

HOW AND WHY WE SHOULD HELP TO KEEP STUDENTS SAFE ON THE INTERNET

The internet is now an integral part of modern day life. For parents, the amount of information out there can seem overwhelming. We might be concerned about what our children are exposed to online and want to be well informed for the sake of our children. We need to keep the degree of risk the internet poses in perspective. Millions of internet interactions take place daily with no underlying harm whatsoever. However we should remember that with the internet being so vast, it is inevitable there is some element of risk. Here are a couple of statistics:

'Staggering' scale of online threat to children revealed as report says 850,000 people in UK could pose sexual risk to children



This headline is taken from Internet Watch Foundation from NCA research www.iwf.org.uk/news-media/news/

This statistic is taken from The UK safer internet centre www.saferinternet.org.uk/



26%

surveyed girls* have had some kind of experience of receiving a request for nude or semi-nude photos or videos

So what can be done?

Here are some tips on how to talk to our children about the internet.



Find a good time and place. Pick an opportunity when you know you're not going to be interrupted and you are both going to feel comfortable. Make sure you have enough time, without turning it into one of those 'special talks' moments.

Keep it age appropriate. Make sure the topic you want to discuss is explained to your child in an age appropriate way so they can understand it.

Avoid the 'big talk'. Talk little and often. It is more effective and helps build trust and support between you.

Prepare yourself. Have knowledge about the conversation topic and ways to keep communication flowing.

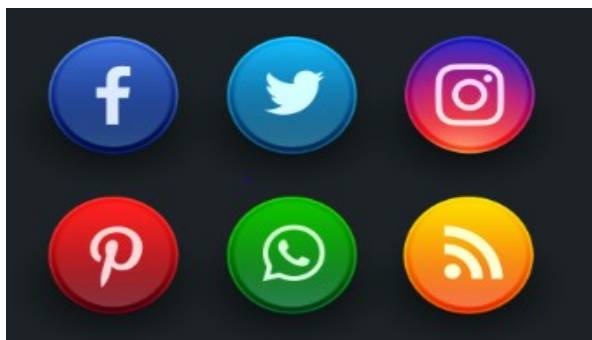
Keep conversations positive. Talk to connect with your child and to show interest, not to interrogate them. **Ask** open questions, **wait** for their response, and **listen** to what they have to say. Don't be afraid to embrace the awkward silences.

Don't give up. If your child doesn't want to talk right now, try another time or find a different way to start the conversation. Be patient.

Here are some tips and links about how your child can use the internet safely with your guidance.

Social Media

Help to decide if your child is ready for social media



Links to further information about how to report any concerns, and organisations which can help with internet safety. If viewing this electronically, icons are hyperlinked, (right click and open)



<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

1. Most social media platforms require users to be over the age of 13. Students need the appropriate social and emotional skills to manage an on-line profile.

2. We can help by being a good role model on social media and checking our own privacy settings. Ask your child if it is OK to post pictures of them on line.

3. Go through your child's privacy and security sections with them. Talk about who can see their profiles, posts and videos.

4. Talk about what to do if anything on social media makes them feel uncomfortable. Obviously children should be encouraged to talk to parents and carers but there are alternative listeners.



www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre



Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre



www.childline.org.uk

PHONE FILTERING



Has your child a new phone or device for the first time and are you concerned about what they can access on the internet and what they can download?

If the answer is yes to any of this, then help is at hand. For **Apple** devices please visit this link [Use parental controls on your child's iPhone, iPad and iPod touch – Apple Support \(UK\)](#) which will tell you step by step, how to set privacy restrictions, restrict the use of built in apps and features and prevent purchases from the app store.

For **Android** devices there is information here [How to Control Screen Time on Android With Google Family Link - Tech Advisor](#)

With an App called Family Link, you download the app on your phone and your child's phone. Then you can *remotely* control what you child has access to and how long and when they can use the internet. There is some information here [Google Family Link app - what parents need to know | Internet matters](#). This app is free, but the downside is it only works with Android devices.

For Control Apps or **all other devices**, this link <https://uk.pcmag.com/parental-control-monitoring/79219/the-best-parental-control-apps-for-your-phone>

provides a comparison of what is available. The cost can be around £40 a year, but it can be seen as being an extra £3 or so a month on phone bills, for piece of mind.

Of course, any app should be used alongside direct monitoring where possible and communicating with your child about why restrictions are in place. Too much restriction could lead to resentment and children finding ways round the limitations!