Keeping Your Children Safe On-line

Protect their device

Choose a child specific network provider

Monitor their activity

How can I keep my child safe online?

Restrict their internet

Talk about the risks of on-line activity

What is On-line Safety?

Keeping people safe on-line is what is done to protect them from harm caused by the devices and networks they are using. Harm in this context can be physical, emotional or financial and might not reveal itself as the user engages in on-line activity but can occur after the user has stopped their on-line activity.

On-line safety activity can take the form of:

- awareness
- education
- information and
- technology.

Users can make themselves safer on-line by being aware of the nature of the possible threats whilst engaging in activity through the Internet. On-line safety activities focus on the positive and enriching side of digital life whilst recognising its challenges and how to best approach them.

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Why is it important?

The internet, for all its opportunities, does pose threats and challenges such as:

- online abuse,
- bullying,
- threats,
- impersonation,
- grooming,
- harassment or
- exposure to offensive and/or violent content.

Whilst adults can be expected to take responsibility for their own actions online, just as they do in the "real" world, we don't think that children or young people always know what the potential consequences of their on-line activity might be. Children and young people do not always have the maturity necessary to keep themselves safe on-line just as we don't think that they can always keep themselves safe in the "real" world.

What does school do?

There are a limited number of things that school can do to keep your child safe on-line. Some of these things will improve your children's safety whenever they are on-line whilst some are only really effective when your children are at school.

1. **Teach about on-line safety**
   On-line safety forms part of the ICT curriculum and your children will be taught about the threats and risks posed by on-line activity, and what they can do to protect themselves on-line, during their ICT lessons.

2. **Provides filtered access to the internet through EastNet**
   School gets its internet feed from EastNet, a wide area network provided through Cambridgeshire County Council. The internet feed is filtered by Smoothwall and pupils cannot access inappropriate material. It is impossible to guarantee that all inappropriate material is blocked but school can block material if it finds that pupils can access pages which it doesn't want them to view.

3. **Monitors student activity on school devices at school**
   School can see which websites pupils have visited whilst accessing the internet through the school network. It can obtain reports showing what pupils have searched for, which websites they have visited and how long they have spent on each site. Smoothwall can even provide reports about pupil activity if they have used their own device whilst connected to the school network

4. **Provides information and support to parents**
   School helps parents to keep their children safe on-line by providing information about what they should be doing and steps they can take to reduce the risk to their children. It will contact you if it becomes aware that your children are acting on-line in ways which could cause harm to themselves or others.
   School cannot manage what pupils do on their own devices using mobile data but it can help you to manage this if you have given them access to an internet enabled device such as a mobile phone.

What Can You Do?

The best thing that you can do is to treat your children the same in relation to the on-line world as you would in the "real" world. This probably means that you should:

- Know where they go

- Know who they go out with

- Limit when they go out

- Stop them going out on their own

This isn't as easy it might appear to be and it will depend upon you taking some control over your children's device and data but you cannot keep them safe if you don't do these things.

Use Parental Controls

Advice to parents about letting children go on-line at home used to revolve around making sure that you knew what your children were doing by putting the family computer in the living room. When children can access the internet via phones, tablets and even their TVs this advice is no longer particularly good. If you know that your children can access the internet at home and you can't see what they are doing you should ensure that parental controls and web filter are in use on your home wi-fi.

Restrict 4G Internet Access

Does your child really need a 4G enabled device? If you think it is necessary you can ask the network provider to filter the feed meaning that they cannot access any inappropriate material using their device.

Monitor Their Activity

The simplest way of doing this is to actually look at their phone regularly. Check on who they are talking to, make sure that you know what apps they have installed and which services they have signed up to, look at their browser history and see where they have been going on-line.

There are also a range of apps that you can install on their device to let you monitor what they are doing remotely. We don't recommend a particular app since which is best for you will be determined by a range of different factors but here are some of the most popular:

Qustudio	Kaspersky Safe Kids
Norton Family Premier	Boomerang
Circle Home Plus	Mobicip
Locategy	Net-nanny

Protect The Device

This is good practice for all your devices not just those used by your children.

- Ensure that apps are kept up-to-date. Use auto-update settings if possible

- Install anti-virus software. You use some at home but there are free packages available on-line

- Stop children installing apps themselves

You should always carry out some research before installing software to protect your device. Make sure that you only ever install software from Google Play or the Apple store. Choosing to install apps from other sources puts your devices and users at risk.

Set Appropriate Privacy Settings

Make sure that your children can only be found on-line by people who know them. Check these settings regularly, especially if you allow your children to install apps themselves. Only allow your children to connect with people you know and block anyone your child is connected with who you do not know. You should be as careful and as strict in the virtual world as you would be in the real one, if not more so.

Use a Child Specific Network Provider

You don't need to use the same telephone provider that you use. ParentShield, for instance, markets itself as the child-safe mobile network and its network claims to be designed specifically for child use.

Talk About On-line Activity

This is one of the most effective things that you can do to protect your child on-line. Take an interest in what they are doing, ask them to show you the apps that they enjoy using and why they enjoy them Ask them about who they are talking to whilst gaming on-line and talk to them about the risks involved in on-line activity. Be particularly careful if they start making on-line friends with people who they do not know in real-life. Talk to them about the risks of sharing images on-line and show them how easy it can be to find embarrassing or humiliating pictures of people.

Model Good Practice

This can be difficult to do but try not to let them see you engaging in the on-line world in ways in which you wouldn't want them to. Make sure that you protect yourself and others and show them what a powerful and positive tool the internet can be.

More Information and Advice

Your first steps should be to talk to your broadband and/or mobile phone provider to see what they can do to filter the internet feed for your children

There is a vast array of information available on-line. The UK Safer Internet Centre is probably a good place to start. It has pages specifically written for parents and carers and can be found here: https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

You can speak to your child's class teacher. If they can't provide you with the information that you are looking for they will be able to seek support from The ICT Service.

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July 2021