HEART OF ENGLAND
Creating Futures

E-Safety Support for Parents/Carers

Today's world is very different from the one which you experienced. Children are easily and readily connected from the moment they wake up until the moment they go to sleep and sometimes have their sleep interrupted in order to remain in contact with their friends.

This level of connection has to be managed and your child has to be helped to learn the correct, safe ways to manage life online.

While children are young they need your protection and your help.

The resources presented here might help you to help them.

The most common issues are:

- Ignoring age restrictions
- illegal behaviour under the ages of 16 Do we actually need this line as well as the one above
- Sharing personal information
- Cyber bullying
- Gambling, Online gaming, running up debts
- Inappropriate content (not limited to pornography)
- Making online friends they have never met which can lead to Grooming/Sexual Abuse/Drug trafficking

Who is responsible for E-Safety?

Issues which can be labelled "E-Safety" occur both in and out of school. They arise where technology and people meet. As a result this will happen outside school and inside school and both home and school need to work together to sort things out. As a school we take responsibility for issues which arise using our equipment and on our system. We've made it clear that we do not want students to have their phones on in school because we know that they tend to want to socially-network during school time. We do not want students to use our equipment to socially network either – which is why we block most of the relevant sites. As a results there should not be phone/social media issues in school. You are responsible for the E-Safety issues which arise out of school.

Age Restrictions

Many social media sites have a minimum age of 13. Many students ignore this.
The age restriction is there to protect your child and we do advise you stick by them. If you know you are not going to win that idea then consider this approach:

- Share the account – you'll get notified when a download takes place
- You set the password on your child's account so nothing can be downloaded without you typing it in.

Report Abuse

The main organisation for managing online abuse of children is CEOP (ceop.police.uk).

We teach your child about how to report an issue, but they need ongoing support to actually do it.

Please go around the site with your child and give them some guidance. If they are worried about reporting something then the safety centre is a good page to visit.

Some sites have the **report abuse button** on them which they also should recognise.

Illegal Behaviour

It is against the law to send indecent pictures (sexting) of a person under 18. It is a crime under at least 2 Acts.

It is also a crime to have an indecent image of someone under 18 on a phone, even if the picture is a selfie. Using a phone to incite is a crime.

There is no way of actually stopping anyone from doing this. The advice is to keep talking to your child and ensure that they understand what is and is not allowed.

Check browsing history

Find out the terms that they've used on their smartphone/ other devices and use urban dictionary if you aren't sure what they mean. You need to know what they look at. Most problems came from an innocent search/mistype. Remember this and plan what you are going to say when you discuss this. *You need to avoid confrontation and anger*, you want the conversation to be helpful and productive. Generally you will be the person paying for the device and you have the right to check it because it is **your job and your right to protect your child.**

Gaming sites

Games and gaming sites have all the opportunities and risks as social networking sites but with the added disadvantage that your child will be distracted by the content and the play. Their guard will be down.
It is important to consider minimum age and to keep the conversation going: you want your child to tell you about the game as that is when anything "different" will come out in the conversation.

Make sure that, if something feels 'different', you report it, or, at the very least, increase your monitoring.

Grooming and Sexual Abuse

When your child is online they will make friends. Some of these friends will be virtual friends who are never met in real life. This is normal but on the Internet not everyone is who they say they are and it can lead to situations where your child is at risk, boys as much as girls.

You will need to be vigilant for behaviours such as

- Getting upset/defensive when you ask them who they are talking to
- Suddenly switching to a different screen when you are near the computer
- Suddenly having access to a device that you don't recognise - particularly phones
- Use of sexual language/dressing differently
- Extreme range of emotions

Given that we are talking about a teenager you might be expecting this to happen anyway, but, if you are concerned try and check devices and report your concerns.

Gambling

The only kind of gambling you are legally allowed to enjoy under the age of 18 is the Lotto and Scratchcards. Even then you need to be 16.

However, if your child has friends who gamble they will want to join in. Watch out for:

- Secretive behaviour
- Inexplicable transactions on the bank account
- Strange or gambling based search history

Gambling addiction is easy to acquire and needs to be prevented.

Pornography, Violence and Consent

Parental control software can be installed on all devices to stop your child accidentally stumbling across pornography. The signs that your child is accessing this are very similar to those when they are being groomed: a really detailed look at the browsing history will help you keep your child safe. Inevitably browsing is linked to pop-ups so look for any which are explicit/ inappropriate. Check bank accounts for unexplained charges.

UK teenagers are usually interested in sex, but uncomfortable talking about it to their responsible adults. Many turn to pornography in order to learn. This is a poor and potentially expensive option. Be prepared to have conversations may be awkward; use the internet and their browsing history to help direct the content of those talks.

Pornography may use violence/violent language and may have confusing rules relating to consent. You may need to deal with all of these issues at the same time.

Cyberbullying and Sharing Personal Images

You need to help your child understand how their personal information can be misused. This means checking that their profile only contain images and information that is appropriate for their age. Try to persuade them that keeping their face OUT of the picture will protect them from image altering software.

Bullying using devices is known as cyberbullying and is common in social media, gaming and online gambling. It relies on the students being connected and providing information that leaves them vulnerable. Boys tend to use "sexting" (sending messages of a sexual nature) or by threatening to harm. Girls more commonly spread lies and rumours, expose secrets or exclude individuals from groups. Please emphasise that being part of a group chat or using language that could cause harm is not acceptable, even if it arises from self-defence as a form of retaliation after being bullied.

Common indicators include:

- Suddenly stopping using a device/social media feed
- Being nervous when a particular person contacts (no matter what method used)
- Being reluctant to go to school or attend the usual social organisations
- Anger/depression/frustration after using the computer

Take the lead on E-Safety

Stay in control. Manage your child's online presence by:

- Ban devices in private spaces, especially where they sleep
- Do not let them add software unsupervised
- Keep communicating with your child – avoid being angry
- Ask for outside help as soon as you are concerned

Places to get help are here:

E-Safety Advisor Childnet
Internet Matters Think U Know
Parents Against Child Exploitation
Connect Safely Setting up Parental Controls
Help with bullying