

Supporting Online Safety at Home

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Safe sharing

Much of our everyday lives can often be shared online, including information, photographs, videos and stories. Sharing online can be great, however, we need to always consider who this information with is being shared with.

Safe sharing at a glance

Remember if you don't know someone in real life, they are a stranger.



Set any social media profiles to 'private' and make sure you only accept friend or follow requests from people you know and have actually met before.

Make sure accounts are secure by choosing a strong password. This should contain a mix of capital letters, symbols and should be around 10 characters. *****



If you are ever asked to share your personal information online, then check with a trusted adult first.

Check that personal information isn't hiding in your images and videos before you post them online.



Always ask permission before sharing someone else's personal information, images or videos.

Never share nudes or underwear photos online of yourself or others.



If somebody is asking you again and again to share your personal information or a nude/underwear photo, and is not taking no for an answer, then ask a trusted adult for help. It's not OK for someone to put pressure on you online.

Challenges for young people with additional needs

The internet can be difficult for some to differentiate between what information, images and videos are OK to share with others online, and what is not, and who we could share it with.

Autistic young people, in particular, tend to be very trusting and honest which could lead to them sharing information, images and videos with strangers online.

They may need to be supported in differentiating not only what a stranger is online, but also what you should and shouldn't share with them.





We can access so much information online, however, knowing what we can trust, and recognising content which has been edited, can be challenging. When engaging with others online and the content they have shared, it is important to consider who they are, what their motives might be and if any key indicators of trust are missing. The impact it can have on the person engaging with it could lead them to feel worried, upset, confused or develop a false perception of trust.

Challenges for young people with additional needs

The motives behind why someone has shared something or made contact can be challenging. Those with additional needs may find the concept of trust and motivations particularly difficult to navigate online. Autistic young people, in particular, tend to be very trusting of others and literal in their understanding of the things which they see and hear. Often, we must assess the situation, check the information we are seeing and discuss the online experiences with the young people in order to rate the overall level of trustworthiness.



If you are ever concerned that someone is acting inappropriately towards a child online or suspect sexual grooming may be taking place, then you can report this to CEOP.

There is more information found at www.ceop.police.uk.

If appropriate for the understanding of your young people, share the CEOP reporting website for young people with them (www.thinkuknow.co.uk) and explain that CEOP are specialist police officers and part of the National Crime Agency.





This section has been developed to help generate discussion about positive actions and strategies young people can take to ensure they thrive online. Both encountering inappropriate content and the amount of time spent online can have a negative impact on a young person's wellbeing.

Challenges for young people with additional needs

The internet can be an empowering place for young people with SEND as it allows them to have a voice. However, the things they do online can have a very real impact on their lives offline, both positively and negatively. They might need further help and support in understanding the choices they have online.

Strategies to empower young people

- Turn the device off or lock it.
- Turn the device over.
- Pause the video, game or song.
- Take a screenshot to show a trusted adult.
- Take the device straight to a trusted adult.
- Press the report or block button.

Whilst it is important not to continue engaging with something that is causing worry or upset, it is also important to balance this with 'saving the evidence'. This is where a screenshot is taken so it can be shown to an adult at a later date which is particularly important in incidents of cyberbullying.





Respect

Talking to and interacting with others is a key aspect of many of our lives online. This section of the toolkit aims to empower young people to be positive and respectful communicators who are resilient to conflict and know how to respond appropriately when they encounter disagreements.

Challenges for young people with additional needs

Using the internet to communicate can offer exciting opportunities for young people, especially if they find ace-to-face interactions more challenging. We also know the internet can be a great source of support and can provide access to communities of likeminded individuals.

However, not all interactions online will be positive. For young people with SEND, witnessing or being the target of unkind and hateful actions can be particularly hurtful. They also need to understand how their own actions online can affect other people. It is important to discuss the meaning of respect and establishing positive rules and expectations.

Key advice to share with young people to respond to cyberbullying:

Nobody should have to experience online bullying	If you see or experience online bullying, tell an adult straight away	Save any evidence by taking a photo or screenshot	Use online reporting and blocking tools
Do not retaliate	Do not wait for it to stop or go away, take positive action instead	Never join in with any behaviour that could be bullying	If you feel like you have nobody else to talk to, contact Childline on 0800 11 11

