



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency



## Online Safety for Children & Young People

As per Public Health Guidelines which have introduced the Stay at Home Policy and Social Distancing measures due to Covid 19, it places greater challenges than ever for parents to ensure that children are safe in their homes in terms of their online activities.

Now, more than ever it is important that parents know how to talk with and keep their children safe online.

### Recent research has shown that:

- 1 in 3 internet users are children.
- 1 in 4 children have experienced something upsetting on a social networking site.

### The key to helping your child stay safe online

*(The following is intended for children up to the end of primary school, for older children parents will need to balance the child's want and right to privacy with keeping them safe)*

### Setting the boundaries:

- Lead by example with regard to how you as a parent use screen time.
- Time limit for daily use.
- No devices during meal times.
- All devices (parents as well as children) left in kitchen at bedtime.
- Where are the children allowed to use devices within the home.
- Parents set the passwords for devices and accounts so that if need arises they can check and review their child's activity online.

### Device:

- "Restrict Settings with regard to child's privacy and content" i.e. age appropriate content, location settings etc.
- The apps installed on the device are suitable for the child with the appropriate parent controls.



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**Key learning points for children to understand to keep them safe online:**

- Be friends with and chat on line with people you know and have met in real life.
- Remember our words affect others, be positive online with regard to what you comment and say about and to other people.
- Respect your privacy if you wouldn't say or show it to your parents or the whole class in school why put it up online.
- If you see or hear something online that scares you, makes you feel upset or uncomfortable talk to your parent(s).

**And for Parents:**

- Keep talking with your child about what they are doing online, join in with them as appropriate.
- If anything suspicious is sent to your children, possibly illegal or abusive, remove the device from your child, do not delete it and contact An Garda Síochána.

**Parents to be vigilant for:**

- Online Bullying: Bullying can take place on any online forum and social media sites. It can also take place on mobile phones and because technology is everywhere, It is more invasive as it continues outside school.
- Sexting: children sharing intimate images on line which are then used as bullying or
- Exploitation: adults contacting children on line.

**Additional online resources to help parents include:**

- <https://cybersafeireland.org>
- <https://www.webwise.ie/>
- <https://www.webwise.ie/parents/advice-top-10-tips-for-parents/>
- <https://www.webwise.ie/parents/covid19-online-safety-advice-for-parents/>
- [https://www.cypsc.ie/fileupload/Documents/Resources/Wicklow/Parents%20Safety%20Handbook\\_emailing%20purposes.pdf](https://www.cypsc.ie/fileupload/Documents/Resources/Wicklow/Parents%20Safety%20Handbook_emailing%20purposes.pdf) A Parents guide to Device safety developed by Wicklow CYPSC.