Keeping safe online toolkit

We know that children's use of the internet can be concerning for both schools and parents and carers. Common and understandable worries may include children accessing inappropriate or harmful content, being exposed to misinformation or social media contributing to mental health issues are common and understandable.

But the internet can also have many positives for children. It can help them learn and develop their knowledge and skills, it can help them connect with their peers, and it can help them explore the world and discover new things.

We live in a digital world and today's children have never known a world without the internet. Ofcom's annual survey into media use shows that 97% of children aged 5 to 15 accessed the internet in the past year.

Unicef compare children using the internet to crossing the road. We don't want to stop children crossing the road just because there are dangers – our role as teachers and as parents or carers is to teach them how to do so safely and responsibly.

Schools and parents/carers have an important role to play in this; they can build their pupils' online resilience and help them to stay safe and happy online.

In this toolkit, we're sharing a number of resources for schools and parents and carers. There are lesson plans, interactive activities and advice to help start these important conversations about responsible internet use and mental health with children.
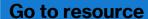
MENTALLY HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

Sign up to the Mentally Healthy Schools newsletter for more resources

Resources for pupils

Responsible use of mobile phones – YoungMinds & Beano

This lesson teaches children aged 7 to 11 about using mobile phones responsibly, and gets them thinking about the differences between communicating on and offline.

Go to resource ⧉

Staying safe online resources – UK Safer Internet Centre

Short films, e-books and websites teaching children aged 3 to 11 about how to stay safe online.

Go to resource ⧉

Trust Me primary pack - Childnet

A resource pack to help teachers educate children around inaccurate and pervasive information that they might come across online.

Go to resource ⧉

Mental health and the internet – Welsh Government

This short 'playlist' style resource talks children through online safety and how to look after themselves online. It also touches on how the internet and social media can affect our self-esteem.

Go to resource ⧉

Resources for parents & carers

Online safety at home: activities for 5-7 year olds – ThinkUKnow

A series of simple 15 minute activities that parents and carers can use with children to encourage awareness about various digital safety issues.

Go to resource ⧉

Let's talk about life online: advice for parents/carers - Childnet

Practical advice and guidance to help parents and carers discuss the online world with their child; including simple conversation starters and advice on tackling difficult topics that may come up.

Go to resource 🗗

Guides for parents/carers on online games, apps and social networks – NSPCC

Information for parents and carers on the most popular apps, games and social media platforms that children use, providing useful information and advice on how appropriate they are and any potential risks to be aware of.

Go to resource 🗗