

Online Safety Advice for Parents and Carers

A guide with useful information regarding the use of electronic media at home.

What is e-Safety?

- E-Safety is concerned with safeguarding young people in the digital world.
- It is about learning to understand and use new technologies and Information Communication Technology in a positive way. (ICT)
- E-Safety 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 about being educated to be able to support and help young people.

Some Key Areas to Consider:

- Chatrooms - Habbo Hotel, Club Penguin.
- Instant Messenger - Yahoo, AIM, BlackBerry Messenger, Skype
- Social Networking Sites - Facebook, Bebo, MySpace.
- Gaming - Xbox, PS3, Wii, World of Warcraft, Runescape, Second Life.
- User Generated Content Sites - Youtube, Flickr.
- Mobile Phones - Web access, Cyber Bullying, Bluetooth, Cameras.
- Online Content - Incitement Sites e.g. pro Self-Harm, pro Suicide, Hate Against Race/Religion, Violence, Pornography.

Young People: Be SMART!

- **SAFE** - Staying safe means being careful and not giving out your name, address, photos, mobile phone no, school name or password to people online. Use a nickname, set social networking sites to private and never post your own or your friends/families information without their permission.
- **MEETING** - Meeting up with someone you have contacted online can be dangerous as you never know if they are who they say they are. Only do so with your parent's/carer's permission, and when they can be present and always meet in a public place.
- **ACCEPTING** - e-mails or opening files from people you don't really know or trust can get you into trouble - they may contain viruses or nasty messages. The best thing to do is ignore them or show them to an adult you trust.
- **RELIABLE** - Some people online maybe lying about who they really are, and some information you find on the Internet may not always be reliable and true.
- **TELL** an adult you trust if someone or something you see online makes you feel uncomfortable or worried. You can report online abuse to the police at www.thinkuknow.co.uk

- **Don't do anything online you wouldn't do in real-life!**
- **If you wouldn't be happy with your parents/teacher/police seeing it, don't post it online!**
- **It's never too late to tell someone if something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable if it feels wrong it most probably is!**
- **Learn how to block someone online and report a problem.**

- **Ground Rules:**
 - Establish how the internet will be used in your house.
 - Discuss what will be kept private online (information, credit card details, photos etc) and decide rules for meeting online friends.
 - EXIF Data, remember pictures posted online may contain information, such as the location of where the picture was taken!
 - Know what your child is doing online just as you would offline.
 - Set up and **use Family friendly filters** which are now provided by the main ISPs

Online Safety:

- Install antivirus software, filtering, firewalls and secure your internet connections.
- Remember that tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes things can get past them!
- Use Parental Control functions for computers, mobile phones and games consoles if you're not sure how then contact the manufacturer or service provider.

Location:

- Ideally locate the computer/laptop in a family room and don't allow webcams to be used unless with your consent and always in a family room under supervision.
- Consider other devices in your home that allow internet access such as Mobile Phones and Games Consoles.

Dialogue:

- Talk to your child, remember **93% WON'T tell their parent or carer** about online abuse - share the experience with them and ask them to show you how they use technology.
- Be open and encourage them to talk to you.
- If your child reports a problem make sure you support them, report it or seek advice.

Children and inappropriate content online:

- 90% of UK children have accidentally viewed online pornography. The average age for first exposure to pornography is 11.
- Two thirds of UK teens have viewed Pornography and 1/3 say they learn about sex from pornography.
- The average teen watches 90 minutes of pornography or inappropriate content per week. This is readily available on YouTube and other similar sites.

REMEMBER TO USE FAMILY FRIENDLY FILTERS!!

Protect your children - 8 Stage Action Plan:

1. Encourage your child not to hesitate about coming to you about anything they see online which upsets or disturbs them. Answer questions truthfully and in a language they understand.
2. Make an effort to get computer literate if you want to support and understand your children; you need to have a reasonable understanding of their world.
3. Demand information from retailers on adult-content filters whenever you buy a new computer for family use.
4. Ask your internet service provider (i.e. Sky, BT, Virgin, TalkTalk etc) how to switch on the adult-content filters that they already provide.
5. Use family search engines or apply safe-search filtering to search engines that your family regularly uses.
6. Set up different user accounts on home PCs/laptops for every member of the family and activate parental controls on your child's accounts.
7. Shop around for software and content that provides extra adult-content filtering.
8. Keep an eye on your child's browsing history, not to censor or spy on them, but to keep them safe online.

Mobile Phones:

- Know how your child's phone works (e.g. Bluetooth, Internet access).
- Save any abusive messages or inappropriate images for evidence purposes.
- Decide together what acceptable bills are. Pay as you go rather than running up a hefty bill! You can limit the amount your child spends on their phone.
- Encourage balanced use, switching off at mealtimes and bedtime.
- Be aware of how to report nuisance calls or texts.
- Contact the Mobile Phone service provider to ask them to block adult content.

Other useful information:

www.ceop.police.uk (CLICK CEOP) where a child or parents can report online sexual abuse/concerns

www.thinkuknow.co.uk CEOP E-Safety website for both children to explore and information for parents and carers.

www.iwf.org.uk (Websites which host illegal child abuse images can be reported for investigation and removal)