

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

TIPS TO HELP
YOUR CHILDREN
USE MOBILE
PHONES AND THE
INTERNET **SAFELY**

Parental Advice

1. SET PARENTAL CONTROL

Set parental controls on home computers and games consoles such as X-Box, Playstation and Nintendo Wii so your child can only access age-appropriate materials, and make sure adult content is locked on their mobile phones.

2. ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES

It's too easy for kids to fire off a text or instant message, or post a comment or photo on Facebook without really thinking about it. Discuss what's acceptable and what's not, and help them understand the need to respect others.

3. DON'T BLOCK & BAN

The digital world is an integral part of life for children and young adults these days, so even if you're concerned about the risks it's no use trying to block & ban. Talk to them about your concerns and get them to understand and agree on some ground rules.

4. KEEP TALKING

Children, especially teenagers, value their privacy, but don't let what happens online become a no-go zone. Normalise talking about it, so that it frequently comes up in conversation, giving you a better idea of what's going on and making them more likely to mention things that are bothering them.

5. WARN THEM ABOUT THE DANGERS

While you don't want to scare them with the bogie man, it's important that you open your child's eyes to the potential dangers of life online, like cyberbullying and talking about strangers. You should also tell them about the help that's available if they ever feel concerned or threatened.

6. STAYING THE LOOP

Try and keep up with what's happening in the digital world, so you don't get left behind. Check out the BBC Webwise for more information at www.bbc.co.uk/webwise or, for the latest gadgets and technology news try BBC Click at www.bbc.co.uk/click

CONTENT FILTERS ON MOBILE

Mobile phones have these clever things called content filters that block websites and commercial content that is inappropriate for under 18's, in line with approved standards. This content includes pornography, horror, excessively violent sites and adult chat rooms.

Phones purchased from EE come as standard with this filter already on, but if you have one for your son or daughter from another provider, you may want to check with the company that the filters have been set.

PARENTAL CONTROL AT HOME

Your broadband provider will probably offer you a parental control option as part of a downloadable anti-virus software package, and when this is installed access to over 18 websites can be blocked.

This is worth exploring as these can also allow you to customise the settings to suit the family. For example, if your 13 year old is neglecting her homework because she comes home and goes straight on Facebook, or your son is up until 3am gaming, you might want to set time limits for those websites, and block other sites altogether if you want to. If you set up password-protected user profiles for everyone at home, you'll be able to control who sees what.

WORTH NOTING

Even if you have set parental controls up on your home network, these won't apply if your child uses your laptop outside your home, such as in a café that has a WiFi hotspot, for instance. They could also be exposed to adult content if they use someone else's phone, gaming console or computer. That's why it's important that you discuss the issues surrounding adult content with them.

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

BRB	Be right back	KPC	Keep the parents clueless
Rents	Parents	LMIR	Let's meet in real life
Noob	New User	LOL	Laugh out loud
OMG	Oh my god	POS	Parents over shoulder
T+	Think Positive	ROFL	Roll on floor laughing
WTF	What the f%@!	ASL	Age, sex, location
LMAO	Laugh my !*rse off		

A-Z OF TERMS

3G & 4G

Third and fourth generation: technical standards common across the mobile industry that allow faster data transfer enabling a range of new services like HD video, high speed internet access and interactive services.

APPS

Computer or mobile phone applications or programmes. 'App' often refers to a mobile app, something that runs on a smartphone, letting the user access specific information and services easily.

AVATARS

Graphical alter egos used in chat rooms, on message boards or on the internet.

BLOGS (SHORT FOR WEB LOG)

Instantly updatable online journals used for publishing short, informal comments and ideas. If you write a blog you're a blogger, and what you do is blogging.

BLUETOOTH

A form of direct device-to-device radio communications system that allows phones to communicate when in close range of each other, without using mobile phone networks.

BLUEJACKING

Used with Bluetooth mobile technology to send anonymous text messages to strangers.

CHATROOMS

These are websites where people from all over the world exchange messages with others. There are thousands of these sites catering for every imaginable hobby or interest. A chatroom can be a great place to talk to people with common interests, and share your experiences and opinions.

COOKIES

Small data files installed to a user's computer, laptop or mobile by a web server, enabling individual preferences, ID, passwords etc to be recalled when the user re-visits a site.

DONGLES

Small devices you can plug into your laptop to access broadband internet on the move.

EMOTICONS

Text-based icons used to express emotions in online communications :o)

FLAMING

Being nasty to other chatroom users in order to start an argument or debate.

FRAPE

To hijack another user's Facebook page and post a comment under their name.

GROOMING

Gaining a child's trust through manipulation in order to engage in sexual contract.

IM or INSTANT MESSAGING

Technology similar to that of chat rooms, enabling real-time text-based online communication. A user is informed when one of their 'contacts' or 'buddies' is online, allowing them to 'talk' by exchanging text messages and files via special software. Popular IM applications include AIM and Facebook Messenger.

MMS

Multimedia messages/photo messages are messages sent or received on a mobile phone, containing pictures and video.

MODS

Most sites are monitored for key words and mods, or chatroom moderators, respond to requests for intervention where needed.

NETIQUETTE

The conversations of politeness recognised on the internet.

POP-UPS

Unsolicited online ads that appear in new browser windows, often age-appropriate.

POSTS

Messages sent to a discussion group or other public message area on the internet. The person who sends it is 'posting'.

SEXTING

Talking and sending of explicit images via MMS.

