Wendover CE Junior School

Online Safety

A guide for Parents

Contents

Introduction

Few of us grew up in the digital world as our children are doing now. Like it or not, it is here to stay and our children often know far more about it than we do. Over half of 10 year olds own a smartphone, smart speaker use has doubled in the last year and more children watch VoD (video on demand) than live TV.

However, they are still children and are not as worldly wise as they may think they are. Our joint aim must be to support and educate children about safe and respectful online behaviour.

This guidance includes findings from recent research, guidance, short video clips and questions for you to think about.

Whilst it is not intended to shock, some of the information should give us pause for thought.

Responsibilities

"I am responsible… for me."

This is a phrase we've used recently in school, encouraging children to think about their responsibilities - online and in the real world.

Children are responsible for what they say and do online. They should talk to an adult whenever they are unsure and about anything that concerns them.

Parents are responsible for checking that <u>content, conduct and contact</u> is appropriate. Privacy settings should be appropriately set and apps / games agreed with age restrictions in mind.

Schools are responsible for educating children about online safety, informing parents of concerns and working with external agencies in the case of a serious safeguarding matter.

Dangers

Recent research shows that:

- Online grooming has increased 700% in the last 5 years
- The average time of first contact to a child doing something is 45 minutes (the time it takes to cook dinner)
- Inappropriate online contact has increased 79% since the start of the first lockdown
- Offenders are often using multiple identities to target the same child or operating in teams
- Offenders gather information about children from different sites to build up a profile

Online activity often exposes children to contact with older people and content and conduct that is inappropriate.

YOUR CHILD ONLINE

38.5% .... Have you ever been contacted by someone online you did not know in a way that made you feel scared or uncomfortable?

43.1% .... Have you ever received online messages that were clearly inappropriate for someone your age?

38.5% ...... Agree/strongly agree that my online friends are older than I am?

Source: Preliminary Findings of the OCA Adolescent Internet (Social Media) and Smart Phone Application Usage Survey

KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

OCA
OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE

#KEEPCHILDRENSAFE

Online contact is perhaps the most feared danger, but online activity affects many more children in other ways:

- Many girls and boys have a poor self image as a result of online activity, which may result in mental health problems
- Online activity 'crowds out' other activities; less time is spent taking part in sport, reading, creative activities and socialising with people in the real world
- Sleep and eating patterns are disrupted, children become tired, less able to concentrate and less resilient
- Children can become aggressive when access to devices / social media / online activity is removed or not available

How much time does your child spend online each week?

Many children no older than 12 are spending more time online each week than they do in lessons at school. It soon adds up and is often hard to keep track of, especially if children are switching devices.

Ask your child to keep a track of what they are doing and for how long.

Day	Before School	After School	Total
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

Social Media

How much is your child exposed to social media?

Even if your child doesn't have their own device, they may well experience significant social media activity through other family members and friends.

As many as 40% of 11 year olds have an online media profile and are starting to build their digital footprint. What is put online very often stays online – forever.

Do you know the age restrictions of apps?

Like films, apps have an age restriction based on the average level of development of a child by a specified chronological age. However, all children are different.

How many apps are there?

The number is growing and each app is different. This makes it more difficult for parents to keep up.

Click the following to access an online guide to social media apps and games: https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/

Watch this short video from the NSPCC
How To Keep Kids Safe On Social Media
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qv0wH2F0Rfk

What percentage of celebrity images are enhanced?

A recent report suggests that over 95% of celebrity images are digitally enhanced in one way or another. The desire to look a certain way can have an incredibly damaging effects on mental health and well-being and lead to lifelong health conditions, including eating disorders.

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRlpIkH3b5I

Online gaming

Does your child play online? What do they play and who do they play with?

Online gaming for under 13s has increased significantly since the start of COVID. Many children admit to playing games that are designed for much older children. The <u>content</u> is therefore likely to be inappropriate.

Young children sometimes have difficulty in distinguishing between the virtual and real world.

Like social media apps, games have age restrictions, based on the average child's ability to cope with the content.

