Online Safety

Whilst the internet and online technologies are an important part of children's lives at home and college, they can sometimes be a bit overwhelming and present challenges in keeping your family safe online.

Did you know: (Ofcom, 2011)

- 70% of parents of 12-15 year olds who use the internet at home think they know less about the internet than their children do
- Three in ten parents of 5-15s who use the internet at home have concerns that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people. This level of concern increases with the age of the child
- 81% of parents of children aged 12-17 think that they know what their child does online; however, 33% of children aged 12-17 claim that their parents do not know what they do online

It is just as important for parents to be involved in their children's lives online, as it is offline. Just as parents would ask about their children's friends at school or the clubs they go to, they should use this approach with the people their children meet online – asking the same questions and showing the same interests.

Ensure computers, laptops and other devices with internet access (like mobile phones and tablets) are all fitted with parental controls.

Free downloadable versions can be found online, or by contacting your internet service provider (such as BT, Talk Talk, Sky etc) for more information. As a minimum, set parental controls on search engines, YouTube accounts and your child's mobile phone.

Organisations which can help

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is the UK's national centre dedicated to protecting children from harm both online and offline. CEOP is part of the UK police force and they work with organisations like the NSPCC, teams sponsored by the likes of VISA and SERCO and experts from government and corporations such as Microsoft in order to safeguard children. CEOP's Thinkuknow education initiative aims to empower children and young people to enjoy online technologies safely, whilst educating parents and teachers about emerging uses of technology and the inherent dangers.

Resources and information

There are lots of resources available to help parents:

- stay up–to–date with the technology their children are using
- understand steps they can take to keep their children safe online
- know what action to take and where to seek further support if things go wrong

Below are some links to some fantastic resources which we have identified to help support and inform parents/carers:

Parents Guide to Media

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/

Parents' Guide to Media is a not for profit organisation which provides a website which gives parents practical and impartial reviews of all types of media such as TV Programmes, Films, Computer Games, Apps, Books and Websites. Parents can type in titles of the specific media and this will give parents an idea of the sort of issues covered in the piece and whether the media is suitable or not for the child's age.

Parents Guide to Technology

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-technology

The Safer Internet Centre is a not for profit organisation which provides schools and parents with practical advice about promoting the use of online technologies in a positive way by encouraging safe and responsible use. They have produced a useful parent guide on their website which explains in a user friendly way how parents can find settings and functions on digital devices such as smartphones, tablets, laptops and games consoles to keep young people safe online.

Parent Zone

https://parentzone.org.uk/

Parent Zone is a not for profit organisation which provides parents with regular periodic updates about changes to the way young people are using new technology, such as digital devices, social media, apps and websites.   The site has links to the Digital Parenting magazine which has useful advice and tips on helping parents keep their child safe online. Using the Parent Zone site, parents

can opt to sign up to a regular e-newsletter which is sent every week to a parent's chosen email address. The site also has links to support groups and advice clinics.

CEOP

https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/

CEOP stands for Child Exploitation and Online Protection.   CEOP is an arm of the National Crime Agency. The purpose of CEOP is to protect young people from online dangers. The site contains practical information for parents about what they should do in case a young person gets into danger online. The school website, www.belperschool.co.uk has a CEOP Report Abuse button on the home page for students and parents to use in case they feel they are in danger.

Live Streaming: responding to the risks

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/live-streaming-responding-to-the-risks/

Thinkuknow, which is the educational aspect of CEOP, has produced a parent guide on the risks of Live Streaming. Live Streaming is a relatively new aspect of online use for young people, and whilst in general it is a positive development as a new aspect of communication, there are several dangers attached to it. The article explains what Live Steaming is, and also gives parents support on how to help young people use it safely.

Has your child shared a nude selfie?

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Nude-selfies-a-parents-guide/

Another excellent article from Thinkuknow is about sharing help and practical advice for parents on what they should do in case their child has shared a nude selfie online or using social media platforms.

https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/