

SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT

Online Safety

Screen Time Advice

We're often asked how long children should spend on their devices each day. Childnet have created a blog discussing why it is difficult to specify a limit and what you should consider. You can read it here:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/new-guidance-for-parents-and-carers-looking-at-screen-time/>

Online Safety with Google

As part of Google Families, Google have a hub of resources that you can use including conversation starters with links to additional tools and advice and information about parental controls. Google also provide you with resources to help your children build healthier habits and stay safe online. There is also a selection of ideas on how to use technology as a family in a fun and engaging manner such as exploring the world and learning how to code. You can access the hub here:

https://families.google/intl/en_uk/

CEOP Website

This website from CEOP Education is designed for children to visit with their parents/carers.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

Personalised Digital Toolkit

Answer some simple questions and get age specific advice and recommendations:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/digital-family-toolkit/>



AUTUMN 2 2024

Our Safeguarding Team

You can always speak to one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads if you have a worry about any child.



Mrs E. Cook
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mrs C Loring
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead

Mrs C Fell
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead

The 12 Online Safety Tips of Christmas

FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

Christmas is almost upon us once again, and soon some lucky children will be excitedly tearing the wrapping off a new mobile phone, tablet or games console. For some of them, it will be the first time they've owned a device that connects them to the online world. Even for older children, a new device means new corners of the digital landscape to explore – and, unfortunately, new risks to be aware of.

We've put together our top tips so that you can guide your young ones in enjoying their new digital gifts safely and responsibly throughout the year to come. Merry Christmas!



1. ALWAYS SET A PASSWORD

If your child's new device has a password protection feature, use it! It will help to keep their private information safe and will deny others access to their device without permission. Your children's passwords should be something memorable to them – but something which other people can't guess (it's also a good idea for parents to write it down in case it gets forgotten!).

2. SET UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS'

This really is an essential when your child gets a new device, so they're protected from the outset. Most phones, tablets and consoles allow you to customise their settings to determine which games your child can play, how they can communicate (and who with), what content they can access and so on. It will give you peace of mind that they can't inadvertently do something they shouldn't.

3. PAY ATTENTION TO AGE RATINGS

One of the first things children want to do with any new device is play games and explore apps. Before they download anything or install a new console game, check its age rating. Many popular games and apps have content that's not suitable for younger ages. The safest long-term solution is to adjust the device's settings so they can only download and use games and apps appropriate for their age.

4. KEEP NUMBERS AND DEVICES PRIVATE

Make sure your child understands that they should never share their phone number with someone they don't know or accept a friend request from them. They should also appreciate that it's a good idea to mainly keep their device out of sight, never lend it to a stranger, and never put it down somewhere that other people could steal it or take it to use without asking.

5. HAVE 'THE MONEY CONVERSATION'

Before your children start using their new device in earnest, talk to them about in-app purchases and other ways that money might be spent through their device. Once they understand, you might want to agree on a spending limit and reassure them that they can come to you if they're uncertain, or if they have made a purchase by accident.

6. DISCOURAGE DEVICE DEPENDENCY

Of course, children who've just got a new device will naturally want to spend as much time on it as possible. But whether they're zapping bad guys, watching videos or connecting with friends, it's easy for them to get attached very quickly. Gently remind them that having family time, going outdoors and getting some exercise are still fun, too. And the device will be there when they get back.

7. EXPLAIN SECURE WIFI NETWORKS

Your home WiFi is protected by a password that only your family knows, whereas public networks (like those found in coffee shops, for example) can be accessed by anyone. It's important that your child grasps this difference because, if they're using a portable device on an unsecured network, then a hacker could access their personal information without them even knowing.

8. LIMIT SCREEN TIME

Using a device for too long, especially just before bed, can interfere with a child's sleep quality and reduce their concentration and overall enthusiasm. It might be helpful to agree on certain times of day when they don't use their device. Most devices' settings let you specify a screen-time limit, helping your child to stay fresh and focused in order to perform well at school.

9. ONLY PAIR WITH KNOWN BLUETOOTH DEVICES

Your child may want to connect to another device via Bluetooth, so they can listen to music wirelessly or share pictures and videos with nearby friends. But if they use Bluetooth to link with a device that they don't know, they're at risk of a stranger being able to see their personal information or having someone transmit a virus onto their device.

10. TURN LOCATION SETTINGS OFF

It's safest to disable the device's location services (if it's a portable device) so your child doesn't inadvertently make other people aware of where they are. You can usually do this via the device's privacy control settings. Turning location settings off not only means your child's whereabouts can't be tracked by others, it also significantly extends battery life.

11. STAY AWARE OF THE SURROUNDINGS

It's quite common to see adults not looking where they're going while engrossed in their phone. Children are even more easily distracted. In some cases, children have been hit by cars or cyclists because they were staring at their device and lost track of where they were. Remind your child that screens and walking don't mix. If they need to use their device, they should stop in a safe place first.

12. BE THERE IF THEY NEED TO TALK

Even when you've made a device as secure as you can, there's still a possibility of your child seeing something that bothers them, or someone they don't know attempting to contact them. If this happens, listen to their concerns, empathise and reassure them. Once they've explained what happened, you can decide if you should take further action like blocking or reporting another user.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday



Is your child safe online?

Talking to young people about what they do online is just as important as asking them where they go when they go out with friends.

It can be difficult to start the conversation with a young person about their online activities. Technology keeps changing and you might struggle to keep up with it all. But you don't need to. You just need to take an interest and ask questions about the games and apps they are using.

Whether they're going out or going online...



Start the conversation

Start the conversation



Ask questions

Ask your child what they are doing online and if you can take part, or ask to play their favourite game with them. If they see that you are taking a genuine interest they will be more willing to want to talk to you about what they're doing online.



Honest conversations

Encourage conversations about not keeping secrets. People online might ask your child to keep their conversation a secret. Talk about what secrets mean in your house.



Buying a device

If you are thinking about getting your child a new device, that's the perfect opportunity to start a conversation. Ask them what they are going to use it for. What are they looking forward to doing?



Reporting a concern

Make sure they know that if they see something online that makes them feel uncomfortable that they can always come to you and they won't get into trouble.

If you are concerned about something that has happened to your child online, you can make a report via the CEOP website:

www.thinkyouknow.co.uk

If you are concerned that your child is in immediate danger, call 999.

www.westyorkshire.police.uk/conversation