



E-Safety for Parents and Carers

Technology continues to play an increasingly important role in the lives of children and young people. From completing homework and staying in touch with friends to gaming and exploring new interests, the online world offers many exciting opportunities. Alongside these benefits, it is important that children understand how to use technology safely and responsibly. As parents and carers, your guidance and support remain one of the most effective ways of helping your child stay safe online.

1. Start the Conversation

One of the simplest and most effective ways to keep children safe online is to talk to them regularly about their digital lives. Showing an interest in the websites they visit, the games they play and the people they communicate with can encourage openness and trust. Children are much more likely to seek help if they know they can speak to a trusted adult if something makes them feel uncomfortable online.

2. Protect Personal Information

Children often do not realise the value of their personal information. Remind them never to share details such as their home address, phone number, passwords or financial information online. It is also important to discuss the risks of sharing photographs, videos and comments publicly, as content shared online can contribute to a lasting digital footprint.

3. Set Boundaries and Expectations

Just as families set expectations for behaviour in everyday life, it can be helpful to establish clear rules around technology use. Agreeing appropriate times for gaming, social media and device use can help children develop healthy habits while ensuring technology does not interfere with sleep, family time or schoolwork.

4. Screen Time and Digital Wellbeing

Technology should enhance daily life rather than dominate it. While screens can support learning, creativity and communication, it is important that children maintain a healthy balance between online and offline activities. Encouraging regular breaks, time outdoors, hobbies and good sleep routines can help support physical and emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers can find further guidance through Parentkind's [Online Safety Toolkit](#).

5. E-Safety on Mobile Devices

Whether using a smartphone or tablet, children have access to websites, apps, social media, messaging services and online games wherever they are. Parents and carers should encourage children to use privacy settings, download apps responsibly and speak to a trusted adult if they encounter anything concerning online.



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Many devices include built-in tools to help manage screen time and promote healthy digital habits. Google Family Link allows parents and carers to manage app downloads, monitor usage and set screen time limits on Android devices, whilst Apple Screen Time can be used to set app limits, schedule downtime and manage content restrictions.

Useful links:

Google Family Link: <https://families.google/familylink/>

Apple Screen Time: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/105121>

6. Social Media Platforms

Social media is a popular way for young people to communicate, share content and stay connected with others. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and Discord can be enjoyable to use, but they can also expose children to inappropriate content, scams and contact from people they do not know. Parents and carers should regularly discuss online behaviour, review privacy settings and ensure age restrictions are followed.

For further advice, including helpful checklists for parents and carers, visit:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists/>

7. Be Aware of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is becoming a common part of everyday life and many young people now use AI-powered tools to support learning, creativity and entertainment. Whilst these tools can be useful, they can also provide inaccurate information or generate realistic content that is entirely fabricated. Children should understand that AI responses should not always be accepted as fact and that personal information should never be shared with AI systems. Ofcom now recognises AI as an increasingly important part of children's digital experiences.

8. Think Critically About Online Content

Not everything shared online is accurate or trustworthy. False information, edited images and AI-generated videos can spread quickly and may be difficult to identify. Encouraging children to question information, check reliable sources and think critically about what they see online can help them become responsible digital citizens.

9. Stay Safe While Gaming

Online gaming is one of the most popular activities among young people and can be a great way to socialise and develop teamwork skills. However, many games allow communication with other players, including people they do not know in real life. Parents should familiarise themselves with age ratings, privacy settings and communication features to help ensure children enjoy gaming safely.

Further advice can be found through the NSPCC [Online Safety Hub](#).

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10. Make Use of Parental Controls

Modern devices, broadband providers and applications offer a wide range of parental controls that can help manage screen time, filter content and monitor activity. While these tools can be valuable, they should be viewed as an aid rather than a substitute for regular conversations about online safety.

11. Remember that Online Safety is an Ongoing Conversation

Technology is constantly evolving, and new opportunities and challenges emerge every year. Online safety is most effective when it becomes a normal part of family life rather than a one-off discussion. By talking regularly, showing an interest in your child's online activities and leading by example, parents and carers can help young people enjoy the many benefits of technology safely and responsibly

Helpful Links

For up-to-date advice and support on online safety, social media, gaming and parental controls, the following resources may be useful:

UK Safer Internet Centre

Guidance on apps, devices, privacy settings and staying safe online.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk>

NSPCC Online Safety Hub

Advice on online safety, gaming, social media and supporting children online.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Parentkind Online Safety Toolkit

Advice on digital wellbeing, screen time and social media.

<https://www.parentkind.org.uk/online-safety-toolkit>