

St. Bede's Catholic Infant School

Internet Safety - A guide for parents

November 2020



The internet provides a space for children and young people to communicate, explore, laugh and learn.

There are lots of ways parents and carers can support their children in doing these things safely.

During 2020 many families have spent longer on devices than usual so we would like to support you by providing information and resources for you to use at home.



1. Begin with a conversation



Talking about the positives of going online, keeping the conversations broad and valuing your child's opinion shows that you are interested in all aspects of their online world. Remain open-minded, and remember children use the internet differently to adults. Encourage your child to discuss what they enjoy about going online.

Here are some questions to ask:

How do you find games that you like online?

What makes you happy when you use technology?

What would you do if...? (eg, you watched a worrying video, you were sent a mean message?)

What can we do as a family to keep each other safe online?

2. Work together



Get your family together to discuss how you use technology and what you use it for. Come to a joint agreement on using it safely and responsibly, and work together to set clear expectations and boundaries. Let your child know what they can do if anything happens online that is worrying, upsetting or confusing, and remind them they can always talk to you about anything. Use the Childnet Family Agreement to guide discussions around your family's internet use. Download a copy at childnet.com/familyagreement.



3. Tackling difficult conversations



Often, difficult topics of conversation can be planned for, but with online content being so accessible, occasionally they can be needed earlier than anticipated. You may wish to take a direct approach and explain the concerns that have lead you to start this conversation.

Alternatively, you might feel an indirect approach is more suitable – discussing young people in general to avoid additional pressure. Listen carefully to any confusion or concerns. Reassure them you are always there to help and even if you don't know the answers, you can find these out together. You can find helpful links to advice on difficult topics at [childnet.com/have-aconversation](https://www.childnet.com/have-aconversation).

4. What if something goes wrong?

If your child comes to you with a concern, try to remain calm and curious, rather than furious. Avoid blame or criticism, as this may close down the conversation if your child feels they have done something wrong or they are in trouble. Instead, remain non-judgmental, acknowledge the challenges they have overcome, and thank them for telling you.

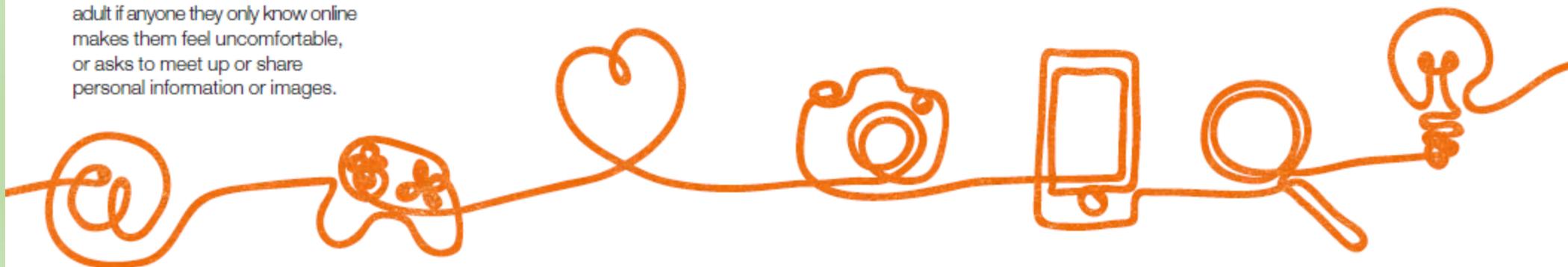
It's okay if you are unsure what to do next, the important thing is to let your child know you are there for them. There is a lot of further support out there to help you decide on your next steps. You can find helpline numbers, further advice and information on reporting at [childnet.com/parents-help](https://www.childnet.com/parents-help).



10 Key messages to share with your child

However and wherever you have a conversation with your child, here are 10 top tips you can share to support them in staying safe online.

1. "You can always come to me if you need help." This is the most important thing to let your child know, and a way to give them confidence to speak to you when they need support.
2. "What would you do if this happened...?" Give your child strategies to deal with upsetting experiences online.
3. "Remember that not everyone is who they say they are online." Remind your child to always tell an adult if anyone they only know online makes them feel uncomfortable, or asks to meet up or share personal information or images.
4. "Keep your personal information safe, and other people's too." This includes full names, contact details, and real-time locations.
5. "Be respectful to others online." Remind them if it's not okay offline...
6. "Think before you post." Help your child to be aware that their online actions can have consequences for themselves and others.
7. "Remember to ask if it's okay." Asking for, and receiving permission from others online is important before sharing images, adding people into group chats, etc.
8. "Remember not everything is true online." Help your child to be a critical thinker to find accurate information.
9. "The things other people post online might not always show what their life is really like." Reassure your child that nobody's life is as perfect as it may seem online, and judging yourself against other's online lives isn't a fair comparison.
10. "Recognise how going online makes you feel and take a break when you need to." Your child may need support in doing this, such as timers and reminders.



Links (please click)

For children

- [Think U Know](#)
- [BBC Bitesize](#)
- [CEOP](#)
- [BBC Newsround](#)
- [Child Net \(Digi-Duck Story\)](#)
- [Child Net \(Smartie the Penguin\)](#)

For parents

- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Think U Know](#)
- [Parent Zone](#)
- [Parent Info](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [CEOP \(National Crime Agency\)](#)
- [Childnet](#)