

They're young, curious and impressionable.



www.getsafeonline.org

Most children's internet use has increased over the last two years, whether it's for entertainment, educational or social purposes.



With all the additional time spent doing more online, how can you be sure that the young people in your family are safe from the issues they can encounter every day?



To help, our online safety experts have put together some simple, easy-to-follow tips.

- Have regular conversations with your child about the internet's positive and negative aspects. Get them to show you what they're doing and try it yourself. Familiarise yourself with new technologies and trends. Discuss bullying, oversharing, inappropriate content, stranger danger and spending too much time online. Set a good example yourself.
- Explain and encourage safe searching, websites and apps. Check what your child is watching – and sharing – on streaming sites like YouTube and TikTok.
- Gaming, social media, picture/video sharing and many other apps and websites have lower age limits for a reason. Download apps only from recognised sources like App Store and Google Play. Add your own email address when setting up accounts and apps for your child.
- Discuss and agree boundaries and rules from a young age, including time limits and appropriate online usage. Empower your child, but remember that they don't have the maturity or experience to always make the right decisions.
- Use parental control software and apps on computers, mobile devices and games consoles, privacy features on social networking sites, safety options on search engines and safe location settings on devices and apps. Turn on your ISP's family filters.
- Keep abreast of new game and social media trends, especially those attracting negative publicity because they may be violent, encourage gambling or leave the way open for messaging anybody, and hence potential grooming.
- If your child uses video calls, ensure their safety by updating to the platform's latest version, following its safety advice and ensuring call invitations and replies cannot be seen by anybody outside the agreed call group.
- Gaming can be very positive for children but make them aware of things like chatting to strangers, in-game purchases of loot boxes, skins and cheats, and spending too much time online.
- Advise your child that they shouldn't believe everything they read or see, and to avoid spreading random or sensational content. Misinformation and fake news are everywhere, including in links from respectable websites.
- Warn about oversharing confidential information or personal details in posts, profiles, messages and chats. Consider what you share yourself.
- Keep tabs on your child's online activities and get to know the signs of something not being right. For example, criminals have exploited increased online use for recruiting children into illegal activities such as cybercrime and drug muling.



Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself, your family, finances, devices and workplace, visit www.getsafeonline.org

If you think you've been a victim of online fraud, report it to Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre on **0300 123 20 40** or at www.actionfraud.police.uk

In Scotland, report fraud to Police Scotland by calling **101**.



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