

February 7, 2020



QSI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF **PÁPA**
HUNGARY

Online Rejection, How to Help

I always start conversations with groups of students by asking them about positive things they experience with their screen time because I want them to know that I understand there are so many wonderful things to do on tech. Teens expect that any adult talking with them about screen time is going to focus solely on the negative. Once students see that I appreciate the many upsides of our tech world, then they are more open to talking about ways to minimize the downsides.

When I asked the students what some of the things that happen on screens that negatively affects them, a student quickly raised her hand and answered:

"Being blocked." She looked a bit self-conscious, so I quickly said, "Yes, teen after teen tells me about this. It's just so common." I was relieved to see her perk right up.

I went on to say, "It is so stressful when someone is blocked or unfriended, often they have no idea why they were blocked. I know how hard the not-knowing is. It is hard to feel rejected, and then on top of that, not to understand why it happened makes it that much more upsetting."

Then, another student raised her hand, "Yeah, I hate it when I can see that someone has opened my Snap to them, but they have not responded to me."

I said, "These types of things can leave us feeling a lot of uncertainty and self-doubt. This can lead to going over and over things in one's mind, trying to find a reason."

So many heads nodded as I said these things.



Upcoming Events

Feb 10	100th Day of School
Feb 10	Scouts
Feb 12	MSA Obj Team Meeting
Feb 13	Movie Night (12+)
Feb 17-21	February Break
Feb 28	Trustworthy Assembly

Lunch February 10-14

- 10: Roasted chicken with rice, salad
- 11: Brassói pork ragout, fries
- 12: Breaded fish filet with rice
- 13: Breaded chicken with tomato penne
- 14: Pizza with ham and cheese

THERE ARE MANY WAYS A PERSON IN LIFE CAN EXPERIENCE REJECTION, AND OF COURSE, MANY OF THESE WAYS ARE NOW ONLINE. HERE ARE SOME SUCH EXAMPLES:

- When someone sends out invites to play an online video game, and you don't get an invite.
- You are being blocked. Someone can block you from Instagram or Snapchat. So when you go to look at the person's feed, it would have a message like "there is no content."
- You get ghosted when someone stops suddenly responding to your messages without explanation, often in texts or other types of messages on other platforms.
- You receive a Snapchat, text, or Instagram, and someone breaks up with you. Often people even do this with a few words like "I think we should just be friends."
- You get unfollowed on Instagram or Snapchat. You would only know if you go to look at your followers and find that a person isn't following you anymore. You wouldn't get a notification.
- You are left unopened on Snapchat, which is when you send a Snap to someone, and they don't open it. You can tell on your end that they have not opened it. This action is also called leaving it unread.
- You see that someone posted pictures from a gathering that you were not invited to. Often this is on Instagram or a Snapchat story.
- You are left off a group text with people who would typically include you.
- You see many of your friends are somewhere, i.e., a party or an outing, on SnapMaps, and you did not get invited.

Here are a few questions to get the conversation started with youth in your life about this topic of online rejection:

1. When do you feel good about being included in things online?
2. In what ways have you experienced rejection related to screen time?
3. How often do you not know why you got rejected?
4. When have you approached someone to try to understand what is going on? Did you do that in person or online, and how did those times go?

HERE ARE SOME WAYS I HAVE FOUND HELPFUL IN TALKING WITH MY TEENS ABOUT DEALING WITH FEELINGS OF REJECTION.

- Quickly recognize the feelings that come up for you, as their parent, when your child shares the fact they were rejected (you might feel anger, sadness, or other emotions). Try not to let your feelings flow out. Instead, realize that when we let our emotions tumble out, it can lead kids or teens to regret that they opened up to us. Instead, try to get to a place of calm and think about focusing your energy on really hearing what they are saying. Let them know you are happy that they told you about the experience of rejection.
- If this rejection happened online – say on a video game such as not being asked to join a group game, or on social media – try not to say negative statements about the platform where it occurred. Many youth fear telling adults about what is happening online because they worry that their game or device will be taken away.
- Validate that it makes sense that they are as upset as they are – feeling rejected is one of the hardest emotions we experience. Then stop. Try not to attempt to fix it right away with things like, "Oh, I am sure it was a mistake," or " Well, you never liked that person anyway." Instead, right when they tell you, try to stay in validation mode for a while. It is incredibly comforting for youth to feel understood at that moment.
- Try modeling being able to talk about these feelings by sharing times when you got rejected. Share the things you felt that you did well, not so well, and what you learned. What is great about such sharing is that teens may open up to you in ways they would otherwise not have.
- Wanting to know why one gets rejected is human nature. It takes a lot of courage for anyone to ask a person why they have done some act of rejection. So, not asking is often the norm for many kids and teens (and us adults as well, of course). Talk about ways one can try to talk with the person to learn why they blocked them. Even if they decide not to, having a conversation about what one could do is a great teaching moment.
- Is there anything your child felt they did or said to the person who rejected them that they now wish they hadn't? I love the phrase "Wise Remorse" (from the mindfulness teacher Joseph Goldstein) to describe the idea of becoming mindful of something you did that you now regret. What did you learn from that experience? Might you want to tell the person that you are feeling remorse?

THIS WEEK IN KEEPING SAFE: CHILD PROTECTION - FEB 12

Class	Teacher	Focus Area	Topic
3/4	Meredith Barber	1: The Right to be Safe	2: Being Safe 2.5 Relaxation
5	Jennifer Stehly	1: The Right to be Safe	3: Warning signs 3.1 Introducing warning signs
6	Kornelia Kertai	1: The Right to be Safe	4: Risk-taking and emergencies 4.1 Defining unsafe and risk taking
7	Ona Larsell	1: The Right to be Safe	Topic 4: Risk-taking and emergencies 4.5 Personal emergency
8	Lariska Muurling	1: The Right to be Safe	3: Risk-taking and emergencies 3.1 Ideas about being safe
9	Marika Szarvas	1: The Right to be Safe	2: Warning Signs 2.2 Warning signs: chart
10/11 A	Brooke Fitzgerald	1: The Right to be Safe	3: Risk-taking and emergencies 3.5 Personal emergency
10/11 B	Jason Stehly	1: The Right to be Safe	2: Risk-taking and emergencies 2.1 Risk-taking (Extract 1 only)
12/13 girls	Jessica Sanders	1: The Right to be Safe	2: Risk-taking and emergencies 2.3 Planning for an emergency
12/13 boys	Michael Fitzgerald	1: The Right to be Safe	2: Risk-taking and emergencies 2.3 Planning for an emergency
S 1/2	Carrie Callahan	1: The Right to be Safe	2: Risk-taking and emergencies 2.3 Planning for an emergency
S 3/4	Alicia Jordan	2: Relationships	Topic 1: Rights and responsibilities 1.4 Rights and responsibilities in intimate relationships