



Online Safety Newsletter

Spring 2023

Be Kind Online

As the online world becomes a bigger part of our daily lives, it's important to make sure we all, especially our children learn the difference between good and bad behaviour online.

It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face to face with each other. Talk to your child about how they are speaking to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect and kindness, like they would if they were face-to-face.

Dr Linda Papadopoulos (Internet Matters Ambassador) provides tips on how you can help your child to be kind online in a YouTube video.

[Be Kind Online Youtube video](#) || Read more : [Top Internet Matters Tips](#)



MINECRAFT

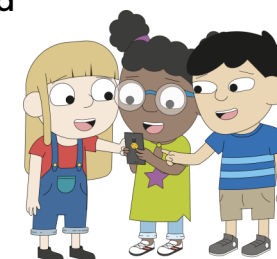
Minecraft remains ever popular and can be a great learning tool that is often used in schools to teach planning skills, recreate famous buildings in 3D and coding. Players use building blocks (a bit like Lego) to create their own worlds. Encouraging creativity and problem solving, Minecraft has plenty to offer gamers of all ages, and it's available on almost all video game platforms.

[NSPCC article- Is Minecraft safe for children?](#)

Recommended Website



The CEOP Jessie and Friends website is designed for children aged between four and seven to explore at home with their parents/carers. It features a series of three animations that follow the adventures of Jessie, Tia and Mo as they begin to navigate the online world: watching videos, sharing pictures and playing games. The key message throughout Jessie and Friends is that if a child is ever worried by anything online, they should tell a grown-up they trust, who will help them.



The episodes can be found [here](#).



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WhatsApp



You're probably well aware of WhatsApp. The app has become a go-to for a convenient and easy way to keep in touch on an individual basis as well as in groups. But are there any possible risks, and how safe is it for children?

Age restrictions:

- In Europe and the UK, the minimum age of use for WhatsApp is 16 years old. It had previously dropped to 13 years old but in April 2018 returned to 16, as a response to data-protection legislation.

Location sharing:

- Your location can be shared on WhatsApp. Talk to your children about when it's appropriate to use this feature and the potential dangers of sharing their location.



Online Bullying:

- WhatsApp has been used in instances of online bullying, e.g. to send nasty messages or share images of other children without their permission. It is important to have regular chats with your child about their online life and that they understand that they must talk to you or another trusted adult if they are being bullied.

Group chats:

- One of the key features is the group chat function. Everybody in the group, even if they are not one of your child's phone contacts, will be able to see all messages within that group.
- You can't always control if you're added to a group chat; but remind children that they can always control their own participation within it – they can leave whenever they want to.
- WhatsApp groups can be controlled by an 'admin', who can change settings, such as the name of the group, who is allowed to send messages, as well as being able to invite and remove people from the chat. This could lead to children feeling left out or being deliberately excluded or removed from groups.



You can find helpful guides and advice about the safety of WhatsApp for children on the following websites:

- ⇒ [WhatsApp safety: a how to guide for parents - Internet Matters](#)
- ⇒ [Is WhatsApp Safe for Kids? Here's What Parents Need to Know | McAfee Blog](#)
- ⇒ [WhatsApp | Parent Zone | At the heart of digital family life](#)
- ⇒ [Is WhatsApp safe for my child? | NSPCC](#)