

Keeping your child safe online - A checklist for parents and carers

As a parent you'll probably know how important the internet is to children and young people. They use it to learn, play, socialise and express themselves in all types of creative ways. This may be through sharing photos and videos, blogging, gaming, or even developing their own apps. It is a place of amazing opportunities.

The technology children use in their daily lives can seem daunting. You might worry about the risks they can face online, such as bullying, contact from strangers, as well as the possibility of access to inappropriate or illegal content. To help them stay safe, it's important that you understand how your child uses the internet.

By following this simple checklist, you can start to protect them and decrease the risks they face: 

 **I have asked my child to show me sites they use** – By doing so, your child is including you in their online life and social activity. Show an interest and take note of the names of their favourite sites. You can then re-visit these when you are alone. Take your time and explore the space, find out how to set the safety features and learn how to report any issues directly to the site.

 **I have asked my child to set their profile settings to private** – Social networking sites, such as Facebook, are used by children to share information, photos and just about everything they do! Encourage your child to set their privacy settings to private. They need to think about the information they post online as it could be copied and pasted anywhere, without their permission. If it got into the wrong hands, somebody may wish to use it against them or worst of all try to locate them in the real world.

 **I have asked my child about their online friends** – We know that people lie online about who they are and may create fake identities. It is very important children understand this. Whether they are visiting a social network or a gaming site, the safety messages are the same. Children and young people must never give out personal information and only be "friends" with people they know and trust in the real world.

 **I have set appropriate parental controls on my child's computer, mobile and games console** – Filters on computers and mobiles can prevent your child from viewing inappropriate and possibly illegal content. You can activate and change levels depending on your child's age and abilities. You can also set time restrictions for using the internet or games. They can be free and easy to install. Call your service provider who will be happy to assist or visit CEOP's parents' site for further information. Explain to your child why you are setting parental controls when you talk to them about their internet use.

 **My child has agreed to tell me if they are worried about something online** – Sometimes children get into situations online where they don't feel comfortable or see something they don't want to see. By opening up the communication channels and talking to your child about the internet, their favourite sites and the risks they may encounter, they are more likely to turn to you if they are concerned about something.

 **I know where to get help if I'm concerned about my child** – The CEOP Safety Centre provides access to a range of services. If you are concerned that an adult has made inappropriate contact with your child you can report this directly to CEOP. You can also find help if you think your child is being bullied, or if you've come across something on the internet which you think may be illegal.

Visit the Safety Centre at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre or by clicking on this button:



1. CHILDNET RESOURCES AND WEBSITES



Childnet: Childnet International is a non-profit organisation working in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. The Childnet website hosts all the online resources detailed below, as well as a number of recommended resources for young people, parents, carers and teachers. www.childnet.com



Childnet resources: On our website you can access resources on a range of topics, including our previously branded Know IT All for Parents interactive guide. The **Parents and Carers** area also contains key advice, information on reporting and detailed information on a range of e-safety topics in the Hot topics section. www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers



UK Safer Internet Centre: Childnet is part of the European Commission appointed UK Safer Internet Centre. Together with partners the Internet Watch Foundation and the South West Grid for Learning, we raise awareness about internet safety, develop information materials and resources and organise high profile events such as Safer Internet Day. You can access a range of resources from across the UK, Europe and wider afield at www.saferinternet.org.uk.



Digizen: A website providing information and advice to encourage responsible digital citizenship. It shares advice and guidance on preventing and responding to cyberbullying, including the film 'Let's Fight It Together' and specific information on social networking. www.digizen.org



KidSMART: This award winning Childnet website is for children, teachers, parents and carers and offers fun games and activities for children alongside effective internet safety advice. Don't forget to check out our new Early Surfers' Zone for 3-7 year olds where you can read the online stories 'The Adventures of Smartie the Penguin' and 'Digiduck's Big Decision.' www.kidsmart.org.uk



2. PARENTAL CONTROLS & FILTERING



A Parents' Guide to Technology: The UK Safer Internet Centre has created this guide to answer commonly asked questions and introduce some of the most popular devices used by children, highlighting the safety tools available and empowering parents with the knowledge they need to support their children to use these technologies safely and responsibly. www.saferinternet.org.uk/parent-tech



