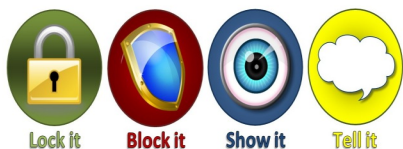


Be E-safe.



Community Wellbeing Newsletter

Technology is the most fantastic, useful tool in our lives today and no more so than in current times. Being able to communicate with friends and family, home schooling, working from home and gaming to past the time in lockdown. However, there is a darker side to the internet that we all need to be aware of and as parents and carers we need to keep up with this ever-changing world. In this issue we have tried to offer some advice and links so we can all check that we are doing the best we can to protect ourselves and families.



These icons are seen in every day life by adults and children. Some can be a great way to keeping in touch with others, but some consideration should be given to how time online is being used and how much time is spent online.



- Talk regularly to your child about what they are on and who they are talking to.
- Try to keep technology in a communal place so you can check what they are watching or doing as you walk past.
- Ask your child to show you what they're doing so you understand them.
- Be positive about things you are shown, but also be open about things you are worried about.
- Ask about their online friends and how they know they are who they say they are.
- Listen to the reason why your child want to use a website or app that you don't think is suitable so you can talk through these together.



Supporting families online

Get expert support and practical tips to help children benefit from connected technology and the internet safely and smartly.

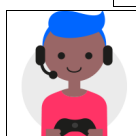
[Website](#)



0-5 With so many websites and apps targeting pre-schoolers find out the simple steps, you can take to protect your young children. [Read More](#)



6-10 As internet use grows, learn about the steps you can make to establish positive behaviour and how you can teach your child to stay safe. [Read More](#)



11-14 As your child makes the important transition from primary to secondary school make sure your knowledge increases with theirs. [Read more](#)



14+As internet access becomes part of your child's daily life learn about how you can have positive conversations about their internet use. [Read more](#)



This a great website that enables you to review and see what your children are watching before the do.

[Website](#)

[Child Friendly Apps](#)



think

t= is it true?

H= is it Helpful?

i= is it inspiring?

n= is it necessary?

K= is it kind?

Getting screen time balance

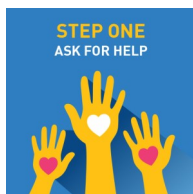
Screen time can offer children opportunities to learn and develop new skills at a touch of a button but like anything, too much of it can have a negative effect on their wellbeing.

As children get older and more independent online, finding the right balance for your family can be challenging but the key is to think about it early on and set some clear boundaries around their online use.

[Balancing Screen time advice 7-11](#)

[Balancing Screen time advice 11 -1 14](#)

[Balancing Screen time advice 14+](#)



Top 5 Tips

1. Create screen time rules together—get them involved in the process of settings simple rules
2. Take an active role in their digital life—get engaged and stay engaged in their digital life
3. Equip them with know-how to manage risk online
4. Use tools to manage their screen time and access to media—make use of free and premium tools available
5. Encourage them to be selective about what they do online—help them avoid mindless scrolling.

Smartphones and other devices

Children are using devices at a younger age so it's important to consider setting controls on the devices they use. Use this [link](#) to find your device.

Pre-installed parental controls are available for most smartphones, tablets, laptops and game consoles, and are part of the system when you buy them. You can often download additional parental control apps and software to supplement these controls. But the most important thing is to set the controls on the device itself.

Device controls can cover a variety of functions, however they usually restrict access to specific features and functions that exist on the device. You might also be able to control whether your child can download new apps, or prevent them from purchasing something in the app store.

In general, device controls won't filter out specific types of content through the internet. You'll also need to set these controls separately on any entertainment site or apps they use (such as YouTube or Netflix) and on the network, they are connected to.



How to Spot an Online Scam



While the internet can be an amazing place to shop, learn new things, and connect with friends, it is also a haven for scam artists. Unfortunately, as soon as one scam is exposed another arrives to take its place. To spot an online scam, be vigilant about evaluating any offers you see and don't be too trusting of people you interact with online. Take steps to keep your private information secure and protect yourself and you can avoid being the next person to fall victim.

