What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) SOLUTIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ROOM FOR INACCURACY
AI solutions, such as language models, generate responses primarily based on the data they've been trained on, which often comes from sources on the internet. Whilst questions will often yield relevant responses, if some of the information they've been trained on is incorrect, it follows that the answers too may contain factual errors or inaccuracies.

REINFORCING BIAS
AI solutions may generate content or images that perpetuate existing biases present in the data they were trained on, without challenge from the algorithms written by humans or the content taken from the web. This could easily lead to biased responses and potentially reinforce existing stereotypes, such as those around gender, race or disability.

IRRELEVANT INFORMATION
AI solutions don't have the ability to understand the context or meaning behind a question or user request. Although highly advanced, the AI relies entirely on the data it's been exposed to and is devoid of independent inputs or reasoning, which could lead to irrelevant or even nonsensical responses to queries.

LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY
Fundamentally, AI solutions are machines or technology programmes that don't have the ability to take responsibility for the responses they generate. This could lead to confusion or misunderstandings in certain cases if the answers are taken at face value. For instance, image-generative Al can lead to output clearly derived from other people's content but without any attribution to the original source artist's work.

STIFLING CREATIVITY
One of the potential risks of children and young people continually using AI solutions for things such as their homework is that eventually, they might become reliant on it. In the long term, this could potentially impact their development and hamper their ability to think creatively or solve problems independently without the aid of an AI tool.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT
If possible, try to be around when your child uses any type of AI solution and employ content filters to try and reduce the chance of profanity or age-inappropriate subjects appearing in responses. It's also important to ensure that children are using AI solutions responsibly and to be there to enable opportunities to discuss their use as part of a safe environment.

PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING
Explain to your child that AI solutions can be used as one of many tools to help them research and learn, but that they shouldn't simply accept the responses they receive as the truth. Encourage them to question, verify and think critically about the information they get back - all of which are equally applicable to any website or platform they use.

DISCUSS BIAS
Talk to your child about the potential biases that may be present in the data that AI solutions are trained on, and how the responses might reflect or change the responses that AI generates. Again, with many things, children have a tendency to believe what they see online. It's important for them to consider whether the information is factual and presented fairly.

ENCOURAGE HUMAN INTERACTION
Not only should children supplement any use of software like AI with additional resources such as books and reputable internet sites, but they also should remember what they can learn from interaction with other people. Discussing things with teachers, relatives and friends isn't just an important and often invaluable aspect of learning – it's an essential part of life, too.

CHECK SCHOOL RULES
Make yourself aware of any rules or guidance your child's school might have about the use of AI solutions. Most software is still extremely new, so many schools may not have yet have a policy, however, it's important to make sure your child is aware of how to use it appropriately and will be using it for the right reasons.

Meet Our Expert

Gary Longdon is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught school and in a research position within the sector. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes in assuring that adults and children alike become more aware of the risks associated with technology as well as its many benefits.


Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 15.02.2023

www.nationionlinesafety.com  @nationionlinesafety  /NationalOnlineSafety  @nationionlinesafety

#WakeUpWednesday