



Online Safety Information for Parents and Carers

What is “e-Safety”?

- Online Safety or “e-Safety” is about safeguarding young people (and adults) in the digital world, the same as we would in the real world.
- It is learning to understand and use new technologies in a positive way.
- It is not about restricting children, but educating them about the risks as well as the benefits so they can feel confident and happy online.
- It is being educated ourselves on how to support and help young people, and where to go to get more advice.

Online benefits:

Please remember, the internet offers wonderful opportunities to our children and will always outweigh the risks!

- Access to **Global** information
- **Education** and learning
- Entertainment, games and **fun!**
- **Communication** with friends and family
- Personal/Social/Health **advice**
- **Saving money**
- Networking and **friendships**: Sense of **Community**
- **Accessible** to all and 24/7
- Develops **Key skills**: Communication and Collaboration

Online risks:

	Commercial	Aggressive	Sexual	Values
Content	Adverts Spam Personal info	Violent content Hateful Content	Pornographic content Unwelcome sexual comments	Bias Racist and extremist content Misleading info/advice Body Image and self esteem
Contact	Tracking Harvesting personal info	Being bullied, harassed or stalked	Meeting strangers Grooming Online Child Sexual Exploitation	Self-harm and suicide Unwelcome persuasions Grooming for extremism
Conduct	Illegal downloading Hacking Gambling Scams Terrorism Privacy	Bullying or harassing others	Creating and uploading inappropriate or illegal content (including “sexting”) Unhealthy/inappropriate sexual relationships	Providing misleading information and advice Encouraging others to take risks online Sharing extremist views “Addiction”

Adapted from EU Kids Online 2008



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Important Organisations

CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk

- The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) delivers a multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the abuse and sexual exploitation of children both on and off-line.
- CEOP have a website: www.thinkuknow.co.uk which is suitable for children aged 5-16 and has a section just for parents/carers with advice and information. You can 'pin' a shortcut tab to this site on your computer's taskbar.
- You can also install the "Report Abuse" tab into your web browser: www.ceop.police.uk/Browser-Safety



The VGT: www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

- CEOP works as part of the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT), which is made up of law enforcement agencies from around the world.



The IWF: www.iwf.org.uk

- The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) is the UK hotline for reporting illegal online content; this may be child abuse images, or material considered to be criminally obscene or inciting hatred.
- If you or your child come across illegal content online, don't panic; make a note of the website address and report to the IWF via their website.
- In incidents of child abuse images, they will work to identify and safeguard the children involved as well as getting the images removed from the internet.



Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk

- Action Fraud is the UK's national fraud and cyber-crime reporting centre.
- If you believe you or your child has been a victim of fraud or identity theft, you can complete a reporting form online.
- They also have up to date information about the latest online scams.



Kent Police: www.kent.police.uk

- If you believe a child is in immediate danger, always contact 999 for police assistance.
- To report non-emergency concerns, call 101 and ask to be put through to your local team.



Home Office: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism

- The government have introduced a new red button for reporting online material which promotes terrorism or extremism. You can access it on their website or download the button to your browser for easy access.



Others

- Always make sure you check out the help and advice pages on any websites, services or technologies your child uses. This should include Social Networks, Instant Messengers, Gaming Sites and Games Consoles.
- Your internet service provider and mobile phone providers will also be able to give you advice on setting up security settings and parental controls on devices in your home.



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Useful Websites and Services

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

- The NSPCC have some excellent information and advice for parents on their website. They have also joined with O2 to provide a helpline for parents to get advice over the phone: 0808 8005002
- They have also produced a new site for parents called netaware: www.net-aware.org.uk where they have teamed up with Mumsnet to review all of the most popular apps and websites for young people; including age ratings.
- The ChildLine website (alongside their helpline) also provides brilliant advice and support for young people on a wide variety of issues, including online safety: www.childline.org.uk



Parent Port: www.parentport.org.uk

- Parent Port are an organisation that allows you to report inappropriate content online, such as inappropriate adverts or rude content in videos.



UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

- UK Safer Internet Centre is a collaborative organisation which provides a wide variety of advice and guidance to help you discuss online safety with your children.
- There are also useful checklists for privacy settings on social networks and what to consider before buying devices for your children.



Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org

- Internet Matters is a not-for-profit organisation working with online safety experts to bring you all the information you need to keep your children safe online.
- It also has an excellent tool which guides you through how to set up parental controls on all the different devices in your home to protect your children.



Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org

- Get Safe Online covers a lot of practical, technical information on protecting your family and computers against fraud, identity theft, viruses and many other problems encountered online.



