Online Safety Guide for Parents and Carers

Helping you to keep children safe on Social Media

● Research the age restrictions of apps – don't rely on the information given in app stores as it is not always correct. Apply the age restrictions given – they are given for a reason!

● Remind young people to set social media accounts to **'private'** – apps are set to **'public'** by default once downloaded.

● Do your children understand what is **'safe and unsafe'** to post online?

● Educate young people on **how** they can report their concerns online, and **who** can help.

● Parents ideally need to sit, discuss and walk through social media platforms and instant messenger apps with their children, setting up **'family safety mode'** within apps that have this feature.

● Support young people in making safe connections online, and in building healthy relationships.

● **Please don't assume all children use the internet and apps the same the same way.** Ask young people regularly where they are going online, and how they are using it.

● **Be careful sharing your location**. Ideally children and young people should have their location services switched off on their phones, or only share their location with selected family and friends only.

● Support children and young people to have a **positive** presence online, and remind them that once something is posted online it stays posted.

● Have a conversation about who your children are following, speaking to and / or engaging with online. Ask how these people make your children feel? For example, does this person you follow make you feel good or bad about yourself?

● Agree on a realistic time limit for gadgets and use of social media as a family. Encourage young people to come away from technology an hour before bedtime.

Great websites to help you keep children safe and help children keep themselves safe:
www.internetmatters.org
www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers
www.childnet.com
www.net-aware.org.uk

Great apps to explore if children have mobile phones
SafeToNet - www.safetonet.com
BBC Own It – visit www.bbc.com/ownit
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