



**Five
Rivers®**

Turning children's lives around

Stay safe online

Your 11+ Guide to Navigating the Internet
and Developing Good Digital Health

Introduction

The internet is a wonderful place to learn, play, and connect with friends. But just like in the real world, there are some dangers online that you need to be aware of to have a good, healthy digital life.

This leaflet was created in conjunction with CYP First and will explain how you can;

- Develop positive digital habits and a routine
- Become aware of some of the common risks
- Become a good digital citizen.



Let's start with the positives!

Learning online

There are lots of resources available for school projects or hobbies. Websites, videos, chatrooms, social media platforms, and online courses are just a few of the ways in which you can use the internet to help you expand your knowledge and inspire you.

Creativity

There are platforms where you can create and share your art, music or stories - the internet is a great place to express yourself.

Connection

Stay in touch with friends and family, or keep up to date with your favourite sporting team, hobby or interest. Video calls and messaging can help you feel close to loved ones, and news reels can keep you up to date with your interests.

Support

There are online communities for almost every interest or issue, where you can find people who can relate to what you're going through.

How to maintain good digital Health – Digital five a day challenge



Click here to watch Luke explain how he engaged in the digital five a day challenge.



Let's start with the positives!

Let's talk about caution and the risks

There are many risks in the digital world, just as in the real world. Here we explain some of the risks.

Personal and private information – keep as much of it to yourself as possible!

It is important that you understand the difference between private and personal information.

Personal information is anything that can be used to help identify you, such as your name, age, email address, or school. It might sound obvious, but it's easy to give out our personal information without meaning to. While it's less sensitive than private information, it's still important to think carefully before sharing it, especially online

For example;

- Posting a photo wearing your school uniform - giving away the address of where you can be found during the day
- Switching on the location tracking on your phone, so people can see where you are.

Private information is more sensitive information, that should be kept secret and only shared with people you trust (like family or a doctor). Examples include your date of birth, phone number, address, bank details, medical records, and passwords. Remember, posting a photo of you and your friends outside your house could give away your address.

Algorithms

An algorithm is a set of rules or instructions that computers use to make decisions about what content to show us. Algorithms can have a positive effect by serving you more of the content that you enjoy, about the hobbies that you have, and it can also help you discover new interests or connect with likeminded people. However, algorithms can have negative impacts by creating a loop, showing the same type of content repeatedly reinforcing a specific or narrow viewpoint. For example, on social media, once you have interacted with (watched, listened or clicked on) a certain kind of content, the algorithms use that as a guide and will keep showing you similar things. If you keep seeing the same things, your brain starts to take this point of view as fact which, if not truly factual, can have negative consequences.

You can help to challenge the algorithms by searching and researching content from a variety of different people, organisations and backgrounds. Make an effort to explore different topics outside of our normal interests, a bit like eating a wide-ranging healthy diet, to find out people's or culture's perspectives. Remember there's a lot of fake news out there. By maintaining a varied digital diet, you can enrich your understanding of the world and really begin to think critically about the world, rather than just looking at the world through a screen.

Phone Addiction

Spending too much time on your mobile phone or using any digital screen can negatively impact your mood, sleep, and relationships. You can literally get addicted to your screens. Remember to take regular screen breaks, have a digital detox, and enjoy the world around you!

Gaming Chat Rooms

While gaming can be fun, chatting with other players can be fun, too. Gaming can help enhance problem solving, activities can improve hand and eye coordination, and you can build connections through multiplayer experiences. However, it's important to be careful of who you're speaking to and what information you share. Gaming can also be highly addictive, exposing you to negative content and normalising violent, anti-social and illegal activities. Some people can find it difficult to differentiate between what is acceptable behaviour in the real world and in the gaming world. It's important to make sure that you spend time in the real world and do not spend more than the recommended amount of time gaming. It's important to take the game's age restrictions seriously, as they are based on research and science, designed to guide everyone in making informed decisions. Adults who care for you should take an interest in what you're playing, who you're playing it with and monitor your time in the digital world in the same way as they would if you were playing outside. It's good for adults to show an interest in your online worlds – why not invite them to join in with you so they can share the fun and understand your digital world.

Adults can find more information by [clicking here](#).

