

NCS Safeguarding Newsletter (website/paper)

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Safeguarding Team

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Welcome to our Parent Safeguarding Newsletter

In each Newsletter we intend to focus on one safeguarding ‘Hot Topic’ issue and will share some advice and tips about keeping your child safe. We will also signpost some supportive organisations and external agencies .

We are committed to working with all our parents and students, to actively promote the safeguarding and welfare of our young people.

If you have any concerns about your child then please do not hesitate to contact one the Safeguarding Team.

Hot Topic – The Online World and Online Safety

Using the Internet is an everyday occurrence for most adults and children. With ever expanding new technologies such as blogs (online diaries), social networking spaces, online chat and mobile phones, young people are using technology in a way never seen before, enabling them to connect, communicate and be creative in a number of different ways, on a range of devices.

However, the internet is constantly changing and being able to keep up to date with technology can be a challenge. You may feel your child has better technical skills that you do however, young people still need the advice and protection when it comes to managing their lives online.

The increased use of technology exposes young people to a number of risks and dangers. In its simplest form online-safety is about ensuring young people use new technologies in a way which will keep them safe without limiting their opportunities for creation and innovation.

Tips, advice and resources to keep your child safe online.

As a parent/ carer you play a key role in helping your child to stay safe online. You don't need to be a technology expert to support your child to use the internet safely, responsibly and positively.

Issues your child may encounter on the internet.

Conduct: Young people may be at risk because of their own behaviour, for example, sharing too much personal information.

Young people need to be aware of the impact their online activity can have both on themselves and other people, and the digital footprint that they create on the internet. It's easy to feel anonymous online and it is important that young people are aware of who is able to view and potentially share the information they have posted. When using the internet, it is important to keep personal information safe and not share it with strangers. Discuss with your child the importance of reporting inappropriate conversations, messages, images and behaviours and how this can be done.

Contact: Young people can be contacted by bullies or people who groom or seek to abuse them.

It is important for young people to realise that friends made online may not be who they say they are and that once a friend is added to an online account, your child may be sharing personal information with them. Regularly reviewing friends lists and removing unwanted contacts is a useful step. Privacy settings online also allow you to customise the information that each friend is able to access. If you are concerned your child is, or has been the subject of inappropriate sexual contact or approach by another person, you must report it to the police via the Exploitation Online Protection Centre (www.ceop.police.uk). If your child is victim of cyberbullying, this can also be reported online and offline. Reinforce with your child the importance of telling a trusted adult if someone is bullying them or making them feel uncomfortable, or if one of their friends is being bullied online.

Commercialism: Young people can be unaware of hidden costs and advertising in apps, games and website.

Young people's privacy and enjoyment can be affected by advertising and marketing schemes, which can also mean spending money online, for example within applications. Encourage your child to keep their personal information private, learn how to block both pop ups and spam emails, turn off in-app purchasing on devices where possible, and use a family email address when filling in online forms.

If you wish to explore internet issues in more depth, including cyberbullying, sexting and more, visit <https://www.childnet.com>

What can parent/carers do....

It is important to talk with your children on a regular basis about staying safe online. This is how you can do this...

1. Ask your child to tell you the sites they like to visit and what they enjoy doing online.

2. Ask them about how they stay safe online. What tips do they have for you and where did they learn them?
3. Ask them if they know where to go for help, where to find safety advice, privacy settings and how to report or block on the services they use.
4. Discuss as a family how the internet will be used at home, what information should be kept private, and rules for making and meeting online friends.
5. Decide if you want to use parental controls on your home internet.

Advice, Support and Resources for Online Safety

- **ThinkUKnow** Site is probably the best place for e-safety information online. It has a wealth of information for parents and students: <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>
- The UK Safer Internet Centre has advice and resources for parents and students: <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>
- **You can report concerns about online behaviour to the police at:** <http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre>

Supportive Organisations

Childline: www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

Young Minds: The UK's leading charity for children and young people's mental health

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>