For more information about the ratings, click below:

https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/video-games-age-ratings-explained/

Online Games Age Restrictions
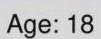

Age: 7+ to 13+

Age: 7

Age: 12+

Age: 18+

Age: 18

Age: 18

Age: 16

Age: 17

Grooming is a very real danger for young online gamers. Perpetrators can easily disguise themselves through the use of avatars. Children can be distracted by the gameplay, may receive gifts or trades from the perpetrator or be encouraged to engage in chatrooms. <u>Contact</u> with unknown persons increases the risk to your child. Watch the following: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ol2I12JmlDQ

Nearly 80% of young people have experienced cyber bullying whilst gaming, as the victim, perpetrator or a witness. Some children believe they have a right to say and do what they want online without consequence. The way they <u>conduct</u> themselves online can be very different to how they behave in person.

Talk with your child about content, contact and conduct.

Cyber bullying

Up to 10% of children up to 11 are likely to have been affected by online bullying. Those spending more than 10 hours a week online are twice as likely to be targeted.

Bullying can be from one individual to another, a group to an individual or group to group. Many children say things online that they would not say in person – some think that online doesn't matter. The consequences of cyber bullying can be significant.

What is your child's experience of cyber bullying?

In school, we discuss bullying and cyber bullying regularly. PSHE and collective worship often focus on respectful relationships.

We asked children to think carefully about what they are saying and we use the THINK acronym. Before saying something, children should consider if it is:

True – are you telling the truth or just repeating a false story?
Helpful – is what you are saying helpful or damaging?
Inspiring – is what you're saying likely to inspire or motivate?
Necessary – do you really need to say anything?
Kind – are you being kind and respectful?

Discuss the following with your child:
- Why is it important to be respectful online:
- How can you be kind online?
- What would you do if someone was being unkind
- What is cyberbullying?
- How is this different to other types of bullying?

Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Xo8N9qlJtk

Click below for further information:
https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/cyberbullying-advice-parents-and-carers

If your child is experiencing cyber bullying:

- Let them talk
- Don't appear shocked by what they say
- Encourage them not to retaliate
- Save the evidence
- Talk to the school
- Talk to the police

Supporting your child

It is only natural to be concerned about online activity. A recent Ofcom survey suggests 45% of primary school parents believe the negatives of the internet outweigh the positives.

Simple safeguards can greatly reduce the risk. PINS and passwords can prevent access to certain sites, your internet provider will have effective content filters and devices have their own privacy settings.

Listening to your child and asking them to explain is often the best way of monitoring their activity.

Share your concerns with your child. Set boundaries for them, which may include screen time limits, what they do, who they can contact and what they are able to see (privacy settings).

Only allow children to be online in a shared family area. If they are gaming, consider not allowing a headset so that you can hear what they are hearing.

If you have concerns try to work with your child to find a resolution. Each app will have it's own way of reporting concerns and will have the function to block contacts.

If you are able, and feel comfortable to do so, you could talk to the parents of other children involved – they may be just as concerned. A phone call or face to face conversation is often better than texts, emails or chatrooms.

As a temporary measure, you may need to take the device away from your child, reduce their screen time or supervise online activity until things are resolved.

If you have concern, notify us at school by email or telephone:
admin@wendoverjunior.co.uk
01296 696822

Repeated cyber bullying incidents may need to be referred to the police.

If you are concerned about sexual exploitation, you can report this to CEOPS:
https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

Further information on many apps can be found at:
https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides

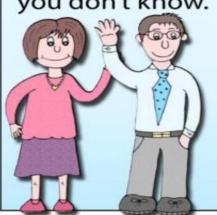The following two slides contain useful information about staying safe online.

You may wish to copy or print these for future reference.

stay safe online

Remember the 5 SMART rules when using the internet and mobile phones.

S — **SAFE:** Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you're chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your email address, phone number and password.

m — **MEET:** Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present.

a — **ACCEPTING:** Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

r — **RELIABLE:** Someone online might lie about who they are, and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information with other websites, books or someone who knows.

t — **TELL:** Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

Find out more at Childnet's website …
www.kidsmart.org.uk

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Childnet International

KidSMART

S M A R T

Stay Safe
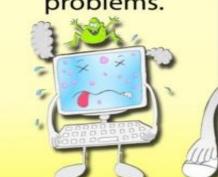Don't give out your personal information to people / places you don't know.

Don't Meet Up
Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Always check with an adult you trust.

Accepting Files
Accepting emails, files, pictures or texts from people you don't know can cause problems.

Reliable?
Check information before you believe it. Is the person or website telling the truth?

Tell Someone
Tell an adult if someone or something makes you feel worried or uncomfortable.

Follow these SMART tips to keep yourself safe online!

SMART tips based on resources from www.thinkuknow.co.uk