Childnet's guide to **Online Gaming** also contains helpful advice and information. www.childnet.com/ufiles/Online-gaming.pdf



Internet Parental Controls: The four big internet providers - BT, Sky, Talk Talk and Virgin Media - provide their customers with free parental controls that can be activated at any time. Video tutorials on how to download and use these controls are available on the UK Safer Internet Centre website. www.saferinternet.org.uk/parental-controls

3. COMPUTER PROTECTION & SECURITY



Sorted: This website was produced by young people and looks at the issues of internet security and protection. It gives simple explanations, important information and advice on how to protect a computer from the dangers of programmes such as viruses, phishing scams, spyware and trojans. www.childnet.com/sorted/



Get Safe Online: A government website which focuses on online computer security and protection issues. It contains advice about firewalls, spyware and antivirus protection as well as how to protect children online. www.getsafeonline.org

For more advice about keeping children & young people safe follow us on TWITTER @youthbedspolice

4. SOCIAL NETWORKING



Young People & Social Networking Sites: Aims to help parents understand the positive and creative ways young people are using social networking spaces (eg Facebook, Twitter and Google+). It also points out the potential risks of using these sites and ways to minimise these risks.

www.childnet.com/ufiles/Young-people-and-social-networking-A.pdf



Facebook Family Safety Centre: Provides useful information and tips for parents and carers, teens and educators. These pages do not require a Facebook account in order to view them. www.facebook.com/safety



Google+ Safety Centre: Provides useful information and tips for parents and carers, teens and educators. These pages do not require a Google account in order to view them.

www.google.com/+safety



Twitter Help Centre - Tips for Parents: Provides useful information and tips for parents and carers. These pages do not require a Twitter account in order to view them.

support.twitter.com

5. FILE SHARING & DOWNLOADING



Music, Film, TV and the Internet: Childnet has developed this guide with the music, film and television industries to inform parents, teachers and young people about how to stay safe and legal when enjoying entertainment on the internet or via a mobile device.

www.childnet.com/resources/downloading



The Content Map: A UK based website that signposts to legal online retailers of film, TV, music, games, ebooks and sports coverage. www.thecontentmap.com

6. SEARCH ENGINES

Using a child friendly search engine allows content to be filtered. Most adult search engines, such as Google, Bing and YouTube, also have built in filtering options under the 'preferences' link that should be adjusted before use.

Google Google Family Safety Centre: www.google.co.uk/goodtoknow/familysafety



bbc BBC: www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/find **YAHOO!** KIDS Yahoo!: kids.yahoo.com **Ask Kids:** www.askkids.com

7. WHERE TO REPORT



Need help? Information about what to do if a child comes to you for help and advice about how to report online concerns such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content or illegal behaviour.

www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/need-help



Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP): A police agency tackling child abuse on the internet. This website includes a unique facility that enables parents and young people to make reports of actual or attempted abuse online. www.ceop.police.uk



CEOP's Think U Know website contains information for children and parents, as well as a link for children to report abuse online. www.thinkuknow.co.uk



Internet Watch Foundation: The UK's hotline for reporting illegal content found on the internet. It deals specifically with child abuse and criminally obscene images hosted in the UK and internationally. www.iwf.org.uk



ParentPort: A website run by the UK's media regulators, allowing you to report content unsuitable for children found in a programme, advert, film, video game, newspaper/magazine or other forms of media. www.parentport.org.uk

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Cyber bullying: How to help children stay safe online

1. Save and print out any bullying messages, posts, pictures or videos you receive. Make a note of the dates and times, along with any details you have about the sender's ID and the URL.
2. Always report anything abusive you see online to the site concerned. Flag it, report it, or talk to someone about it.
3. Never respond or retaliate, as this can just make things worse. Instead, block any users that send you nasty messages. You can find a guide on how to do this on specific social networking sites here: Beatbullying.org/safety/specific.
4. Think very carefully before posting photos of yourself online. Remember that once your picture is online, anyone can download it and share it or even change it.
5. And lastly, don't pass on cyber bullying videos or messages about other people. Don't just ignore it. If you see cyberbullying going on, report it and offer your support.



Some useful websites:

- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.net-aware.org.uk
- www.kidsmart.org.uk
- www.bedfordshire.police.uk/tackling_crime/cybercrime_online_safety.aspx

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