

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, creating a modern, layered effect. The central area is a plain white space where the text is located.

Promoting Online Safety



Conduct: children may be at risk because of their own behaviour, for example, by sharing too much information

Children need to be aware of the impact that their online activity can have on both themselves and other people, and the digital footprint that they create on the internet. It's easy to feel anonymous online and it's important that children are aware of who is able to view, and potentially share, the information that they may have posted. When using the internet, it's important to keep personal information safe and not share it with strangers.

Discuss with your child the importance of reporting inappropriate conversations, messages, images and behaviours and how this can be done.

Contact

Without privacy settings installed, bullies or people who seek to abuse or groom children, can find ways to contact them on social media

It is important for children to realise that new friends made online may not be who they say they are, and that once a friend is added to an online account, they may be sharing your personal information with them.

Regularly reviewing friends` lists and removing unwanted contacts is a useful step. Privacy settings online may also allow you to customise the information that each friend is able to access. If you have concerns that your child is, or has been, the subject of inappropriate sexual contact or approach by another person, it's vital that you report it to the police via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (www.ceop.police.uk).

If your child is the victim of cyberbullying, this can also be reported online and offline. Reinforce with your child the importance of telling a trusted adult straight away if someone is bullying them or making them feel uncomfortable, or if one of their friends is being bullied online.

Links and advice for parents to keep their children safe online

- ▶ <https://www.cyberwise.org/learning-hubs>
- ▶ <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>
- ▶ <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>
- ▶ <https://www.cyberwise.org/post/2018/07/31/is-omegle-ok-for-kids-what-every-parent-should-know>

It can be difficult to know how to start talking to your child about what they're doing online or who they might be speaking to. But talking regularly, like you would about their day at school, will help your child feel relaxed and mean that when they do have any worries, they're more likely to come and speak to you. It can help to:

- reassure them that you're interested in their life, offline and online. Recognise that they'll be using the internet to research homework as well talking to their friends.
- ask your child to show you what they enjoy doing online or apps they're using so you can understand them.
- be positive but also open about anything you're worried about. You could say "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about things I've seen here."
- ask them if they're worried about anything, and let them know they can come to you.
- ask them about their friends online and how they know they are who they say they are.
- listen for the reasons why your child wants to use apps or site you don't think are suitable, so you can talk about these together.
- ask your child what they think's okay for children of different ages so they feel involved in the decision making.



NSPCC

Talking to your child about online safety

Advice on how to start the conversation and get support if you're worried.

Keeping our children safe online

- ▶ Parents today face immense challenges due to continued advancements in technology and easy access to the internet
- ▶ The ever changing social media landscape may be one of the most challenging issues for parents.
- ▶ No matter what young people are doing online, it is important to revisit education regarding privacy settings on a regular basis. Here are some points for consideration as parents navigate the topic:-

Online safety tips for young people

React well to inappropriate content

When you're researching something online, there's always a chance of finding content that makes you feel uncomfortable or upset. If this happens, you can report it as inappropriate and (hopefully) get it taken down. Tell a trusted adult what happened: they'll help you decide what to do next.



Be cautious with your profile

Be careful not to give out too much info on your social media or gaming profiles. Details like your full name, address or school's name could all help strangers to actually find you offline. A trusted adult can help you make your profiles private – so only your family and actual friends can contact you.



Learn to spot fake news

If you're looking into a topic for homework or a project, be careful not to get taken in by fake news: content that's deliberately created to mislead people. Check the story with credible sources, like the BBC or Sky News. Trust your instincts, too – if it seems too unbelievable to be true, it's probably fake.



Lock your devices

Taking your phone or tablet to school? Turn password protection on. It keeps your private info safe and stops anyone accessing your device without permission. Passwords should be memorable to you – but difficult for anyone else to guess. Get a trusted adult to write it down in case you forget it!



Know how to deal with bullies

Sadly there are people online who enjoy picking on other users. If you ever feel like you're being bullied online – by anyone, not just someone from school – talk to a trusted adult about it. Together, you can discuss possible steps, such as blocking or reporting the person who's targeting you.



@#%\$&!

Manage online relationships wisely

Most people in a relationship chat to their partner online. Just be mindful that once you send a pic or message (even if it's private), you no longer control who else might see it. Messaging someone you've never actually met – and who might not be who they say – is definitely best avoided.



Keep it 'real' with online friends

Everyone enjoys adding friends and followers on social media. It's important, though, that the people you interact with online really are your friends. If they're just random people you've connected with to increase your contacts, you don't know if they could be trolls or bullies (or worse).



Report offensive in-game chat

If you game online with your mates, you'll know things can get competitive and heated on the in-game chat. Playing against people you don't know (especially if they're older) raises the risk of offensive comments and even threats. Our advice? Find out how to block or mute those bad losers.

How much screen time is too much?

- ▶ Despite fostering connections with others online, screen time can have a detrimental effect on young people with rates of anxiety and depression in young people rising by 70% in the last 25 years.
- ▶ A study suggests a link between that increased rate as well as depression, anxiety and poor sleep caused by social media use.
- ▶ 7 out of 10 young people have experienced cyberbullying and online hate in comment feeds, forums and social media alike.

Moving Forward

- ▶ Once you know what your teen considers the up - sides and the down - sides of social media, it`s easier to make a plan with them that helps to keep the parts they like and get rid of those they don`t.
- ▶ If your teenager can`t think of many positives, this conversation might help them realise that although they`re spending a lot of time on social media, they might not actually be getting a lot out of it