PEGI Rating	Description
3+	Suitable for all ages
7+	Contains some possibly frightening scenes or sounds, mild violence
12+	Allows more graphic and realistic-looking violence towards fantasy characters
16+	Includes more mature and realistic violence against human characters, bad language, and the use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs
18+	Applies when the level of violence becomes 'gross' or explicit sexual activity

Some more of the more serious risks

Online grooming

This is when someone builds a relationship with you, to gain your trust for harmful reasons. They'll be charming and attentive and can make you feel special. And once they gain your trust, they may exploit the relationship by asking you to do things that could put you in difficult or unsafe situations, such as carrying or holding drugs, letting them stay in your home, or sharing inappropriate pictures. Groomers are skilled at gaining trust by paying attention to you and your wishes. They might buy you gifts such as clothes and mobile phones or make exciting promises (some of which might happen) to make you feel secure and special. Many children describe feeling valued or important when grooming is happening and this is exactly what a groomer wants, so they can manipulate you more. It's important to be very careful of people you don't know, treating you like this.

Sexting and Image Sharing

Sharing personal images can have serious consequences. It is illegal to distribute or share sexualised images of children and once you share an image, you lose control over how it is used and where it might end up.

Some harmful people online may use AI technology to create fake images that look like you. Such as superimposing your face onto someone else's body, to make it look like you've shared inappropriate pictures. If this happens, you must report it to the police straight away.

For more information about this [click here](#).

Sextortion

Sextortion is something that a groomer do to exploit your trust. They may ask you to send inappropriate images of yourself, after making you feel safe and secure, often creating the illusion of a relationship. They might even send images of themselves to encourage you to do the same. Once they have these images, they may threaten to share them with your family, teachers or friends unless you pay them some money. This blackmail can quickly escalate and if you send them money, they may keep asking for more. The best way to protect yourself is to avoid sending any images that you wouldn't want others to see. And always be careful when interacting with people you don't know very well, online.

You can now contact OFCOM to help you remove harmful content on some platforms. [Click here](#) to find out more.

Pornography

The internet can expose you to content that could negatively influence your views about relationships and the roles people play in them. Pornography often creates unrealistic expectations about bodies and relationships, leading to feelings of insecurity, dissatisfaction, or inadequacy. It gives a false idea of what healthy relationships look like, often showing interactions without love, care, trust or respect. Women are often shown as passive participants, subjected to actions without care or consent, while men are in control. This is misleading and unrealistic. Pornography does not teach the importance of open communication, mutual respect and consent when building healthy relationships.

Misogyny

Misogyny is dislike and prejudice against women, spreading the belief that women are inferior to men. These views can be seen online promoting misogynistic views. Influencers promotes dominance over women, believing that men are entitled to own women and to do what they want with them. These people normalise this type of behaviour and attitude toward women. Misogyny leads to unhealthy relationships and creates serious dangers and harm for girls and women. It warps people's understanding of the world and makes it hard to recognise what is a healthy relationship, built on love, respect and equality. Misogyny can sometimes be hard to spot, especially when influential people online tell stories of fame, fortune and a desirable lifestyle, suggesting you could have that too. Once you start accessing content like this, your algorithm will show you lots of similar content to reinforce those views.

[Click here](#) to find a useful glossary of terms.



Top tips on how to keep safe

Think about your digital footprint

Once you post something online, it's on the internet forever. When you share something online, imagine how you will feel about it when you're applying for your dream job. Would you be happy to have those words or images out there?

Think Before You Share

Consider whether you're giving away any personal or private information? Always ask yourself if what you're about to share is safe and appropriate. Follow a 24 hour rule before sharing anything online. Wait a day and ask yourself "do I still want to share this?". Often you'll find that after the initial urge disappears, you'll realise it's not necessary.

Limit Screen Time

Set daily limits for how much time you spend online to ensure a good balance in your life.

Stay Informed

Learn about online safety and the latest trends - knowledge is your best defence! But remember to be sure that the source of information is trusted? There's a lot of fake news around and you will be being served this type of content by algorithms. Always talk this through with an adult you trust. Keep in mind that sharing fake news is dangerous, so fact-check things before you share them.

Be Kind

Treat others with respect online and be a good digital citizen. It's easy to forget that there's a real person behind the screen.

Talk About It

If you encounter something uncomfortable, talk to someone you know and trust. Part of being a responsible digital citizen is knowing what's wrong and how to report it. There are lots of useful resources to support you on the back page.



