

Keeping children safe online

A conversation guide for parents and carers

The internet plays an integral part in children and young people's lives. And while there are numerous benefits that come with exploring this digital world, there are also several risks.

We've put some tips and conversation starters for parents and carers to help foster a positive relationship with the internet in their home and on their children's devices.

- **Have ongoing conversations** about keeping safe online, don't just make them one offs
- **Link them to existing relevant situations** that may be going on e.g. for older children you might want to discuss timely news cases like Andrew Tate
- **Establish the boundaries/rules early on** and be willing to adjust and discuss them as children get older
- **Use the technical tools available** to reinforce the rules but discuss this with your child
- **Reassure them that they can come to you** if they have seen content that worries or upsets them
- **Reassure them that they will not be blamed** if they have said or shared something inappropriate
- **Help them to report content** that is worrying or upsetting

Conversation guide

For young children

- **Let's explore together and agree what kind of apps and websites are appropriate** – what kind of things would you like to look at online?
- **Lets talk about what you share** – it's fun to look at pictures and images but lets be careful and what information you share and with whom.
- **Lets agree some rules** – talk about how long they can spend online and what times are appropriate.
- **If you are unsure about something** – come and ask me and we can go over things.
- **Never worry about anything alone** – if you are scared or worried about something come and talk to me.

For teenager

- **Still be interested** – make sure that, even though your children are older, you are still interested in what they are doing and seeing online.
- **Reassure them if they are worried** – if they have made a mistake, shared something or said something there is help and they can come to you.
- **Challenge** – if they say something that you think they have been misinformed about, have a conversation about it. Don't leave it, tackle it.
- **Encourage them to use privacy settings and blocking** – most teenagers are keen to keep their information private and only share with people they choose to see it. Ask them if they are using privacy settings.
- **Encourage reporting** – reassure them that if they need action taking on content that is shared or that they been posted that they can report it to the provider.
- **If they need help** – they can contact Childline for help and support.

This resource has been made in partnership with Charlotte Aynsley, a digital safeguarding expert with over 10 years experience supporting BECTA, the UK Government, the NSPCC and more. You can find out more about Charlotte Aynsley at her website: www.rethinkingsafeguarding.co.uk