Online safety guidance / resources – updated June 2020

Update – June 2020

Government

The government has updated its [Coronavirus (COVID-19): support for parents and carers to keep children safe online](#) guidance. The guidance, which provides advice and information to help parents and carers to keep children safe online during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, now includes information on Apps to help children stay safe online.

Online grooming

Children continue to spend more time online due to COVID-19, and the [National Crime Agency](#) is aware from online chats that offenders have been discussing opportunities to abuse children during the crisis. [Europol](#) has seen a surge in attempts by offenders to contact young people on social media.

The COVID-19 period may also result in children being more exposed to offenders through online gaming, the use of chat groups in Apps, phishing attempts via email, and unsolicited contact using social media.

Children may also become lonely and isolated. This could make some children more inclined towards making explicit material to exchange with peers, which offenders may try to benefit from – connecting with them to produce explicit material or to arrange an actual meeting once restrictions are lifted.

Please remind children and their families of the risks that exist in relation to internet use, and the need to be vigilant online.

[NSPCC Net Aware](#)

NSPCC New Aware has published some tips for keeping children safe online during COVID-19 and beyond. Schools may wish to share the [8 tips for keeping your kids safe online during lockdown](#) with parents and carers.

Introduction

During the current closure period, many children will be accessing online resources to support their learning at home. This will be an integral part of closure arrangements and it is essential that it is undertaken in a safe way, supported by appropriate risk assessments. The other aspect of online safety during this time is that pupils not in school will have significantly more time available to them to spend online. This clearly presents potential safeguarding risks.

Remote learning

Remote learning takes place when a learner and member of staff giving instruction are not in the same place and the lesson is instead delivered through downloading information, webinars, or live streaming.

The concept of remote learning is not new. For some time, many schools have provided a virtual learning environment through which their pupils have been working and learning from home, outside of normal school time. Pupils can complete homework, coursework and other things remotely and submit them online, which are then marked and returned to pupils by their school.

The government have acknowledged that whilst there is no expectation for teachers to stream or provide recorded videos, many schools, colleges and universities are using video conferencing platforms to provide remote education. They have also stated that it is important for educational settings to ensure that they are making use of the security features and filters on any service they choose to use, and advised users to refer to the service providers' official support site which will assist in setting the right security features and filters.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three main areas of risk:

Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;

Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults;

Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Author: Matt Lewis, Safeguarding Adviser for Schools and Early Years
Date: June 2020

APPENDIX B - online resources for children

Childline

Childline helps anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Children can talk with Childline about anything, whether big or small; their trained counsellors can help. See their website or call free on 0800 1111.

BBC Own It

Updated in relation to COVID-19, this website provides support for young people to take control of their online life. Topics include help and advice, skills and inspiration on matters such as friendships and bullying, safety and self-esteem.

BBC Bitesize

A free online study support resource designed to help with learning, revision and homework. Bitesize provides support for learners aged 5 to 16+ across a wide range of school subjects. It also supports children and young people's wellbeing and career choices; since 20 April daily lessons have been published to help pupils across the UK with home schooling.

APPENDIX C - online resources for parents and carers

Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)

The ESCB is a statutory multi agency organisation which brings together agencies who work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Essex. It has produced guidance for parents and carers to help them understand online safety and exploitation generally.

Internet Matters – helping parents and carers keep their children safe online

A not-for-profit organisation that has a simple purpose – to empower parents and carers to keep children safe in the digital world. See their website for further information.

The Children's Society

A charity fighting child poverty and neglect, and helping all children have a better chance in life. They have produced information about online safety.

The NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)

The NSPCC has produced several online safety guides, from setting up parental controls to advice on sexting, online games and video apps.

Parent Info

A website offering expert safety advice in relation to a range of online harms, endorsed by the National Crime Agency's CEOP command.

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Common Sense Media

Independent reviews, age ratings, & other information about all types of media for children and their parents.

Parent Zone for families

A website with a range of digital age resources for families, including guides on digital platforms and trends.

Children's Commissioner

The Children's Commissioner has published a digital safety and wellbeing kit for parents, and a safety guide for children. The kit and guide have been designed to help ensure children are safe and their wellbeing is looked after while at home during the coronavirus outbreak – when their screen time maybe higher than usual.

The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)

The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) is a collaborative forum through which government, the tech community and the third sector work together to ensure the UK is the safest place in the world to be online.

Disrespect Nobody

Home Office advice on healthy relationships, including sexting and pornography.

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