Remember!

The internet is a powerful tool, and you should use it wisely. Stay safe, be wise, and enjoy all the amazing things the online world offers! Critically think - has this person got a hidden agenda? Are they making me feel uncomfortable? Are they asking me to do things I wouldn't normally do? How do they know me? Why are they messaging me? What is their tone like? If you feel uncomfortable, that should be a warning sign something isn't right.

Organisations to contact if you need support

Online sexual abuse:

Report to CEOP or the NSPCC Helpline.

NSPCC Helpline:

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@NSPCC.org.uk

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre):

Website: ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting

Childline:

Phone: 0800 1111

Website: childline.org.uk

Internet Watch Foundation (IWF):

Website: iwf.org.uk

Report Harmful Content:

Website: reportharmfulcontent.com

Action Counters Terrorism (ACT):

Website: act.campaign.gov.uk

Action Fraud:

Website: actionfraud.police.uk

Reporting specific types of online harms:

Child sexual abuse images: Report to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF).

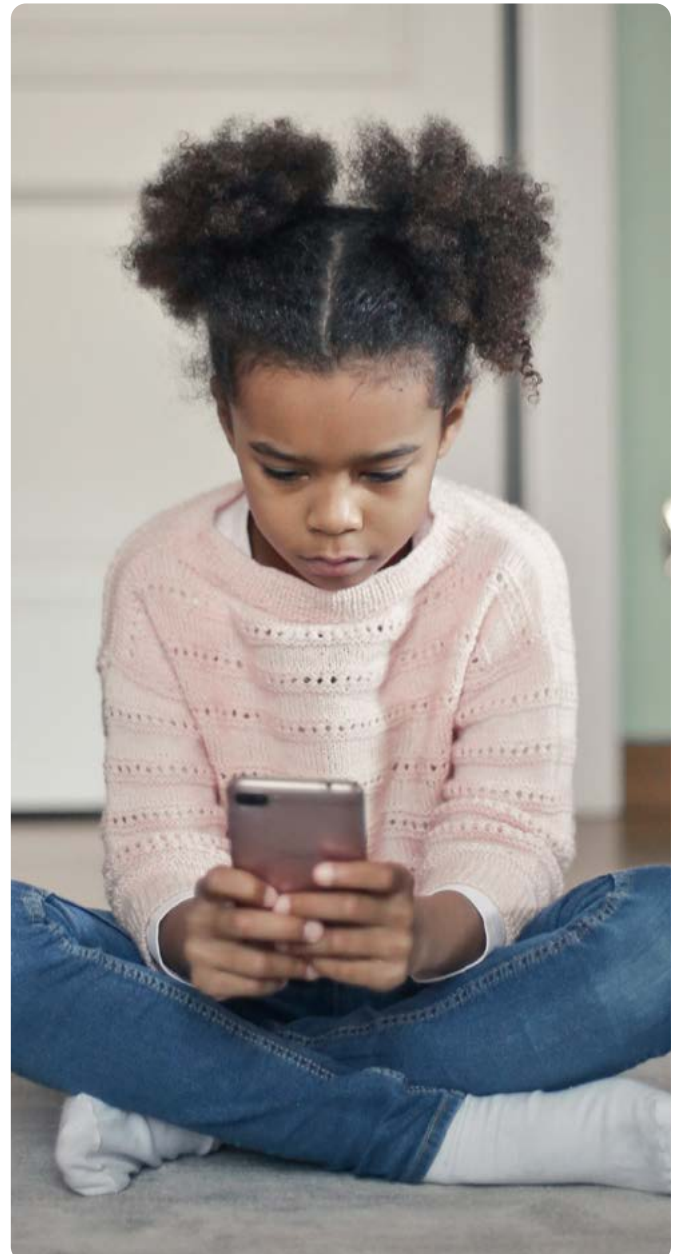
Terrorist content: Report to Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) or the government's online form.

Online abuse or exploitation: Report to CEOP or the NSPCC Helpline.

General harmful content: Report to Report Harmful Content or the platform where the content is hosted.

Fraud and cybercrime: Report to Action Fraud.

If you are worried about someone: Speak to an adult you trust, or contact the NSPCC Helpline or CEOP.





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