KEEPING YOUR **CHILDREN SAFE**

Children love using technology and are learning to navigate websites, online games and consoles, and touch screen technology like ipads and smartphones from a younger and younger age.

Latest Ofcom research has shown that 91% of 5-15 year olds live in household with internet access . We know that children need support in these environments, so there are real advantages in making sure that children are supported right from the start.

These **seven frequently** asked questions will provide you with useful information and tips that you can put into place at home, to help keep your youngest children safe.

1)Where do I start?

The best way to keep your family safe online , and to understand your child's internet use , is to use it together. Conversations and active engagement with your children is key. Be positive and embrace the technologies that young children enjoy– look for family activities and games . Take time to explore the games and services that your children use and look out for safety feature that maybe available. This will help you be more confident.

2)Should I set rules?

In the same way that you set rules for most areas of your children's lives, establish your expectations regarding online activities. These rules should include ; time spent online , sites that can be visited and behaviour expected. Its good if these rules are established from the out set .

3)How can I supervise my child?

Placing your laptop or computer in a busy part of the house e.g the living room or kitchen can be helpful. This can make it easier for you to monitor / get involved in their technology use. Remember the internet can be accessed from many portable devices ,for example smartphones, ipod touch and tablets . Portable devices may allow you to ensure your children are using them where you can see them.

4)How much time is too much?

Children can be enthusiastic users of technology .The challenge can be to harness this enthusiasm and ensure a balance . There are some strategies you can use to manage the time online issue , such as agreeing time limits or using time limiting tools, designating weekly times to use the internet together or removing portable devices from bedroom at night to avoid tiredness.

5)Are there tools to help?

The are parental controls and filters available , to help you set safer boundaries for your children ,but you will usually be required to set them up. Your internet service provider (such as BT or Talk Talk) will provide free filters to help block age inappropriate content for children and on the UK Safer internet Centre website you can watch video tutorials that show you how to find and set these up. All mobile phone operators (such as O2 or Vodaphone) also provide parental controls for free.

6)What advice can I give my child?

Education is the best tool that a child can have, so discuss with your child the importance of telling an adult immediately if someone, or something, upsets them online. It is very important that your children realise that "friends" made online are still strangers, so personal information should be kept safe. Encourage the use of screen names and nicknames were possible.

7)Where can I report?

Reports can be made to websites through safety/help centres and moderation services. If you are suspicious about the behaviour of others online, reports can be made to CEOP and inappropriate media content, online and offline can be reported via Parentpoint.

Some useful links -www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/need-help

www.ceop.police.uk

KEEPING YOURSELF SAFE ONLINE

The internet provides lots of opportunities for chatting with friends, playing games and creating your own content. To help you get the most out of the internet, we've brought together the latest information on staying safe online. Here are a few tips to keep yourself safe on line

Top tips

1. **Protect your online reputation:** use the services provided to manage your digital footprints and 'think before you post.' Content posted online can last forever and could be shared publicly by anyone.

2. **Know where to find help**: understand how to report to service providers and use blocking and deleting tools. If something happens that upsets you online, it's never too late to tell someone.

3. **Don't give in to pressure:** if you lose your inhibitions you've lost control; once you've pressed send you can't take it back.

4. **Respect the law:** use reliable services and know how to legally access the music, film and TV you want.

FACEBOOK CHECK LIST

o Do you know your friends?
o Who can find what you post on Facebook?
o Be in control of what you share online
o How does your profile appear?
o Teenage user updates
o Are you ready for Graph Search?
o How do you use your Friends lists?
o Do you know how to deactivate your account?

HELP ON HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF ON FACEBOOK

Facebook Safety Centre-www.facebook.com/safety

Latest changes on Facebook blog -http://bit.ly/U8acSe
Report/Remove tags video -http://youtu.be/CaJYQXiu3PY
UK Safer Internet Centre -www.saferinternet.org.uk
Childnet -www.childnet.com
Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) -www.iwf.org.uk
Report abuse or grooming to CEOP -http://ceop.police.uk
Childline -www.childline.org.uk

Think About your future

Popular websites like Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Flickr, Blogspot, and Xanga make it easy to build a web of friends and acquaintances, and share with them your photos, whereabouts, contact information, and interests. But be thoughtful about what you post; don't put your safety or your future at risk.

Never forget: the words and images you post on the Internet may be available for years, and your profile may be viewed by future employers and **school admissions officials, as well as identity thieves, spammers, and stalkers**.

Making your online profile work *for* you instead of against you

Recent media coverage has highlighted a new, fast-growing trend among corporate recruiters and school admissions officials: more than just Googling candidates, many are now monitoring social networking sites, too.

Recent studies have shown that 1 in 10 admissions officers checks for candidates on social networking sites and 38 percent of the time, this leads to rejections. These numbers are likely to continue to climb in coming years.

So what's the best course of action? Use your online profile to your advantage!

Treat it like a free place to promote yourself personally and professionally while staying connected with your friends. When applying to schools or conducting a job search, this is particularly true.

Web pages containing risqué photos and provocative comments about drinking etc can make applicants look immature and lacking in professional judgment.