

Tips to Help Children and Young People

Stay Safer Online

Talking regularly with your child can help keep them safe online. Making it part of daily conversation, like you would about their day at school, will help your child feel relaxed. It also means when they do have any worries, they're more likely to come and speak to you.

But it's easy to become overwhelmed with the different technology, the language that children use, the huge number of games and apps which are available and the potential risks. Below are places for help and advice to help you support your children to stay safer online.

Parental controls

[Safety Net](#) recommends that parents take five steps to keep their children safer online:

1. **Understand how to set limits from your internet service provider (SKY, TALKTALK, Virgin, BT)**
2. **Put restrictions on (iPad, mobiles, Xbox etc.) and do not allow children to have access in their room at night.**
3. **Set safe search on google and YouTube turn off Auto**
4. **Have a plan for when things go wrong**
5. **Most importantly – keep involved in your child's online life**

These steps are not easy to do; the link below will help. Sometimes these steps make the internet too restricted, and you might need to remove or set time limits. The technologies in this area are changing all the time. For more help please visit: [Seek advice](#)

When media is used thoughtfully & appropriately, media can enhance daily life. Use this Family Media Use Plan tool to create a personalised plan for your family: [Family media plan](#)



Removing phones from children's bedrooms at night is crucial for ensuring adequate sleep, emotional regulation, and physical health.

Up to 77% of teenagers lack sufficient sleep, and those using phones before bed are 44% more likely to suffer from sleep deprivation. Experts recommend creating a "digital sunset" at least 90 minutes before bed.

How to Implement a "No Phone" Bedroom Rule:

- Centralised Charging Station: Create a dedicated charging station outside the bedroom.
- Establish a "Digital Sunset": Ban devices 90 minutes before lights out.
- Use Old-School Alarm Clocks: Avoid the excuse of "needing the phone to wake up".
- Model the Behaviour: Adults should also keep their phones out of the bedroom, which the [Institute for Family Studies](#) suggests as crucial for setting a good example.

Five themes of online safety – use these to think about what area to discuss:



- Conduct – How you behave
- Content – What you view, share (upload) and download
- Contact – Who do you interact with
- Overuse – Are we using technology too much
- Commercial – POP UPS, scams

Useful Resources:

- [Parent Zone: Screentime; everything you need to know](#)
- [Free online course \(for foster carers but useful to all parents/carers\)](#)
- ['What I wish my parents or carers knew...': A guide for parents and carers on managing children's digital lives | Children's Commissioner for England](#)
- [About the Ivison Trust - a national charity working to keep children safe from exploitation](#)
- [Ivison Trust: Supporting parents to keep children safe from exploitation](#)
- [Ivison: Parent participation information](#)
- [CEOP: Think you know summary](#)
- [eLearning: Ivison Trust; Keep them safe: child sexual exploitation training](#)
- [eLearning: Ivison Trust; Child criminal exploitation and county lines](#)
- [Organisation information – Runaway helpline](#)
- [Missing People Charity Support Services – \(Exploitation\)](#)
- [How Ofcom is Helping Children Stay Safer Online – A Guide for Parents](#)
- [A parent's guide to AI](#)
- [Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#)
- [For younger children – PANTS: NSPCC](#)
- [How to talk to young people about nudify apps](#)
- [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)
- [HeadStart](#) (Resources and guidance to support young people's mental wellbeing and resilience)
- [Parents & carers | Childnet](#)

Financial exploitation resources:

- [Money Mules – National Crime Agency](#)
- [Report Remove | Childline \(under 18\)](#)
- [Revenge Porn Helpline – 0345 6000 459 | Revenge Porn Helpline \(over 18\)](#)
- [Stop Non-Consensual Intimate Image Abuse | org \(over 18\)](#)
- [Sextortion – Professionals | Crimestoppers](#)
- [What is Financial Exploitation? | The Children's Society](#)
- [Staying safe online and fraud prevention – West Sussex County Council](#)
- [CSE Toolkit for parents and carers](#)

Reporting tools:



- [Report Remove tool](#)
- [Reporting online safety concerns | NSPCC](#)
- [CEOP Safety Centre](#)

Information Videos:

- [Emily's story: Online grooming \(Australian\)](#)
- [NSPCC #shareaware \(Lucy and the Boy\)](#)
- [Can I be your friend? \(useful video to highlight how odd our online world is\)](#)
- [My new friend \(child sexual exploitation theme\)](#)

Teach Yourself Topics:

- [Money Mules – National Crime Agency](#)
- [Money Mules – Help stop money mule recruiters \(westmidlands-gov.uk\)](#)
- [Easy Money – YouTube](#)
- [What is sextortion? – YouTube](#)
- [Sextortion or Sexually Coerced Extortion Help & Support](#)
- [Report Remove | Childline \(under 18\)](#)
- [Get Support | Childline](#)
- [Exploitation Risk Checker | Causeway Charity](#)

Change WhatsApp group adding privacy settings:



Did you know?

