

This October a County-wide campaign highlights the risk of online child exploitation

From the 17-24 October the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) in conjunction with the Southend Safeguarding Partnership, (SSP) will be hosting a week of online activity raising awareness of online risk, spotting the signs of abuse, discussing the importance of healthy relationships and open communication at home, and exploring methods to protect young people from abuse.



Traditional signs of exploitation include a young person having more money and being secretive. New and emerging signs of exploitation stem from the online world, such as receiving online commodities - game currency and other gifts within games. The week of activity will cover:

- Children's internet use
- Online safety for pre-schoolers, primary and secondary age children
- Online gaming
- How to discuss healthy relationships and consent with children (including children with special educational needs)
- Sending nudes
- Frightening content/harmful online challenges

The resources created will help provide parents and carers with the information they need to support their child to safely navigate the online world, whatever their age. All our children are at risk of exploitation so it is well worth a visit to explore some of these online resources which can be used at home.

There will be two Facebook Live sessions during the week.

Facebook Live/Event promotion prior to week of action

[@The2Johns](#) are once again introducing their online safety week with a Facebook Live looking at recent trends they have encountered in their visits to schools. [Join them Sunday 17th October at 6pm.](#)

Exciting news! In partnership with [@EssexBrook](#) a Facebook Live session is available for parents and carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities talking specifically about healthy relationships. [Join them on Thursday 21st October at 1.30pm.](#)

Take a look at the week!

Monday 18 October - general overview of internet

Exploring all about online safety - from gaming to sexual images, pre-schoolers to teens. Keeping safe online and starting conversations about safety is something all parents, carers and grandparents need to be doing. There are podcasts, videos and lots of resources to share. There is information for parents, young people and professionals working with children on www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation



The power of the internet. Take a listen to @The2johns podcast where they explore what the internet means to individuals, explaining the fine balance between encouraging healthy exploration of the internet with being open about the dangers it can pose. <https://escb.podbean.com/e/general-overview-of-the-internet/>

Tuesday 19 October - younger children

@The2johns talk about how pre-schoolers and young children view the world through the lens of the internet and how to develop a healthy curiosity in children about what they see and do online. It is never too early to begin discussions about healthy internet use.

<https://escb.podbean.com/e/online-safety-for-parents-of-young-children/>

Did you know an average parent posts nearly 1,500 photos of their child by their fifth birthday? Growing up in a digital world can normalise image sharing, which is why it is so important to have conversations about safe internet use early on. The NSPCC have some really useful videos for younger children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1n9Jly3CQ8>



You don't need to talk to your pre-schooler about online safety yet, right? Wrong. If you treat online safety just as you would treat road safety, then talking about safe internet use becomes the norm and not something that children feel needs to be hidden as they get older.

<https://youtu.be/cXvjNpYzsSA>

Wednesday 20 October - pre-teens 8-12

@BrookEssex recently recorded a Q&A about how to talk to young people about consent. You can catch up and listen on <https://fb.watch/80hL4n-POs/>

Did you know the number of children exploited online doubles between the ages of 11 and 12 years old. This means those at the end of primary school, about to enter secondary school are particularly at risk, especially as it is a time when some children begin to enter the world of social media <https://www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation>



Podcasts by @barnardos and @childrenssociety encourage parents of pre-teens to think more widely about all the places their youngster may have access to the internet (not just at home) and to prepare them for owning their first smartphone. <https://escb.podbean.com/e/online-safety-parents-of-pre-teens/>

If something bad is happening to your child they should never feel that they are alone. There is ALWAYS someone to listen to them, They may feel able to tell an adult they trust at home or school or they may prefer to speak to someone who doesn't know them <https://www.escb.co.uk/childrenyoung-people/im-worried-about-exploitation/>

Thursday 21 October - teens

Any young person could send a nude pic. Even your child. The possible consequences of sending nudes could be really damaging. If it does happen, remember there could be peer pressure or grooming involved. Find out more and where to go for help about this and other online safety issues

<https://www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation>



Some great advice from the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service on how to have conversations with your child about online activity, setting boundaries and how to manage emotions and reactions to content seen online <https://youtu.be/JQUfZwKPs5A>

Friday 22 October – online gaming

Did you know your child's online chat can filter out of the game and onto other, less secure platforms? Find out how to make your child's new tech safe with this video from the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit <https://youtu.be/Rum7wfxZfc4>



Is your child into online gaming? Did you know strangers can contact your child especially on public or large servers and send inappropriate, mean or sexual content? Find out more and how to keep your child safe <https://www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation>

Saturday 23 October – sending nudes

Did you know people can screenshot and share your child's snaps? Keep your child safe online and find out more about privacy settings <https://www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation>

@The2johns discuss why and how young people are drawn into taking and sharing inappropriate images. They discuss how both parents and young people may be feeling and how to have an empathetic conversation with your child, as well as practical advice on getting photos removed

<https://escb.podbean.com/e/online-safety-youth-involved-sexual-images/>



If they have been tricked into doing something you or they are not comfortable with or are suffering from peer pressure there are lots of places you can turn to for support <https://www.escb.co.uk/childrenyoung-people/i-need-some-help/>

Sunday 24 October – Half-term/Halloween

A digital Halloween is a scary thought in more ways than one! In this podcast @The2Johns are talking about the importance of being extra vigilant about online exploitation at this time of year <https://escb.podbean.com/e/the-two-johns-halloween-scary-content-and-harmful-online-challenges/>

Now social restrictions have lifted children may be facing pressures on and offline. Children may take increased risks and feel added pressure to make up for lost time. Take a look at this video from The Training Effect which explains the teenage brain and how you can support your children to stay safe and make positive choices <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVMHyTBpyKY>



It is half term soon which probably means more time online = increased risk of exploitation. A supportive conversation about online safety and healthy relationships is so important <https://www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation>

Did you know just under half of those being investigated for exploiting others online are children and most are the same age as the victim. If you are worried your child might have been a victim this website has information about who to contact <https://www.escb.co.uk/onlineexploitation>

It is important to remember exploitation is not the child's fault and they are never to blame. By creating a supportive environment, where online safety is discussed in the same way as road safety or stranger danger, children will feel more able to speak openly about concerns they may have and potentially avoid an online threat escalating.



If you have a safeguarding concern and would like to speak to someone at Darlington Academy please contact a member of our Safeguarding Team



Designated Safeguarding Lead,
Mrs Grant



Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Mrs Hahn