SMS

Text messages sent between mobile phones.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and Google+ are all social networks, valued by young people in particular, because they allow them to forge links with friends and express themselves online. Users can publish their own home page or 'profile', make friends with other on the site, post pictures, share information about what they're up to, chat in real time with friends and tell others about their likes and dislikes.

TROLLS

Social networking or message board users who post deliberately mean, incorrect, harmful or controversial messages to upset others. Trolls are normally anonymous and often inflict attacks on strangers.

WiFi

Wireless broadband that enables access to the internet from any room in your home and also in 'hotspots' in public places such as cafés.

WIKI

A page that allows anyone to contribute and edit pages without the need for web design programmes.

KEEP TALKING

Children, especially teenagers, value their privacy, but don't let what happens online become a no-go zone. Normalize talking about it, so that it frequently comes up in conversation, giving you a better idea of what's going on and making them more likely to mention things that are bothering them.

THINGS TO FIND OUT ABOUT

Who are they socialising with?

People online are not always who they say that are. Are their friends really friends?

How much personal information are they sharing?

Things they say or pictures they post could lead people to figure out where they live, go to school, socialise etc.

How do they respond to requests?

Who's the chat or friend request from? Why are they making contact?

Have they applied privacy settings?

Most social networks have privacy settings that you can use to control the information people see.

Have they considered meeting up with people they've met online?

It's vital that your child understand that dangers of doing this. They should never arrange / agree to meet up with people they've met online. (The only time this might be acceptable would be if they were accompanied by a parent / carer or other trusted and responsible adult.)

Could this be embarrassing?

Remind them that it's not just about staying safe. An offensive post, thoughtless remark or photo showing them falling down drunk could prompt ridicule or bullying, and upset or shock friends and relatives. And they wouldn't want a potential employer to see elements of their 'digital shadow' in future that will embarrass or show them in a negative light.

STRANGER DANGER

Unfortunately, the anonymity of life online makes it highly attractive for strangers who can target children using information they find online.

There are a number of ways for strangers to gain a child's trust. They might do this by developing an online 'friendship' with the child, masking their own age, personality, name and even gender, so that they appear to be a friendly, appealing and attractive child or young person, of a similar age to their target, with lots of interest in common. This process is called grooming, and it can result in extremely dangerous and inappropriate contact.

CYBERBULLYING

Unfortunately some bullies now use mobile phones and the internet to intimidate and harass others, using voice or text messages, video clips or posts on social network sites and chatrooms.

Cyberbullying may involve:

- Abusive or threatening comments on the victim's websites, profiles or blogs or posing pictures or videos of cruel or humiliating incidents
- Threatening or abusive text / voicemails
- Hacking the victim's online profile to impersonate them and post comments
- Anonymous online bullying by so-called 'trolls', who may not know the person they are targeting, and whose aim is to antagonise and cause upset.

Cyberbullying can reach a child anywhere, anytime, even at home where you'd like to think you could keep them safe. It can also spread rapidly, with the danger of cruel humiliating video clips going viral exacerbating the feelings of embarrassment and helplessness.

Guarding against cyber bullying on mobile

Advise your child not to leave information about themselves on their voicemail message or to an unknown caller. They should also let callers identify themselves before saying anything – particularly if no number is displayed.

If they're being bullied

Tell them to divert calls from a problem number to voicemail, rather than answering them.

Encourage them to tell you, a teacher or another family member if they receive a bullying text, and to not reply to the message and get them to keep such messages as evidence.

And if the bullying persists...

You can ask for their phone number to be changed. As cyberbullying is an offence under the Communications Act, your network provider can supply caller information to the police if necessary.

Online bullying

Most social network sites and forums have a 'report abuse' button and will act quickly to remove abusive content. It may be possible to block the sender: many websites allow you to do this via your privacy settings. Retaliating only makes things worse: encourage them not to respond to abusive comments online. Get them to talk to someone they trust, as cyberbullying may well be part of a wider pattern of bullying.

PICTURE AND VIDEO MESSAGING

Many of us will have read about 'happy slapping', where an assault on someone has been recorded and shared among peers or online. 'Happy sapping' can involve slapping another child or an elderly or vulnerable adult, stealing something from them, taking clandestine footage that has the potential to humiliate or embarrass them, or even sexually assaulting them.

Let your child know that participating in any such activity or recording such an assault is a criminal offence; and also that laughing at, sharing or passing on the resulting images is in itself a form of bullying. If they'd be embarrassed for people outside their friendship group to see an image, or they wouldn't want others to see a similar image if they were its subject, they shouldn't take, keep, share or watch it.

SEXTING

It's becoming dangerously common for teenagers to send sexual images of themselves to a boyfriend or girlfriend over a mobile phone. Young girls especially can feel pressured into doing this, and unfortunately once such images are sent, they can't be got back.

Partners may promise to keep images private, but in fact want to show them off to their friends, and when a relationship finishes there's even less control over who sees them – in some circumstances they may be a source of continuing humiliation and embarrassment.

While it is against the law for anyone to possess or distribute indecent images of children under 18, teenagers may not realise that this applies to them.

ADVICE TO OFFER YOUR CHILD

- Think before they send any images of themselves, or share images of others
- Encourage them to act responsibly and with empathy, and not share sexual images of others
- Think about how they would feel if it was images of themselves being shared
- Remind them that it is illegal to share indecent images of under 18s.

HELP AND ADVICE

The Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP) www.ceop.gov.uk has lots of information that will help you spot signs of grooming and give you contact information you need in order to report abuse. You should contact CEOP immediately if you're concerned that your child may be being groomed.