Connect Safely: www.connectsafely.org

- Connect Safely is an American based website which provides guidance on privacy, security and safety online; this includes some clear, practical safety tips and advice for parents.



Childnet: www.childnet.com

- Childnet is a partner organisation of UK Safer Internet Centre, which has some wonderful resources, including videos and storybooks, to help you discuss online safety with your children.



BBC Stay Safe: www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/curations/stay-safe

- This is CBBC's ultimate internet survival guide designed for young people. It contains all the tips and tricks they'll need to stay safe online, beat the cyber-bullies and become a 'super-surfer'.
- This is a great site to explore with your children and start talking about online safety together in a fun way.





GOLDen Rules for Parents

Ground Rules

- Discuss and agree as a family, how the internet will be used in your house.
 - Let your children tell you what they think is/isn't acceptable for them to do online, (*e.g. not being nasty to people, keeping personal information private and not talking to strangers*). Then add your own rules, (*e.g. how long they are able to use the internet per day, not using webcams in bedrooms*).
 - You might find it helpful to write these 'ground rules' down as a visual reminder and decide on sanctions for breaking the rules.
 - Make sure your child understands that their online actions can have offline consequences
- Discuss using strong passwords with your children so they understand how they can protect their online accounts.
 - It is important that they know how to keep their passwords safe by not sharing them with anyone, or using the same password for several accounts. If your child's account has been 'hacked', make sure they change their password and report suspicious activity to the game or website.
 - For more advice on using strong passwords visit: <https://www.getsafeonline.org/protecting-your-computer/passwords> or check how secure your passwords are at: www.howsecureismypassword.net.
- Remember these are whole family rules, so consider your own use of the internet and lead by example.
 - Think about how much information you are sharing on your social networks about your children and who can see it, (*e.g. first day at school photos*).

Online Safety

- Set up filters on internet search engines to limit the likelihood of your children *accidentally* coming across inappropriate content when searching online.
 - Remember that filters will never be 100% effective, so you cannot rely on them alone to protect your children. It is important that your children understand that they should tell you straight away, if they come across something inappropriate or upsetting online.
- Make the most of the parental controls on devices and games consoles.
 - You can manage how much time your child spends on consoles and limit their access to the internet and online chat rooms. Take a look at: www.internetmatters.org/controls/interactive-guide.
 - Make sure your child understands that parental controls are in place to protect them, not restrict them; some children will actively work around parental controls if they feel constrained without knowing why.
 - Be aware that internet history can be hidden and deleted, so make sure you talk to your children.
- Install antivirus software, firewalls and secure your wireless internet connection.
 - Contact your internet service provider or take a look at: www.getsafeonline.org for more information.

Listen

- Take an active interest in your child's online life and talk openly with them about the things they do.
 - Talk to your child about which websites they like to use and why; engage in their online world with them. Learning together with your child can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour online.
- Pay attention to behaviour, language and attitude changes in your child.
 - These behaviour changes can indicate that something is upsetting your child online. Children who are being groomed, radicalised or exploited online will often be pressured to withdraw from family and friends by the online perpetrator.
 - If you have concerns about grooming or sexual exploitation online, you should report to CEOP immediately: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Ceop-Report>.



Dialogue

- Don't panic; just talk you your children!
 - Try to maintain an open and positive relationship about the internet with your child.
 - Make sure your child knows that they can come to you for help if something happens online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable.
 - *Many children won't disclose incidents of cyber-bullying or online grooming because they are worried that adults will overreact and remove their access to the internet.*
- Ask your child if they know where to go for help; where to find safety advice, privacy settings and how to report or block on their games and websites.
 - Explore the websites together to ensure your child knows how to block and report someone who is nasty or inappropriate. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply and to keep any evidence.
 - If the game has a 'parent/carer section', it's a good idea to do your own research and find the parental controls or reporting systems for yourself.
 - Have a look at: www.net-aware.org.uk for an overview of some of the most popular websites.
- Ensure that your child understands that pictures, videos or comments that are posted online can be very difficult to remove and rarely remain private.
 - Discuss the pressures for young people to send inappropriate or indecent images to each other (*sexting*). *How might this behaviour affect them in a relationship? Do they know what they would do?*
 - Young people need to be aware that images can be copied, saved and shared without their knowledge and if they are under 18, they are also breaking the law by making an indecent image of themselves.
 - Take a look Childline's Zippit App: www.childline.org.uk/Play/GetInvolved/Pages/sexting-zipit-app.aspx, which empowers young people to take control when they feel pressured by sending fun and ironic pictures instead.

Remember: Banning the internet will not work and often drives problems underground. Children who are worried about our reactions are less likely to report problems. Education around safe use is essential to ensure that the whole family can benefit from using the internet.