



Tips to help keep your child safe online

The internet offers endless possibilities for children to play, create, learn and connect. But there are also risks and we recognise that many parents feel concerned about the activities and content their children are accessing in the digital world. As parents and carers, the key is to find the balance for your child and minimise the risks where possible.

Current trends suggest that children own smartphones at progressively younger ages, and screen use has been found to start as early as six months of age.

Here are a few of our top tips:

- Foster open and honest communication - talk to your children about staying safe online. It's important that they know and feel that they can speak to you if they're unsure about anything they see online.
- Set up accounts together and discuss the privacy settings available to them. This is a good opportunity to discuss who may see what they post and help them understand they lose control of the data once it's out there.
- Discuss the minimum age; many platforms require children to be over 13 to sign up, such as social media.
- Familiarise yourself with your child's school policy and support this approach. Encourage them to speak to a trusted adult about anything they see that concerns them online either at home or in school.
- Talk to them about cyberbullying, and the importance of being aware of the impact on others, of something you might post.
- Apply parental controls where possible, but don't trust that they will catch all inappropriate content.
- Check your child's browser history to see what sites they visit and remember it is still important to be aware of your child's online activity when they become a teenager.
- Set relevant boundaries, discuss your expectations and time limits.
- Ensure your child isn't using their devices unsupervised; keep them in shared spaces where possible.
- Ensure they never reply to a message or email from a stranger or upload any photos of people/your home.



For more useful information and links, visit:

gov.uk/ChildrenOnlineSafety