

# Internet Safety

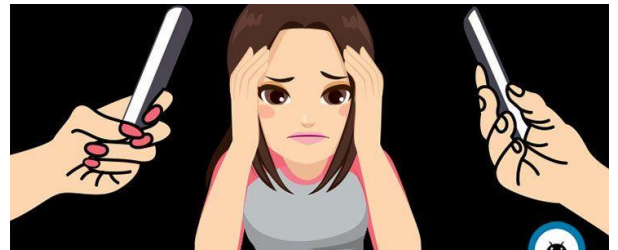
Children and young people's lives online have changed dramatically because of the coronavirus and as a result of spending more time at home and online. Research has shown that during lockdown some children have increased their use of social media significantly and whilst the internet is a great way for children to stay in touch with their friends, it comes with risks. Now, more than ever, it's important to talk to your child about staying safe online and about the apps and sites they're using and how they are using their screen time and children and parents need to consider the following:



- Does your child spend hours searching the internet?
- Do they spend less time each day talking to people they know and more time talking to people they don't know on a livestreaming or video app?

Asking them about the sites, apps and games they use regularly can be a great way to start a conversation and help you identify any risks in what your child's doing online or who they may be talking to.

Many of our children have been talking to their school friends online but without the visual contact the nuances are lost and this can lead to misunderstandings and result in further upset and the breakdown in relationships. This has a further impact on them when they are in school and not only affects their learning but also impacts upon their self-esteem.



It can be difficult to know how to start talking to your child about what they're doing online or who they might be speaking to, and the language that they are using. It can help to:

- reassure them that you're interested in their life, offline and online. Recognise that they'll be using the internet to research homework as well talking to their friends.
- ask your child to show you what they enjoy doing online or apps they're using so you can understand them.
- be positive but also open about anything you're worried about. You could say "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about things I've seen here."
- ask them if they're worried about anything, and let them know they can come to you.
- ask them about their friends online and how they know they are who they say they are. If someone from within any group chats allows someone else to access your chat think- do they really know who they are?

**The WWW Approach - do you know WHO your child is talking to online, WHAT they are doing online and WHERE they are going online?**

You can also find online safety tips and information about social networks, apps and games for parents over on [Net Aware](#) and on the [NSPCC website](#)