

Advice for Parents and Carers on Social Media

Helping Your Child to Be Safe Online



Making E-Safety a Priority

With more than 50% of children using social media by the age of 10, keeping your child safe online is a priority.

With the rise in smart phones, social media has become the new way to connect with friends, meet new friends and communicate. Used appropriately, it can be enjoyed. However, with up to 25% of children pretending to be older than they are online, one in twenty children arranging secret meetings with those they meet online and up to 30% of parents letting their child use social media without restrictions or supervision, there is a need to help children get this right. In this bulletin, we will help you to:

1

KNOW THE APPS

Understanding the 3 'big hitters': Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat

2

KNOW WHAT TO DO

How to protect your child and help them be safe online.

3

KNOW WHERE TO FIND HELP

Including national and local agencies.



CEOP

For advice and reporting of online abuse.

ceop.police.uk



NSPCC

Providing confidential advice and support to parents and young people.

nspcc.org.uk



Talk to us:

About what we do to protect your child or about online grooming or bullying.

Know The Apps:

Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat offer profiles, discrete messaging and photo sharing. All three have a minimum age of 13 years for creating profiles.

Facebook:

- Check privacy settings and use the strictest settings available.
- Remind children not to share anything personal, including location.
- Only 'add' family and friends that they know well.
- Remember that everybody has different privacy settings: what is private for one may not be for others. This is important when writing on the 'walls' of others.
- Facebook events should be kept 'private'. Failing to do this makes it openly available for others to see and know your child's location on a given day and time.
- Once posted - very hard to remove. Historic posts remain and can have consequences.

Instagram:

- Make sure that your child's posts are private.
- Fake accounts can be made - only accept 'friends' that you know well and can guarantee their authenticity.
- Instagram has a private messenger - screenshots can be shared with others freely and bullying can be common here.

Snapchat:

- Children like this as it doesn't seem to have a sense of permanency and they let their guard down. But this encourages vulnerability.
- Stress that only photos that they wouldn't mind being shared should be taken.
- Make sure that they know how to 'block' and 'report' users that behave inappropriately.
- Under 13's can sign up for 'SnapKidz' - they can't share photos and Snapchat doesn't store any of their data.
- The new 'Snap Map' identifies users on their locations and plots them on a map. Ensure your child's privacy settings prevent this.

SPOTLIGHT ON: ONLINE GROOMING

Grooming online can come from those familiar and unknown to the child. They may pose as older or of different genders, promise friendships, gifts and other incentives or use intimidation and blackmail as a tool.

Signs of grooming include: becoming increasingly withdrawn and secretive, especially surrounding their phone; use their phone late at night; go to unusual places to meet 'friends'; have new possessions that they can't explain; show increasing anxiety and low mood.

This can escalate to sexual abuse online with encouragement to send indecent images, which is illegal in all forms for underage children in terms of creation, possession and distribution.