

Online safety: top tips

Going online is a huge part of most young people's lives so it's important to talk to them about online safety. Here's our tips to get you started.



Chat to them about what they like to do online

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to talk to them and have regular conversations so that online safety is part of everyday discussion. Ask them open-ended questions like 'What's your favourite game or app to play on?'.

- Listen to what they have to say and show an interest. They could give you a demo of their favourite app or show you their favourite YouTube or TikTok account.
- They will probably be able to teach you things you don't know! This will also give you an opportunity to chat about any safety settings they might already have in place.
- Regular conversations with your child will encourage them to come to you if they ever need support or advice.

Talk about who they are in contact with online

There are lots of different ways that children can talk to people online – messaging apps, on social media, and less obvious ways such as chat on online games. Talk to your child about who they are talking to and what they are sharing with them.

- Use settings to help limit who can contact your child.
- Remind your child that they shouldn't share personal information with people they don't know online.
- Let your child know they can come to you or another trusted adult if any conversation makes them feel uncomfortable.

Help manage what they see and do online

Parental controls and privacy settings can help you manage how your child spends time online and help to keep them safe.

- Device settings – manage things like location sharing, screen time and in-app purchases. Most tech and gaming companies have dedicated pages to support with setting these up.
- App or game settings – in-app tools that can help to keep your child's account private and manage who they're talking to. You can normally find information on these in account settings or directly on the platforms website.
- Mobile or network provider settings – help to manage browsing access and stop your child from visiting inappropriate sites or downloading apps that aren't suitable. Contact your mobile or broadband provider for more information about setting this up.

Make sure to talk to your child first before implementing any new settings and explain to them how they help to keep them safe.

Remember it's ok to ask for help!

Remember you don't have to be an online safety expert – that's our job! We're here to help, with resources and advice to help support you and your child.

If your child asks you a question you don't know the answer to, or speaks to you about a negative experience they had online, here are some of things you could do:

- Visit the NSPCC online safety hub: nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety
- Call the NSPCC helpline **0808 800 5000** to speak to an advisor
- Ask another parent
- Speak to your child's teacher
- If your child needs more support, they can contact Childline: childline.org.uk

