



Internet safety Parents Summary

The Internet is an exciting and positive place. It holds many opportunities for children and young people including careers, support, creativity and engagement.

Understanding Apps

If your child is using an app, site or game and you want to know more about it you can explore together and ask:

1. What content can they see?
2. What can they share and who can they share it with?
3. Who can they chat with? How and where?
4. Who can they be friends with?

Which apps should I be concerned about?

There are no apps, sites or games that are more or less dangerous or risky. People who want to harm children will use any sites or services which children use. Children should know to be wary of people they friend and talk to online, especially if they are asking to talk privately with them, and children should always be advised not to share personal information online or any photos or videos that make them feel uncomfortable.

Viewing

- Anyone can post and share content
- There may be inappropriate, sexual or violent content online
- Most apps and games include privacy and security settings
- Parental controls and filters can also help manage online activities

Sharing

- It's easy to share online
- Younger children – seek permission before they share
- Children should never feel pressurised, uncomfortable or blackmailed
- Look out for others by not sharing inappropriate content

Chatting & Friendships

- Chatting and meeting new people can be fun and appealing
- Most people just want to chat or be friends, but some seek to harm
- Advise them not to share too much personal information
- Talk to a trusted adult if anything worries them

Viewing Videos

- An inappropriate video is anything that worries, scares or upsets your child. It could be aimed at adults and include sexual images or show violent behaviour. Or it might encourage crime, terrorism, eating disorders or suicide and self harm.
- If your child is watching videos online, whether it's on a streaming service, YouTube or through another platform, they may, accidentally, see something not intended for them.
- Sometimes, children can be exposed to unsuitable videos through a link they've found or been sent, or an app they've downloaded.
- Sometimes children are curious and they may go looking for content.

What can you do?

- **Talk to your child** - Talk about the videos they like to watch and watch some together, as this will help you to identify if they are suitable for them. Talk about what might make a video inappropriate and make sure they know what to do if they see anything they shouldn't. Encourage your child to talk to you or another adult they trust if they see anything whilst watching videos that makes them feel worried, scared or sad.
- **Look up the age ratings** - Younger children are more likely to come across inappropriate content if they are using apps, websites or services before reaching the minimum age requirements. Check the age ratings or requirements before your child uses them for a guide as to whether it's appropriate.
- **Set up parental controls and filters** - Most apps, sites, games and services have parental controls and filters to help you manage the content your child may see. Some services also let you set up child accounts, so content can be automatically filtered, or you can choose what content your child can view and block any obvious adult content.

Gaming

- **Chatting with people they don't know.** Gaming is different to social networks, as players often play against people they don't know. This may include adults.
- **Inappropriate or unmoderated chat.** In some games swearing and insults are common, especially when a player hasn't performed very well. Mean comments or insults can hurt, and competitive criticism might feel like bullying for some children.
- **Requests to chat in private.** Once a child moves to private chat, it may not be monitored by the game. They might share personal information or feel pressured to do something that they don't want to do.
- **Offering gifts or trades.** Some people may offer to trade – or give – your child in-game items or currencies to earn their trust and persuade them to have a separate conversation outside of the game.

What can you do?

- **Play with them** . Play, or watch your children play, online games to understand how they talk online, who they talk to online and what you're comfortable with. Look at the privacy settings together.
- **Talk to them.** With older children, who may not want you to play with them, have regular chats about the games they play, who they talk to and how.
- **Use family controls.** Use family controls and in-game settings to manage, limit or turn off in-game chat to make sure that you're confident interactions are right for your children.
- **Encourage reporting.** To catch potential problems early, encourage your children to report inappropriate chat in game and to tell you if anything in the game makes them feel worried or uncomfortable

Live Streaming

- **Content.** Children could be exposed to age inappropriate content, including sexual or violent content.
- **Offensive comments.** If the live stream is public, viewers may be able to leave negative or inappropriate comments.
- **Live streaming is 'in the moment'.** This increases the risk of children and young people acting on impulse, and saying or doing something they'd be less likely to do offline.
- **Inappropriate contact.** People seeking to harm children may attempt to trick them into engaging in sexual activity, flatter them with positive comments or gifts, or make threats to try to force them to do things they don't want to do.

What can you do?

- **Talk to them.** The best way you can protect your child is to talk with them about online life. And not just once: make this an ongoing conversation as part of your family life.
- **Use devices in public spaces.** Younger children should be closely supervised by an adult and live streaming should not take place in a private space, like the bedroom or bathroom.
- **Privacy and safety settings.** Go through the privacy and safety settings together with your child. Make sure only trusted friends and family they know offline can view their online profiles and videos.
- **Be wary of requests to chat in private.** Remind your child to be wary of people they meet online who want to chat to them in private, away from other people.
- **Support and Reporting.** It's really important that your child knows how to get support. Remind them that they can always speak to you or another adult they trust if they have any worries. Talk to them about how to report to social media platforms or CEOP if they're concerned about contact from an adult.

Social Media

- **Inappropriate content.** Anybody can post and share videos, pictures, or ideas on social media. This means children may see things they don't want to, including sexual or violent content.
- **Inappropriate behaviour.** Children can feel more confident when they are online as they feel protected by the screen. This can result in them, or their friends, saying or doing something they'd be less likely to do offline, including oversharing.
- **Over-sharing.** Social media lets people share information about who they are and what they like doing – with lots of different people. It's easy to share things online that we wouldn't face-to-face. Once something has been shared, you can never be sure who has seen it, saved it, or shared it.
- **Making friends with people they don't know.** It's also easy to set up fake profiles, and some adults may even pretend to be children when they're much older. This makes it hard to tell the difference between someone who's genuine and a fake. Some people online, can also put pressure on children or manipulate them into doing something they don't want to do.

What can you do

- **Make sure they are ready.** Remember, most of the popular social media services require users to be at least 13 years of age before they can register. It's also a good idea to check out the social media site or app they want to use with them, look at the privacy settings, age requirements and talk with them about how they can use it safely.
- **Be a great role model.** What you do on social media will influence their online behaviour. Make sure your social media accounts are a good example to your child, by taking some time to check your friendships, privacy settings and the things you that you have posted.
- **Get involved and support them.** The best way you can protect your child is to establish a positive relationship with them around their life online. Let them know you want to support them as they begin to explore, and that they can come to you if they have any worries or problems. Talk about any worries you might have, and why you have them.
- **Talking about safe social media use.** Talk about what it means to be a good friend online, how would they deal with disagreements and how the treat their friends online. Talk about how to share with care by using the privacy settings and reporting systems

Reporting

CEOP reporting is designed specifically for children, so that they always have somewhere to go if they are worried. The reporting form is designed to be as accessible as possible by children, but it is highly recommended that young children of primary school age seek the support of an adult they trust to help them make a report.

It is not possible to report to NCA-CEOP anonymously. NCA-CEOP advise any urgent reports where a child is in immediate danger should be reported to the local police force where the child is located.



Summary

Chat little and often

- Talk to your child about their life online
- Take the opportunity to talk to them about how to stay safe
- Explain any worries you may have

Remind them to report anything worrying

- Make sure they know they can come to you
- Help them identify trusted adults
- Let them know you won't blame them

Take some practical steps

- Create a family agreement and regularly review
- Use parental controls
- Direct your child to age appropriate information



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Thinkuknow offers resources for different audiences:

4-7

8-10

11-13

14+

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