

Keep your children safe online



Parents have a vital role to play in helping reinforce messages about staying safe online.

Schools and other service providers have a responsibility to ensure eSafety is embedded in their organisational culture to help protect the children and young people in their care. As part of this, schools will realise that their responsibility is more than just blocking bad internet sites. Therefore through offering education on the topic they are helping children and young people avoid risks when not at school. Parents can help reinforce these messages at home and to do so need to understand the risks their children may be exposed to, and how they can supervise and support their children effectively.

It's never too soon or too late to start reinforcing these messages. They are, in principle, the same ideas that we were taught as children: 'don't talk to strangers'; the green cross code; or 'think before you act'; but just in a different 'online' context. Today's children and young people have grown up in this 'online' world that is very different from that of most adults.

This leaflet will help parents to understand what these new opportunities and risks are and offer practical advice about how you can help keep your children safe.

Where and how do children get online?

We live in a changing world where new technology means that the online, virtual world is all around us and accessible anywhere.

This means that the opportunities and risks that children are exposed to are not simply limited to the school ICT suite or your home computer.

The internet can be accessed via most mobile phones and even via gaming consoles.

All this boils down to the fact that parents and teachers cannot supervise Internet access at all times.

This is why it is vitally important for children to take responsibility for being safe themselves and this can be achieved through active education on the topic.



Did you know?

58% of 7 - 12 year olds
and 97% of 13 - 16 year
olds have a mobile phone.

(Ofcom Sept 2009)

Opportunities

Children use technology in amazing ways to do amazing things. Technology opens up new possibilities that many of us never had when we were growing up.

With the power of the Internet, children can create their own websites, music, videos, photographs and upload and share these online with friends, family or the whole world. Thanks to mobile phones, laptops and handheld devices such as portable music players and games consoles they can access the Internet from any location at any time.

Many young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities; always on and always there.

Above all, new technologies support social activity that allows young people to feel connected to their peers. There are also endless new opportunities for the way children learn and the way teachers teach.

- Learn via **educational** games and programmes
- Learn by **researching** information
- Share **resources** and ideas
- **Communicate** with people from all around the world
- The opportunity to be **creative**

Risks

As parents, we may not use the Internet and other technologies in the same way as our children, but we do need to understand what they are doing, what the risks might be, and how we can help them to keep safe.

Some people abuse the anonymity the internet provides. Meeting strangers online or being 'groomed' is potentially a parent's biggest concern. There are other issues too such as pornographic, racist or extremist content; the harvesting of personal information; and cyberbullying.

- **Paedophiles** use the internet to meet young people
- People **lying** to others online
- **Bullying** using the internet
- Seeing **inappropriate** images and material
- **Viruses** and pop ups
- Self generated risks such as giving away **personal details**



Grooming

Adults who want to groom children, or talk to them for sexual gratification will seek out young people who desire friendship.

They will often use a number of grooming techniques including building trust with the child through lying, creating different personas and then attempting to engage the child in more intimate forms of communication including compromising a child with the use of images and webcams.

Child sex abusers will often use blackmail and guilt as methods of securing a meeting with the child.

Here are some common signs of grooming that you should be aware of. It doesn't mean that your child is being groomed, but these are signs to look out for if you're worried:

- **Excessive** use of the computer
- **Aggressive behaviour** regarding internet usage
- **Secretive behaviour**
- Change in use of **sexual language**



If you are worried that the above may be affecting your child then please contact the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) at www.ceop.gov.uk or 0870 000 3344.

Bear in mind if you are reporting a crime, phone 999.



Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of mobile phones and the Internet to deliberately upset someone else.

When children are the target of bullying they can feel alone and misunderstood. They may not be able to identify that what is happening to them is a form of bullying, or be confident that the adults around them will understand it that way either.

Previously safe and enjoyable environments and activities can become threatening and a source of anxiety. The Anti-Bullying Alliance found that 22% of young people reported being the target of cyberbullying.

Bullying is not new, but some features of cyberbullying are very different:

- It can take place at **any time** 24/7.
- The audience can be **very large** and reached rapidly.
- People who cyberbully could attempt to remain **anonymous**.
- Cyberbullying can also take place **across generations**; teachers have been targets.
- Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as **evidence**.

Be aware, your child may as likely cyberbully as be a target of cyberbullying. Be alert to your child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use. Talk with your children and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone. Remind your child not to retaliate.

Keep the evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.

Report cyberbullying:

- Contact your child's **school** if it involves another pupil.
- Contact the **service provider**.
- If the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the **police**.



Practical advice

Talk with your children about what they are doing online. Find out which websites they visit and how they communicate with their friends. Are they using instant messaging programs like MSN Messenger, or are they texting their friends using their mobile phone? Make sure your children know they can come and talk to you or another trusted adult if they are worried or upset about anything that happens online.

Lead by example and join in when they are online, and show an interest in their online activities. Show them what they can find out online in a positive way, ie for research for school projects (or let them show you!) Also don't just explain the risks, show them – search for 'web grooming' on www.bbc.co.uk for example. Encourage them to behave safely and responsibly when using technology.



