

Online Safety Advice



As a parent, you need to be aware of the risks to your child in the digital world. Things like cyberbullying, accessing inappropriate content, sexting and grooming all sound scary for a parent.

But if you understand them, you'll be able to talk to your children about them.

Education and information really are the solutions - **helping your child to be sensible and respectful in their digital lives.**

The positives of technology far outweigh the negatives. As parents, we fear the potential negative impact of social media, cyber-bullying, adult content, predators – we're confronted with so many negative headlines and frightening stories. But the internet offers amazing opportunities for learning, connecting, creating, and collaborating. While it might be tempting to ban internet access on smart phones etc, this simply makes children more vulnerable when they go it alone. Just as you taught them how to cross the road safely by doing it alongside you, then taking the lead and finally doing it on their own - staying safe online needs the same approach.

Top tips to keep children safe online

1. Educate

Go on to the social media platforms that they're using and find out what they are all about. If you understand what they're up to online you will be able to better educate and advise.

It's important that children understand the impact that their online activity can have on themselves and other people, today and in the future.

2. Protect

There are parental controls and filters available to help protect children from harmful inappropriate content online.

Your Internet provider should provide parental controls to help you set safer boundaries for your children by filtering or restricting content.

Devices such as phones, tablets, game consoles and other devices that connect to the internet have parental control settings. Filtering can be very effective but no system is 100% foolproof, so education remains key.

3. Monitor

Keep an open dialogue with your child about their use of the internet. Younger children should only use the internet when they are in a family area so you can keep an eye on what they are doing and how they are using it. As they get older they will demand more privacy, but it's important to stay interested and engaged.

4. Support

We all make mistakes, particularly when we are young. Be approachable. Make sure your children know they can talk to you if something goes wrong. And make sure you know what to do if it does. Most sites now have 'report abuse' buttons where you can report inappropriate behaviour and your child's school should have procedures in place to deal with incidents if they do occur.

We know our children are often ahead of us when it comes to knowledge about the internet. So we want to help you understand the issues so you can support them.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

1. Talk to your children about any issues they may have.
2. Encourage them to be respectful to others and be careful what they post - their standards will be different from an adult's, so they may not see your point of view straight away.
3. Remember games consoles have access to the internet too. They all feature parental controls so you can be sure your children are only accessing age-appropriate content.
4. Most parental controls don't block social networks (like Facebook and Twitter) or chat rooms. It comes down to talking to your children and teaching them to act appropriately.
5. Stay informed - try to keep up with what's happening in the digital world so you don't get left behind

USEFUL WEBSITES

There are various websites relating to online safety available for you to view.

Useful websites include:

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Childnet: www.childnet.com

Kidsmart: www.kidsmart.org.uk

Safer internet : <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers>

Orange : https://explore-orange-live-orangedigital.s3.amazonaws.com/2013/04/05/EE_Advice_for_parents_guide.pdf

Safe: www.safesocialnetworking.org

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre)::
www.ceop.police.uk

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

Childnet: www.childnet.com

Click Clever Click Safe Campaign: <http://clickcleverclicksafe.direct.gov.uk>

Cybermentors:
www.cybermentors.org.uk

Digizen :www.digizen.org.uk

Kidsmart : www.kidsmart.org.uk

Virtual Global Taskforce — Report Abuse: www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

NSPCC : <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Durham County Council : <http://www.durham.gov.uk/esafety>