- Ask yourself if the offer seems too good to be true.
- Research the background of the company or website.
- Search for the company's real website yourself.
- Take time to decide on online transitions.
- Try to avoid sharing person information with people or businesses you don't know.
- Contact friends directly about suspicious messages or posts.
- Be cautious about people you only know online.



On Line Gaming

Online gaming means you can play in real time with people across the world through a computer, games console, tablet or smartphone connected to the internet. Games can offer children a world of adventure to immerse themselves in, but it's important to understand how children can stay safe and what games are appropriate for their age.

To support parents, Internetmatters.org created a hub of advice to explain and understand the world of online gaming and encourage children to game safely and responsibly online.

- [Online gaming—The Basic](#)
- [Online gaming—The Risk](#)
- [Online gaming— The Benefits](#)
- [Online gaming—The Resources](#)
- [Game safe](#)

Cyber bullying is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets. Social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites and chat rooms (such as Facebook, Xbox live, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat) can be great fun and a positive experience. But what do you do when things go wrong?

Cyber bullying is rife on the internet and most young people will experience it or see it at some time. In a recent national survey, 56% of young people said they had seen others be bullied online and 42% have felt unsafe online. Cyber bullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and it can go viral very fast.

[BullyingUK website](#)

[Bullying in school](#)

[Advice for young people](#)

[Advice for Parents](#)

[Young Peoples Guide](#)



Spotting signs of cyberbullying

- Stopping using their electronic devices suddenly or unexpectedly
- Seeming nervous or jumpy when using their devices, or becoming obsessive about being constantly online
- Any changes in behaviour such as becoming sad, withdrawn, angry, or lashing out
- Reluctance to go to school or take part in usual social activities
- Unexplained physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach upsets
- Avoiding discussions about what they're doing online or who they're talking to



Cyberbullying and online harassment

Cyberbullying and online harassment can be extremely distressing. They can be classed as criminal offences but there is lots of help available to support you.

Report cyberbullying to internet service providers - lots of content on social media that is offensive or upsetting is not necessarily a criminal offence. However, cyberbullying often violates the terms and conditions established by social media sites and internet service providers. Report cyberbullying to the social media site so they can take action against users abusing the terms of service.

Tips to stay safe online

Think before you post - when posting or commenting on the internet, consider what you say and what effect this may have. Never post comments that are abusive or may cause offence to others.

Keep personal information personal - do not say anything or publish pictures that might later cause you or someone else embarrassment. Be aware of what friends post about you, or reply to your posts, particularly about your personal details and activities.

Make the most of privacy settings - keep your profiles closed, allowing access only to your chosen friends and family.

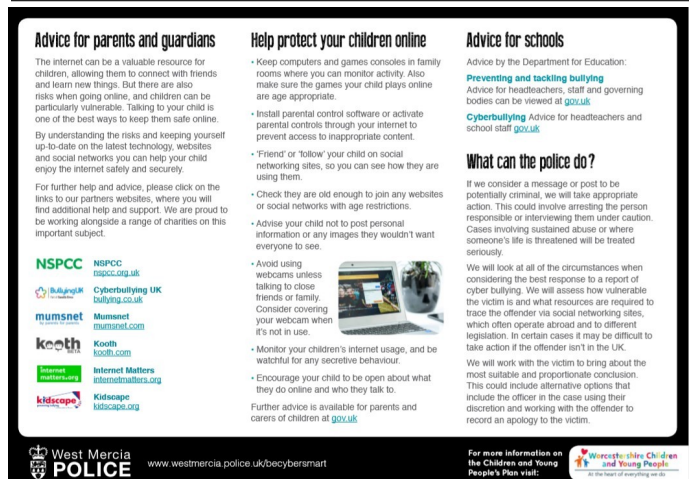
Social media help sections can show you how to block users and change settings to control who can contact you. You can get advice and support on using the following social media sites including the ability to report content to them.

