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Keeping Children Safer Online

Technology and the internet, whether accessed by computers, mobile phones or other devices, are becoming firmly embedded within today's family life. The internet offers many exciting benefits and opportunities whether using it to send emails, shop or socialise with friends. However for some of us it can seem frightening and a lack of confidence or knowledge can make adults feel wary about keeping children safe online. There are practical steps we can all take to help keep children and young people safe when using technology.

Follow the Golden Rules

Ground Rules
- Discuss as a family the internet will be used in your house. Consider what will be kept private online (information, credit card details, photos etc) and decide rules for meeting online friends (such as taking someone with them, meeting in a public place etc). Know what your child is doing online much like you would offline.
- Discuss using strong passwords with your child so they understand how they can protect their online accounts. It's important they know they need to keep their passwords safe and not share them with anyone or use the same password for several accounts. If your child's account is "hacked" or compromised then make sure they change their password and report any concerns or suspicious activity. Check how secure your passwords are here: http://howsecureismypassword.net/. For more advice on using strong passwords visit http://tinyurl.com/Getsafeonlinepassword

Online Safety
- Filter unsuitable sites by using parental control software so that they cannot be seen or used by your children – most ISPs provide free tools and there are free and purchasable programmes you can install.
- Always remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes things can get past them, so don't rely on them alone to protect your child.
- Install antivirus software, firewalls and secure your internet connections e.g. wireless networks. Visit your ISP website or www.getsafeonline.org for more information. Consider how safe you are when you're online – shopping, banking etc. Make sure you are aware of online threats (such as scams etc) and how you can protect yourself.
- Visit www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide for safety information about consoles and devices and www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers/parental-controls for parental controls

Location
- Where possible, locate computers and laptops in a family area where children's online activity can be monitored or supervised. Always supervise the use of webcams and any applications or devices which allow voice or video chat. Also be aware of the use and location of other devices your child's uses which allow internet access such as mobile phones and games consoles.

Dialogue
- Don't panic! Talk to your child and ask them to show you (or even teach you) how they use the internet and the computer, learn which websites or tools they like to use and why. Learning together can often open opportunities to discuss safe practise with your child.
- Always ensure your child knows how to block or report another user who may be sending nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply.
- Make sure your child knows to tell an adult they trust if they see something online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable. If your child receives any abusive messages etc keep them for evidence purposes to show to the school or police. You can also report problems directly to service providers and websites.
- Always report any illegal online activity to the appropriate agency e.g. the Police, CEOP or IWF.
- Make sure your child understands that their online actions can have offline consequences e.g. sending nasty or upsetting messages. Ensure your child knows that once an image or video is sent to someone (friend or stranger), they have lost control and anyone can potentially see it.
- **Remember:** It's essential that you be realistic - banning the internet will not work, it often drives the problem underground and makes a child less likely to report a problem. Also children can use computers etc at friends' houses and at school so education around its safe use is essential. Educate your children as well as yourself and the whole family will benefit from using the internet.

Useful Websites

www.ceop.police.uk – Website for the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. Use the report abuse button to seek advice and report online abuse such as grooming

www.iwf.org.uk - Report illegal content online

www.parentport.org.uk – Report inappropriate content

www.childnet.com   – Information for parents/carers and children and young people about online safety

www.saferinternet.org.uk – UK Safer Internet Centre

www.pitda.org.uk – Parenting in the Digital Age website from The Parent Zone

Kent Resources

www.kent.gov.uk/esafety - Kent County Council's guidance and advice for Parents/carers

www.kent.police.uk/internetsafety - Kent Police's guidance and advice for Parents/carers. Report illegal activity to Kent Police via 101 or 999 if there is an immediate risk of danger

www.kscb.org.uk – Kent Safeguarding Children Board

Useful links for Parents/Carers

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/browser-safety - download CEOP Tools for your web browsers

ww.getsafeonline.org – Free up-to-date Security advice – protect yourself from scams and online crime

www.cyberstreetwise.com - advice for business and homes

www.internetmatters.org – Advice from Internet Service Providers

www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety - great information, factsheets etc. from NSPCC about a range of issues

http://www.vodafone.com/content/parents.html - Digital Parenting Magazine

www.learnmyway.com   – Free online Computer Courses

www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/safety-and-privacy/ - BBC's guidance and information

www.commonsensemedia.org – Impartial advice on media (Films, books, websites)

htp://safely.yahoo.com/ - Yahoo Safety Tips

http://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/security/family-safety/default.aspx - Microsoft Family Safety

www.google.co.uk/familysafety - Google Family Safety Centre, includes safety tools and report options

www.theparentzone.co.uk – The Parent Zone

www.fosi.org – Family Online Safety Institute

www.vodaphone.com/parents - Excellent guide for parents on digital technologies

http://explore.ee.co.uk/digital-living – EE Online Safety Guidance

www.carphonewarehouse.com/mobilewebsafety - Guide to Mobile Web Safety

www.connectsafely.org - Parents Guide to Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat and Google+

www.askaboutgames.com – Advice on computer gaming and how to apply parental controls

www.getgamesmart.com – Advice from Microsoft on gaming

www.pegi.info/en/index/ - Information about age ratings of video games

www.barnardos.org.uk/barnardos_be_safe_guide.pdf - Barnado's "Be Safe" Guide for Parents and Children

www.getnetwise.org – Advice and information (Including parental control tools etc)

www.knowthenet.org.uk/ - Stay Safe, legal and informed online

www.thatsnotcool.com – Advice for teens on texting/sexting and relationships for older children

www.actionfraud.police.uk – Report fraud and scams

www.childline.org.uk - Advice and information for children and young people

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Secondary/What-are-they-doing/Socialising/Under-13s-and-Face/ - Information CEOP regarding under 13's and social networking sites

www.beatbullying.org

www.kidscape.org.uk/cyberbullying/