



# Online safety at home: parents and carers newsletter

September 2021

As we begin our new school year, children are now spending more time online doing their school work, playing games or watching videos. Technology is hugely valuable for education, as well as a way to keep in touch with friends and family. However it's important we all consider how we can support children's online safety during this lockdown, and always. Here's some information about what your child may enjoy online and what you can do to help keep them safer:

## Sharing pictures

Using devices like phones and tablets to share pictures and videos can be a great way for children to have fun and stay in touch with friends and family. It's really important your child knows what's ok to share online and what they should check with you first.

Read [younger children sharing pictures or videos online](#) for more information on the risks and how to support safer sharing.

## Watching videos

Children love to watch videos and YouTube is always a firm favourite! But sometimes children can be exposed to videos that are not meant for them.

[YouTube Kids](#) is a safer way for children to explore their interests. You can find more information about this on [YouTube: what parents need to know](#).

Remember, primary-age children should be supervised at all times when online.

## More information?

Thinkuknow is the education programme from the National Crime Agency's Child Protection Command CEOP (NCA-CEOP) whose aim is to protect children and young people from sexual abuse online.

For more information, advice and guidance, visit their [parents website](#) and download their [home activity worksheets](#) for fun, online safety activities to do with your family.

## Steps you can take to help keep your child safer online

**Parental controls:** Parental controls have been designed to help you manage your child's online activities. There are various types, some of which are free but others which can be bought. However, nothing is totally fool proof so this shouldn't replace the support and guidance you give your child to help keep them safer. For more information and step by step instructions on setting up parental controls, visit [Parental Controls & Privacy Settings Guides - Internet Matters](#).

**Supervise their online activity:** Keep the devices your child uses in communal areas of the house such as the living room or kitchen, where an adult is able to supervise. Primary-age children should not access the internet in private spaces alone, such as in a bedroom or bathroom.

**Explore together and chat little and often:** Ask your child to show you their favourite apps, games and sites and encourage them to teach you how to use these. Ask them if anything ever worries them online. Make sure they know they won't be in trouble and can get help by talking to you or another adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel worried, sad or scared.

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**Make sure they know where to go for support:** Remind your child they can always speak to you or an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel worried or upset. For a breakdown of report services, visit: [Supporting your child with reporting unwanted content online](#)

**Take a look at Thinkuknow:** Thinkuknow is the national online safety education programme from the National Crime Agency. Thinkuknow offers learning activities, advice and support for children and young people aged 4-18 and their families. The [Jessie & Friends animations](#) for 4 to 7s will help you start a conversation about online safety and for 8-10's, there's the [Play Like Share animations](#) and the [Band Runner game and advice website](#) .

**Help your child identify trusted adults who can help them if they are worried:** This includes you and other adults at home, as well as adults from wider family, school or other support services who they are able to contact at this time. Encourage them to draw a picture or write a list of their trusted adults.

**Talk about how their online actions affect others:** If your child is engaging with others online, remind them to consider how someone else might feel before they post or share something. If they are considering sharing a photo/video of somebody else, they should always ask permission first.

**Use 'SafeSearch':** Most web search engines will have a 'SafeSearch' function, which will allow you to limit the content your child can access whilst online. Look out for the 'Settings' button on your web browser homepage, which is often shaped like a small cog.

Visit [Thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://Thinkuknow.co.uk/parents) for more information on keeping your child safer online.