Kids will be kids, online as well as offline.

Let's help protect yours from online harms.

GET SAFE ONLINE .org

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OFFICE OF THE POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER NORTH WALES

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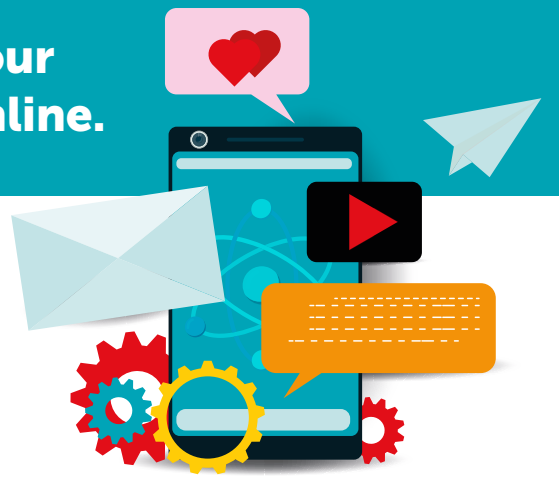
NORTH WALES POLICE

www.getsafeonline.org

Do you know what *your* kids are doing online?

With all the time that children seem to spend online, how can you be sure that the young people in your family are safe from the issues they can encounter every day?

Check out these easy-to-follow tips to help your child enjoy a safe and confident experience online.



- **Sit down and talk regularly** with your child about their online activities, and get them to show you what they're doing. Keep abreast of new technologies and trends. Talk about the potential negatives, like oversharing, accessing inappropriate content, cyberbullying, stranger danger, uncontrolled spending and being online for too long. Set a good example yourself.
- **Steer your child** towards safe searching, websites and apps. Check what they're watching and/or sharing on streaming sites like YouTube and TikTok. Encourage them to use child-friendly platforms like YouTube Kids.
- **Familiarise yourself with** new game and social media trends, especially those attracting negative publicity because they may be violent, encourage gambling or leave the way open for messaging random strangers, enabling potential grooming or other types of coercion.
- Don't underestimate the part **social media and messaging apps** play in your child's life, nor how what they experience online can make them feel, including affecting their wellbeing and mental health.
- Gaming, social media, picture/video sharing and many other apps and websites have **lower age limits** for a reason, so you should make sure your child doesn't access those for which they're underage.
- **Discuss and agree boundaries and rules** from a young age, including appropriate online usage, always being respectful and how much time they spend online. Empower your children, but remember they don't have the experience or maturity to always make the right decisions.
- Consider setting up **parental control software and apps** on computers, mobile devices and games consoles, privacy features on social networking sites, safety options on search engines and safe location settings on devices and apps. Turn on your ISP's **family filters**.
- For **video calls**, ensure your child's safety by updating to the platform's latest version, following its safety advice and checking that call invitations and replies can't be seen by anybody outside the agreed call group.
- **Online gaming** is widely recognised as having many developmental benefits for young people, but talk to them about potential negatives like chatting to strangers, in-game purchases, gambling on loot boxes and excessive screen time.
- Warn your child about **misinformation, disinformation and fake news** and show them examples. Advise them not to believe or share everything they see or read, especially in these days of sponsored 'news' and AI-generated images, videos and text.
- Warn your child about **confidential information, personal details and images/video** about themselves or others they share in posts, profiles, messages and chats. Consider what you share yourself.
- **Download apps only from recognised sources** like App Store and Google Play. Add your own email address when setting up accounts and apps for your child.
- Without being controlling, **keep an eye on your child's online activities** and know how to recognise the signs of something not being right. For example, criminals have exploited increased online use for recruiting young people into illegal activities such as malware coding, money/drugs muling or extremism.

#SaferKids

For more information, visit www.getsafeonline.org/saferkids

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself, your family, finances, devices and workplace, visit **www.getsafeonline.org**

If you think you have been a victim of fraud, report it to **Action Fraud** at **actionfraud.police.uk** or by calling **0300 123 2040**. If you are in Scotland, contact **Police Scotland** on **101**.

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