Facebook - facebook.com
Twitter - twitter.com
Instagram - instagram.com
LinkedIn - linkedin.com
Google+ - google.com
YouTube - youtube.com
Pinterest - pinterest.com
Tumblr - tumblr.com
Snapchat - snapchat.com

If you believe that you are the victim of an offence, always keep a record of the content, by taking a screenshot, for example. If you are worried that your child or a loved one might be the victim of cyberbullying here are some signs to look out for:

- Low self-esteem.
- Withdrawal from family and spending a lot of time alone.
- Reluctance to let parents or other family members anywhere near their mobiles, laptops etc.
- Finding excuses to stay away from school or work including school refusal.

For further signs and advice visit [bullying.co.uk](#)



Advice for parents and guardians

The internet can be a valuable resource for children, allowing them to connect with friends and learn new things. But there are also risks when going online, and children can be particularly vulnerable. Talking to your child is one of the best ways to keep them safe online. By understanding the risks and keeping yourself up-to-date on the latest technology, websites and social networks you can help your child enjoy the internet safely and securely.

For further help and advice, please click on the links to our partner websites, where you will find additional help and support. We are proud to be working alongside a range of charities on this important subject.

Help protect your children online

- Keep computers and games consoles in family rooms where you can monitor activity. Also make sure the games your child plays online are age appropriate.
- Install parental control software or activate parental controls through your internet to prevent access to inappropriate content.
- "Friend" or "follow" your child on social networking sites, so you can see how they are using them.
- Check they are old enough to join any websites or social networks with age restrictions.
- Advise your child not to post personal information or any images they wouldn't want everyone to see.
- Avoid using webcams unless talking to close friends or family. Consider covering your webcam when it's not in use.
- Monitor your children's internet usage, and be watchful for any secretive behaviour.
- Encourage your child to be open about what they do online and who they talk to.

Further advice is available for parents and carers of children at [gov.uk](#)

Advice for schools

Advice by the Department for Education:

Preventing and tackling bullying
Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies can be viewed at [gov.uk](#)

Cyberbullying Advice for headteachers and school staff [gov.uk](#)

What can the police do?

If we consider a message or post to be potentially criminal, we will take appropriate action. This could involve arresting the person responsible or interviewing them under caution. Cases involving sustained abuse or where someone's life is threatened will be treated seriously.

We will look at all of the circumstances when considering the best response to a report of cyberbullying. We will assess how vulnerable the victim is and what resources are required to trace the offender via social networking sites, which often operate abroad and to different legislation. In certain cases it may be difficult to take action if the offender isn't in the UK.

We will work with the victim to bring about the most suitable and proportionate conclusion. This could include alternative options that include the officer in the case using their discretion and working with the offender to record an apology to the victim.

West Mercia POLICE [www.westmercia.police.uk/becybersmart](#)

For more information on the Children and Young People's Plan visit: [West Mercia Children and Young People's Plan](#)

[Talking to your 6-10 year old](#)

[Talking to your 11-13 year old](#)

[Talking to your 14+](#)

[Talking to Vulnerable children](#)



Useful Numbers and Websites

BullyingUK—0808 800 2222 [website](#)

Childline—0800 1111 [website](#)

Police— 101 [website](#)

UK safer internet safety— [website](#)

NSPCC—0808 800 500 [website](#)



1 TALK ABOUT IT
Find the right time to approach your child if you think they're being bullied.

2 SHOW YOUR SUPPORT
Be calm and considered and tell them how you'll help them get through it.

3 DON'T STOP THEM GOING ONLINE
Taking away their devices or restricting usage might make things worse and make your child feel more isolated.

4 HELP THEM TO DEAL WITH IT
If it's among schoolfriends, advise them to tell the person how it made them feel and ask to take any comments or pictures down.

5 DON'T RETALIATE
Advise your child not to respond to abusive messages and leave conversations if they feel uncomfortable.

6 BLOCK THE BULLIES
If the messages are repeated block and report the sender to the social network or gaming platform.

7 KEEP THE EVIDENCE
Take screenshots in case you need them later as proof of what's happened.

8 DON'T DEAL WITH IT ALONE
Talk to friends for support and if necessary your child's school who will have an anti-bullying policy.

9 KNOW WHEN TO TAKE IT FURTHER
In extreme cases and if you feel your child is in danger then consider informing the police.

10 DON'T STOP WHEN THE BULLYING STOPS
Keep talking to your child and consider whether counselling could help them deal with the consequences.