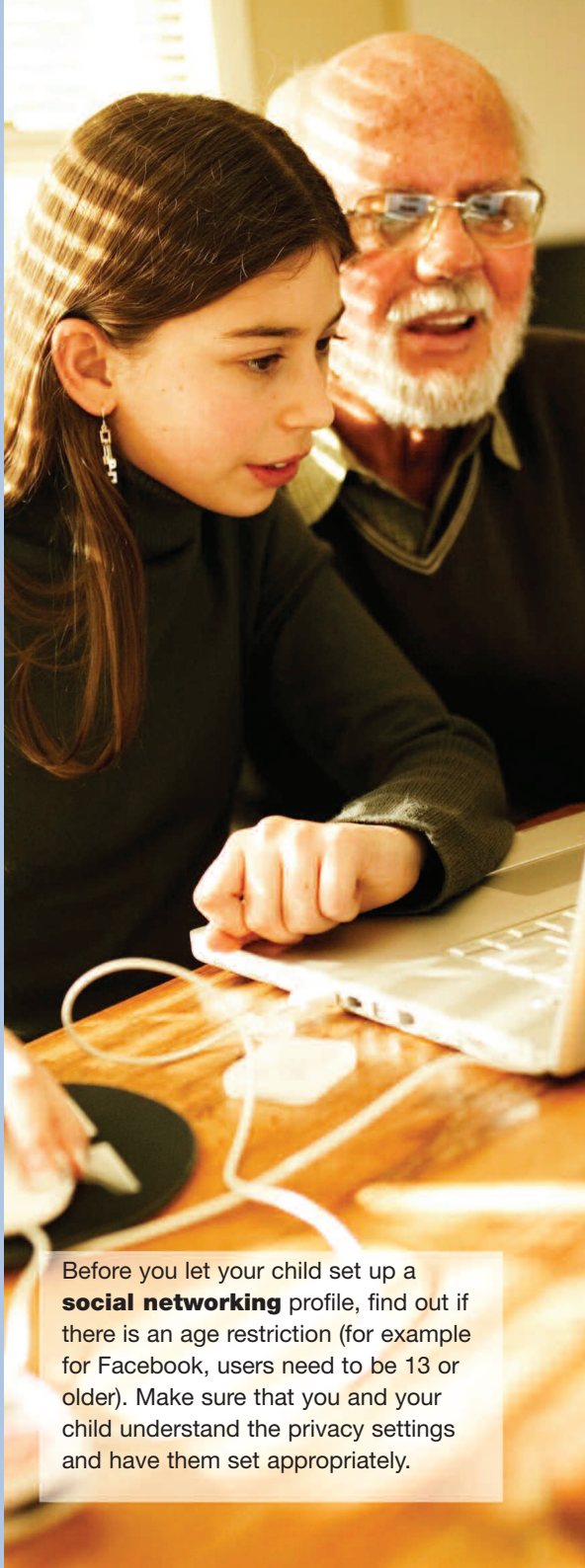
Together with your children, draw up a set of responsible **rules** about using the Internet that the whole family agrees to. Think about what is reasonable for the age of your children, and make sure your children are balancing the amount of time they spend online with the amount of time they spend on other activities.

Make sure your children understand the importance of **keeping personal information safe**. Posting personal information on websites, or sending in messages, can lead to strangers getting hold of it. Items of personal information such as full name, address, telephone numbers, photographs and school name should all be kept secret and not posted online. Encourage your children to think about who else might be able to see what they post on websites or send in messages.

Keep the family computer in an area where you can **keep an eye out** for inappropriate content. Remember that children can also access the Internet from other devices such as mobile phones, portable music players and games consoles. Consider installing suitable safety software that will alert you if they do something that might put them in danger. There are several commercial software products that will do this for you. Check if this software carries the Kitemark for Child Safety Online Software:

<http://www.bsigroup.com/en/Product-Services/Kitemark-for-Child-Safety-Online>. If you see inappropriate content, report it to the Internet Watch Foundation at **www.iwf.org.uk**.

The Internet allows young people to make new friends across the country and even across the world, allowing them to learn about new cultures and new places. However make sure your children know that they should **never meet anyone they only know online**, unless they take you or another responsible adult with them.



Before you let your child set up a **social networking** profile, find out if there is an age restriction (for example for Facebook, users need to be 13 or older). Make sure that you and your child understand the privacy settings and have them set appropriately.

Find out more

IT Courses:

Find your nearest Barnsley Online Centre at www.ukonlinecentres.com. 'Online Basics' is a free, easy-to-use online course that will help you get started using computers and the internet.

For local Barnsley learning events and courses visit www.barnsleylearning.net.

Adult and Family Learning offer courses that can help you to improve your IT skills and knowledge, phone **01226 775270** for the latest course details.

www.myguide.gov.uk is a website designed to help people take their first steps with computers and the internet.

Most internet service providers and mobile phone companies have sites set up for parents, for example: parents.vodafone.com; o2.co.uk/protectourchildren and www1.orange.co.uk/safety which provide advice on both mobiles and the internet.

eSafety advice:

Ask your child's school if they are offering an advice session for parents or if they can provide any further information. Find out from them what they have taught your children about eSafety.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk, from CEOP, has a section dedicated to parents with lots of useful advice.

www.childnet-int.org and its subsite 'Know IT All' for Parents, offers a unique, interactive guide to help you keep up to date with how children use the Internet and how you can support them in keeping safe.

besomeonetotell.org.uk is for parents who are concerned about bullying in their child's life, both outside and within school.

Also visit www.barnsley.gov.uk for all other council services.

www.getnetwise.org provides information to help you make informed decisions about internet usage and security software.

Něse j'u nevojitet ndihmë për të kuptuar këtë dokument, j'u lutemi n'a kontaktoni.

若您需要幫助來理解本檔，請與我們聯繫。

यदि आप को इस दस्तावेज़ को समझने के लिए सहायता की आवश्यकता है तो कृपया हम से संपर्क करें

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tego dokumentu skontaktuj się z nami

ਜੇਕਰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ

Обратитесь к нам, если для того, чтобы понять этот документ, вам нужна помощь

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے کیلئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں

If you need help understanding this document please contact Barnsley Safeguarding Unit on 01226 772400

