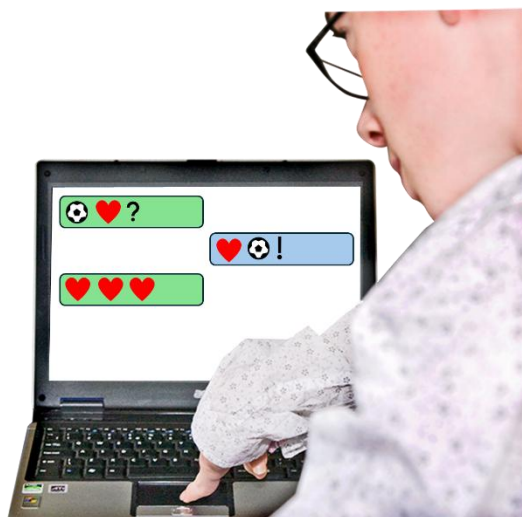


Staying Well Online: What is an Echo Chamber?



The internet is a great place to talk to other people who have the same interests and beliefs as you.



It is normal to talk to other people on websites and social media who share the same interests as you.



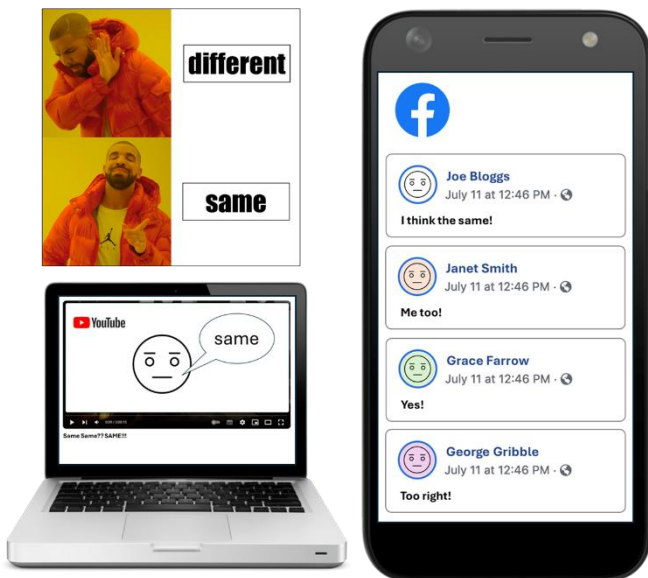
However, only talking and listening to people with the same beliefs as you can sometimes affect the way that you feel about the world and other people.



When you only talk or listen to other people with the same beliefs as you, you might not hear different opinions and beliefs from other people.



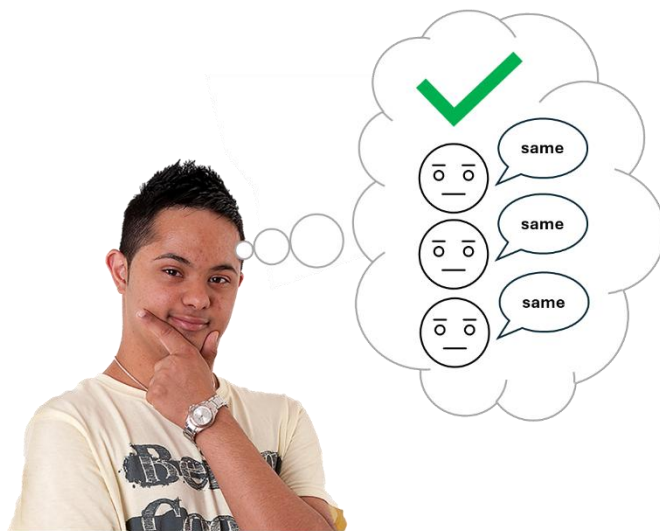
Only talking to and listening to people with the same beliefs as you online is sometimes called an **echo chamber**.



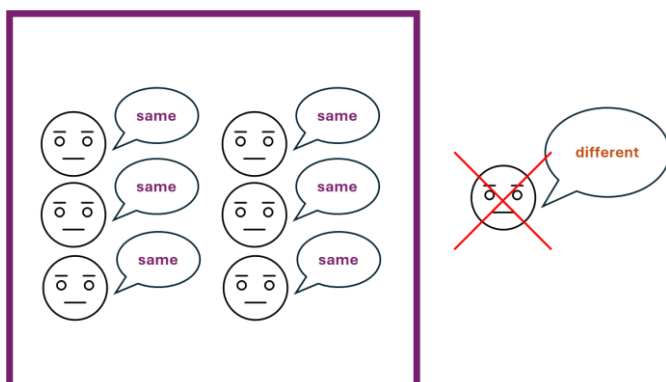
An **echo chamber** is a place where you only find things that support your beliefs. Things like videos, pictures and opinions.



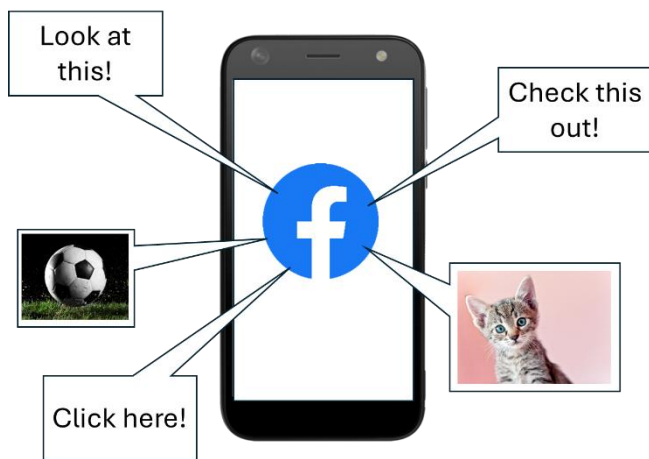
When everybody shares the same beliefs and opinions, they only hear those same beliefs and opinions back – like an **echo**.



