Keeping children happy and safe online during COVID-19

Many UK schools are closed, or running at a reduced capacity as a result of COVID-19. Due to this, many children and young people have increased their use of technology to keep in touch with friends, to entertain themselves, or to try to keep up with their learning. In addition, many parents are teaching their children with online learning.

Here are lots of useful resources and tools that you as a parent or carer can use to help ensure that your child is safe and happy online.

Please feel free to share this as widely as you wish either via email, by social media or by placing it on a website as the links are embedded in the document.

Online safety activities you can do from home

As children spend more time at home and are online more than ever, we've pulled together a list of easy-to-use resources. They are divided into age-groups and include quick activities, films and plenty of other fun ways to engage with your children. Activities range from identifying fake news to advice on online bullying – there is plenty for you and your family to use.

- **For 3-7 year olds**
- **For 7-11 year olds**
- **For 11-14 year olds**
- **For 14-18 year olds**

Getting advice and guidance if something goes wrong

The more time that children and young people spend online, the greater the chance there is that they will see something which isn't appropriate for them at their particular age. Whether this is fake news, impersonation, or negative comments, there are lots of places that you can go to for help and advice on how to report these issues. Together, as a family, you can also help prepare your children for incidents like this and build their critical thinking skills.

Making a report

www.reportharmfulcontent.com is a website designed to help you report anything which you believe shouldn't be online. There is guidance about how to report different types of content as well as help with the next steps you can take if your report isn't actioned by the site or service you have made it on. Many social media sites also have a 'report inappropriate content' button or explain the way in which to report your concer.

1. **Report it on the platform** - all of the major platforms used for sharing content have the option to report a piece of content. For example, on Facebook you can click on the three horizontal dots in the top right-hand corner of any post and select 'Give feedback on this post'. It will then allow you to report the post as inappropriate and describe why. This will alert the platform to the content and allow them to review it against their own content standards. If the platform doesn't take reasonable action, report it to Report Harmful Content.

2. **Report hate speech to the police** - Hate crimes are any crimes that are targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice towards that person's disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or transgender identity. This can be committed against a person or property. If you are targeted or see hate speech online then you can report it via the True Vision website.

3. **Child sexual abuse content** - this should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation. If you know the child then you should also make a report to CEOP.

4. **What if my child has received images from an adult**? This is a criminal offence and you **must** report it to Northumbria Police by ringing 999. Ensure that you keep any evidence of the images but we recommend taking away the device until Northumbria Police is able to assist you.

5. **Support the individual** - if an individual has been upset by seeing offensive content then make sure that they have the support they need. This might range from listening to their concerns through to putting them in touch with a specialist charity who can help.

Speaking to someone

For young people - depending on the age of your child, there are a range of places that they can go to for help. For younger children they can **call Childline** for help and support, and for older children **The Mix** offer free and practical advice.

For parents and carers - **The O2 and NSPCC helpline** can help you with any questions or concerns you may have about keeping your child safe online. They can provide you with advice and help to troubleshoot any problems your family may be facing.

For educators or professionals - The **Professionals Online Safety Helpline** will continue to operate Monday to Friday 10:00am – 4:00pm. This helpline can assist with any online safety issues or concerns any professional working with children and young people may have. For help and support, please email **helpline@saferinternet.org.uk**

Making the most of the internet as a family

Creating a family agreement

A **family agreement** is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet. As you have everyone at home, it's a fantastic way to set boundaries and discuss how you are all going to use technology during this time. Where is tech going to be used in your home? How are you going to share it and what times of the day can different family members have access? It's also a great way to discuss how to behave online and talk about what happens if something upsets or worries your child.

Having a conversation

As a parent or carer, the best tool to support your child in leading a happy and safe life online is open conversation. Our **Parents' Guide** gives advice on how to begin these discussions, how to work together as a family to support your child online, and how to handle difficult conversations or situations.

Topic specific advice for parents and carers

From livestreaming and parental controls, to grooming, the **saferinternet.org.uk** has advice for parents and carers on a **range of topics.**

Information from

ChildLine https://www.childline.org.uk/ **0800 1111**

Child Exploitation Online https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/

Internet watch foundation https://www.iwf.org.uk/

Northumbria Police https://www.northumbria.police.uk/

O2 and NSPCC Helpline https://www.o2.co.uk/help/nspcc/adviceline **0808 800 5002 for free, Mon – Fri 9am – 4pm**

Professionals Only Helpline helpline@saferinternet.org.uk

Report harmful Content www.reportharmfulcontent.com

Report it http://report-it.org.uk/your_police_force

Safer Internet https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

The Mix https://childnet.createsend1.com/t/j-l-qpikut-l-o/