To stop others from being able to automatically add them to groups children can follow the following steps:

1. Open WhatsApp and click on the Settings icon
2. Select Groups
3. Select My contacts except...
4. Select Done

Other useful links:

- [Online harms](#)
- [Internet Watch Foundation; Latest report](#)
- [The body keeps score](#)
- [The anxious generation](#)
- [Hundreds of British celebrities' victims of deepfake porn experience](#)
- [About Cyber Psychiatry \(CEAR\)](#)

Instagram Notifications:



New Alerts to Let Parents Know if Their Teen May Need Support

Instagram will start notifying parents if their teen repeatedly tries to search for terms related to suicide or selfharm within a short period of time. These alerts are designed to give parents the information they need to support their teen and come with expert resources to help parents approach these sensitive conversations.

Using artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) is an increasingly common part of online life. As it continues to develop, make sure you know how it works and how to keep you/your child safe if they use it.

AI generated content - This is where an image, video or voice recording has been created using an online generator. These can be completely artificial, meaning none of the content is real, or they can be altered versions of existing real content.

AI content generators - These are the tools used to create AI generated content by entering a series of commands to generate new content or edit an existing image or video.

AI chat bots-These are chat functions where you are speaking with a bot rather than a real person. They will often only respond to short messages and will usually introduce themselves as a bot. However, the bots can often be given human names.

AI summaries - This is where a platform gathers and summarises information, usually found at the top of a page or search engine result. The AI will often take information from across a range of sources and list the sources within the summary.

You can get more information and advice here:

[Get advice for using artificial intelligence safely | Internet Matters](#)

[Artificial intelligence safety tips for parents | NSPCC](#)

[Get Support | Childline](#)



Gambling & Online Harms:



Ygam is a national education charity dedicated to informing, educating and safeguarding young people against gaming and gambling harms. Our Family Hub is there to provide support and guidance for families on tackling gaming and gambling risks and

Ygam Family Hub Services ([Family Hub | Ygam](#)):

- Guidance and resources to help parents and carers understand and manage online risks
- Expert advice on identifying early signs of gambling and gaming addiction
- Workshops and educational materials to support family communication about digital wellbeing
- Signposting to additional specialist support services when needed

Safer Tips Flyer – [Top Tips for Safer Gaming and Gambling](#)

Information is also available on the following websites:

[Helping your child to stay safer online - Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Parents & Carers \(Parents Guide to Internet Safety\) - West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Online Safety – East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)





Top Tips for Online Safety – for children and young people

Online friendships - Try to think of your online world as an extension of your offline friendships. Include others in your activities, as being left out of online games or chats can feel just as hurtful as being left out in real life. Be careful how you word things too — the written word can easily be misinterpreted. Whether you're sending emails, texts or posts, think about how your message might come across. Important conversations, especially when sorting out disagreements, are usually best saved for face-to-face.

Be respectful - Always be respectful to others on social media. Don't post photos of friends that they might find embarrassing without asking first and take them down straight away if someone asks you to. Before posting, think about how your words or images might make others feel. You'd care about what people say or post about you — so show the same courtesy to others.

Be aware of your digital footprint - Every time you go online, you leave a digital footprint. This can show others where you've been and what you're doing. Posting pictures and videos can be a great way to be creative and stay connected, but remember that once something is online, it can be very difficult to remove. Think carefully before sharing anything you wouldn't want your family to see.

Think before you post - Social media and websites can be great places to share opinions and make positive change. However, try to avoid posting negative comments or ranting in the heat of the moment. It may feel good at the time, but you could regret it later. Expressing your views in a positive or neutral way is often more effective and less likely to cause offence. Remember there's always a real person behind the screen with feelings, just like you.

Know who you're dealing with - Online socialising can be fun and is a great way to stay in touch with friends and family. Many people choose only to chat or play with people they know in real

life, which is a sensible approach. If you do interact with people you don't know, use the same caution you would offline. Remember that people aren't always who they claim to be, so avoid sharing personal details. If someone makes you uncomfortable or asks for private information, stop contact and tell a trusted adult. Never arrange to meet someone you only know online.

Protect your identity - Never share personal information online, such as your phone number, home address or the school you attend. Always check your privacy settings on social media and make sure only people you trust can see your posts.

It's not always real life - Keep in mind that photos and posts rarely show the full picture. People usually share their happiest or best moments — not everyday life or tough days. Comparing yourself to others online can make you feel low but remember that social media doesn't reflect the whole story.

Keep a healthy balance - The internet is a fantastic tool for learning, creativity and staying connected, but it's important to take regular breaks from screens. If you notice you're spending a lot of time online or thinking about it constantly, it might be time to step back a little. There's a lot to enjoy offline too — spending time with friends, family and doing things you love. It's all about finding a healthy balance.

Resources for children/young people:

- [Sending nudes / sexual content](#)
- [Deepfake guide for young people](#) by Internet Matters
- [Ok To Ask? | Surrey Police](#)
- [HeadStart](#) (Resources and guidance to support young people's mental wellbeing and resilience)
- [Safecall free and anonymous helpline – exploitation & county lines](#)
- [Resources for 3-11s - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Resources for 11-19s - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Taking control of your online safety | Childline](#)
- [Young people | Childnet](#)

Information can also be found on the following websites:

[Being Safer Online - Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Children & Young People - West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

