



## Online Safety and Parental Controls

### General Guidance

We all want our children to be safe online but this can be a daunting task in today's digital landscape. With some good practice and systems put in place, your child should be able to safely access those parts of the internet that are designed for them, which will develop their skills and experience.

A few things should be considered when allowing your child online:

#### **1) Find an appropriate website for your child to use**

Begin by exploring the website together, becoming familiar with the content. This will then allow you to give your child some more independence later on down the line, perhaps by being in the same room as them and regularly checking that they are still using the website you agreed upon.

#### **2) Use a child-friendly web browser**

A 'web browser' is the application we use to view webpages. You may currently use Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox or Internet Explorer. However, it is possible to download a web browser that is designed for families. These browsers will block certain websites deemed inappropriate. You can even block websites of your choosing, for example youtube.

#### **3) Block access to Youtube**

Youtube is fantastic - you can find almost anything on there. But it can also be troublesome for the same reason - you can find almost anything on there. It is user-generated content that is very hard to monitor. Someone may post a video which looks harmless, but they may be using a lot of inappropriate language on the audio. Videos often play one after the other, so what may have originally started off as a harmless video may move on to another video you have not chosen your child to view. For these reasons, you may wish to remove access to Youtube by either deleting the app on your tablet/smartphone, or adding it to a block list on a child-friendly web browser (see point number 2). Here are some links that may help with limiting access to Youtube. The site explains how to limit access to Youtube, as well as how to stop your child from downloading it again.

*How to Restrict Youtube on iPads, iPhones and Android devices*

<https://www.guidingtech.com/block-youtube-screen-time-iphone-ipad/>

<https://otsimo.com/en/restrict-youtube-android-devices/>

#### **4) Limit Adult Content**

There are many ways we access the internet nowadays; desktop PC, Mac, tablet or iPad to name a few. Each device will have its own function that allows you to restrict the content that is available to be viewed on it. We advise that you take the time to find the solution for your device. Often it is simply a short Google search to find the instructions to make your device safer for your child. Please remember however, that none of these methods can guarantee that inappropriate content won't be

accessible on the device. The technology used to decide what is inappropriate cannot be 100% successful, but it can go a long way to allowing your child to use and access the internet more safely.

### **5) Create a Separate Profile for your child**

Most computers and devices will allow you to create a separate user profile for your child. You can then limit the adult content of your child's profile (for example, by deleting the Youtube App on their profile) but allow you, as the adult, to continue to access websites and apps that you would like to use. There are various steps to take to create a child profile, depending on the device.

For more information on Parental Controls click the following link to find information on how to set up controls on your device.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

### **6) Monitor Social Media**

You may not be aware, but there are age restrictions on the use of Social Media (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and WhatsApp). Usually these restrictions are part of the organisation's terms and conditions, and therefore should be adhered to.

For example, you can only use the following services if you are over 13 years of age:

*Twitter*

*Facebook*

*Instagram*

*Pinterest*

*Google+*

*Tumblr*

*Snapchat*

*Skype*

*Myspace*

Please be aware that there is an obvious risk when children use social media platforms. They could be contacted by a complete stranger; have inappropriate communications with other children online; or be involved with cyber-bullying. Even at age 13, you still cannot control what appears on your child's news feed, so you will want to be aware of which websites your child is using. Most of these websites require you to link the account to an active email address. Our advice would really be to prevent your children from using these services until they at least meet the age of the service's terms and conditions.

More detailed information about social networking and children can be found at [Net Aware.org.uk](http://NetAware.org.uk)

### **7) Monitor Online Gaming**

Has your child talked about Roblox or Fortnite? It is likely that your child plays games on their device or console - and it is become increasingly common that these games

have an online element whereby your child will play with other players from around the world. There is now the risk that your child will be having conversations with complete strangers through voice or text chat, exposing them to inappropriate language and contact with people they don't know. It is essential that you make yourself aware of the risks, and that you read up on how to set parental controls to either limit or disable these voice and text chat functions.

Ultimately, you must decide which measures to put in place to ensure your child is safe online.



Over at [Common Sense Media](#), they review games for children and give advice to parents for how their children can stay safe using those games, including how to turn off chat functions. You can simply use the search function to research a new game you are thinking of purchasing for your child.



The [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) have a useful website with tips and advice about your child's online safety. Head on over to their website to access their resources: [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

We hope you find this information helpful. If you have any concerns or questions about E-Safety please do talk to a member of staff, we would be happy to help.