Being part of an **echo chamber** can make you and other people believe that your beliefs are the only ones that are right.



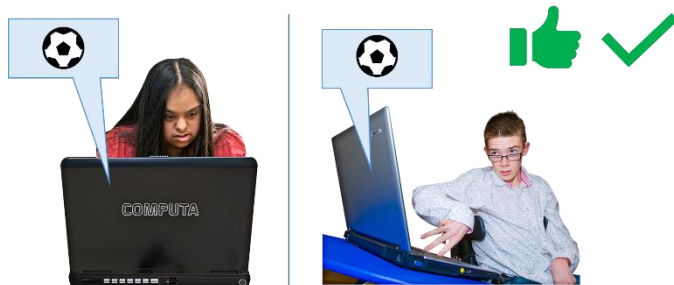
In an **echo chamber**, there are no different opinions to challenge those beliefs or show people a different way to think about things.



Echo chambers can happen a lot on social media because social media websites are designed to show you things that you are interested in or things you believe in.

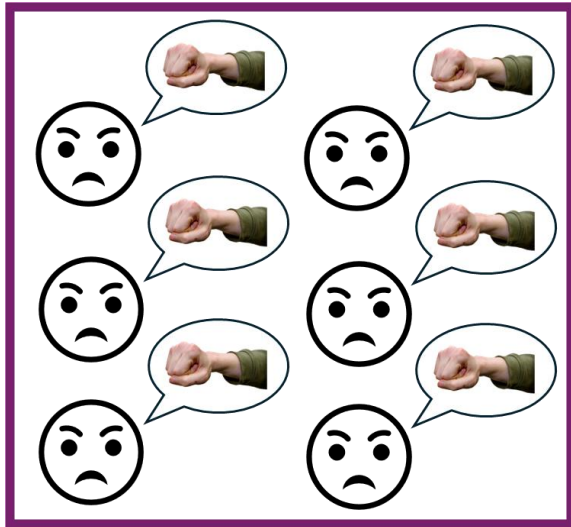


This makes it easy for people to find other people and groups that share the same beliefs and interests.



It is normal and okay to share your beliefs and interests on the internet, but the next section will talk about how **echo chambers** can become harmful.

Staying Well Online: The Dangers of Echo Chambers



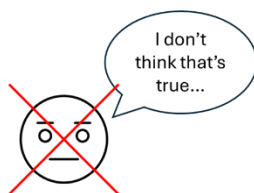
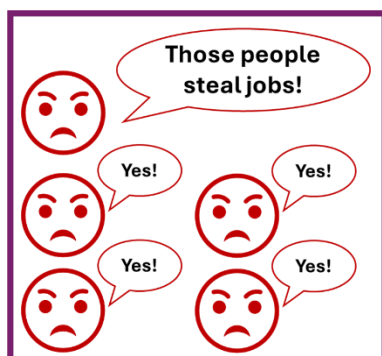
Echo chambers can sometimes become dangerous when people share harmful beliefs.



Sometimes people share harmful beliefs online, for example, hate towards a certain group of people.



Echo chambers can make these harmful beliefs even stronger. The people sharing them think everyone feels the same way and that they are right.



Because nobody challenges those beliefs, people might start to believe and say things that are not true.

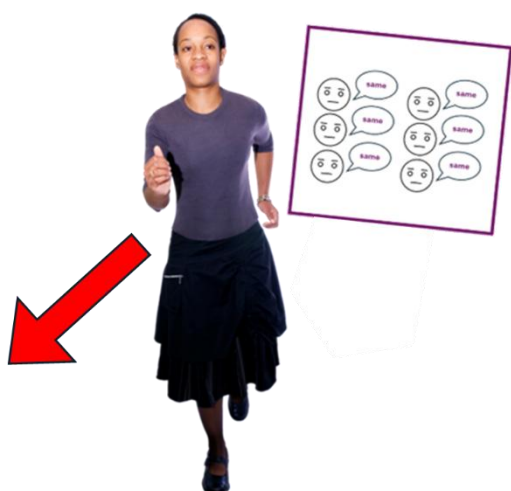


This can sometimes lead to hateful language from people, damage to things and property and even violence against other people.



Beware of social media posts that say bad things about groups of people. You could find yourself in a harmful **echo chamber**.

Staying Well Online: Tips to Avoid Echo Chambers



There are a few ways to avoid finding yourself in an **echo chamber**.



Listen to (or read) other opinions about things, not just the opinions you agree with. This can sometimes be hard to do.



If you hear or read a piece of information online, try and find out if it is true. Don't assume that it is true because it fits your beliefs.



Look at how other websites are reporting on news, not just your favourite ones.



Try spending less time on the internet and social media. Try and spend more time with people in real life, friends and family.



Look after yourself! Eat healthy food, get good sleep and stay active. Even light exercise will help your body and mind!



Keep your mind busy by doing activities and hobbies that don't use screens, such as reading or crafts.



Meet new people by joining groups or doing some volunteering!



If you feel that you are spending too much time online or feel that it is affecting your mental health, you can speak to someone for support.