

## **TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT INTERNET SAFETY**

Talking to your child is one of the best ways to keep them safe online. Using parental controls on social networks, online games and browsers and on both hardware and software can filter or monitor what your child can see. Preventing your children from using the internet or mobile phones won't keep them safe in the long run, so it's important to have conversations that help your child understand how to stay safe and what to do if they ever feel scared or uncomfortable.

### **HAVE THE CONVERSATION EARLY AND OFTEN**

Children and young people spend an average of 12 hours a week online and it becomes part of their routine early on in life. That's why it's important to start talking to your child about keeping safe online at an early age. As your children get older, and technology changes, make sure you keep talking about what they're doing online and how to stay safe. Repeat the conversation as they get older.

### **KNOW WHO YOUR CHILD IS TALKING TO ONLINE**

Children don't think of people they've met online through social networking and online games as strangers, they're just online friends. So it's important to keep track of who your child's talking to. Ask them questions like:

- who do they know that has the most online friends?
- how can they know so many people?
- how do they choose who to become friends with online?

Explain to your child that it's easy for people to lie about themselves online, like their age, for example, because you have never met them. You could also become 'friends' with your child so you can see their profile and posts but your child may not want to 'friend' you, especially as they get older. Agree that your child can 'friend' a trusted adult like an aunt or uncle so they can let you know if they see anything worrying on your child's profile.

### **SET RULES AND AGREE BOUNDARIES**

It's useful to agree on some ground rules together. These will depend on your child's age and what you feel is right for them, but you might want to consider:

- how long/when they can go online, websites they can visit and online activities they can take part in.
- sharing images and videos.

how to treat people online and not post anything they wouldn't say face-to-face.

If your child plays online games:

- check the age rating before they play and make sure you know who they're playing with.
- talk to them about what information is OK to share with other players. Negotiate time limits for gaming.

### **MAKE SURE THAT CONTENT IS AGE APPROPRIATE**

You know your child best, so check that the websites, social networks and games they're using are suitable for them. Check that your browser's homepage (the page that you see when you open an internet window) is set to a website that you're happy for your child to see.

Online games, movies and some websites will also have an age rating or minimum age to sign up. Age limits are there to keep children safe, so you shouldn't feel pressured into letting your child sign up or use websites that you feel they are too young for.

### **USE PARENTAL CONTROLS TO FILTER, RESTRICT, MONITOR OR REPORT CONTENT**

You can set up parental controls to stop your child from seeing unsuitable or harmful content online:

- Internet Service Providers (ISPs), such as Virgin Media, Sky or BT, provide controls to help you filter or restrict content.
- Laptops, phones, tablets, game consoles and other devices that connect to the internet have settings to activate parental controls. Software packages are available – some for free – that can help you filter, restrict or monitor what your child can see online.
- Remember that if your child goes online away from home, the same controls might not be in place at other people's houses or on public Wi-Fi. As your child gets older you can change the level of control that you use. If your child asks you to remove the controls completely, and you are happy to do so, make sure you agree what behaviour is acceptable online first.

## **CYBER BULLYING**

If the cyber-bullying is taking place outside of school, it is a matter for the local police and you should use the following contacts:

**Email:** [Eastleigh.Police@hampshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Eastleigh.Police@hampshire.pnn.police.uk)

**Dial:** 101

**Website:** <http://www.hampshire.police.uk/internet>

## **WHAT WYVERN CAN DO TO ASSIST WITH SOCIAL MEDIA ISSUES**

- Regularly educate our students about keeping themselves, and others, safe online.
- Provide guidance and support to the parents of victims.
- Offer support and guidance to the students at our college who are the victims of abuse on social media.
- Confiscate a mobile device until the end of the college day, or until the parent comes in to school to collect the phone (in the case of repeated issues).
- Liaise with police, as appropriate, if parents choose to inform them about any social media abuse.
- Encourage students to report anything that they're worried about to an adult they trust whether it affects them directly or concerns another young person they know.
- Educate students in responsible ways to use the internet and social media.
- Proactively discuss cases involving the misuse of social media reported in the media through focussed tutor time activities and assemblies.
- Discuss with student voice and college councils the role that mobile devices play in our lives and how we should all act responsibly to prevent cyberbullying and misuse or potentially dangerous use of social media.
- Invite external speakers to address students as and when possible to further develop understanding and appreciation for the risks involved with social media misuse.
- Identify pupils most at risk of manipulation or bullying via social media to pre-empt and prevent potential harm, signposting them towards agencies and additional any support.

## **WHAT WYVERN CANNOT DO TO ASSIST WITH SOCIAL MEDIA ISSUES**

- Keep a student's phone beyond the end of the college day (unless there has been an agreement with the parents).
- Seize phones to investigate issues that have occurred on social media.
- Oversee/monitor student use of social media that may result in "catfishing, cyberstalking, dissing, exclusion, flaming, fraping, grieving, harassment, masquerading, outing, roasting and trolling". These are all words used in a cyberbullying context.
- Oversee/monitor the use of social media by other adults that may result in "catfishing, cyberstalking etc." as above.
- Adjust the privacy settings on an individual's device.
- Issue a sanction for anything that has occurred outside of college – this should be followed up by parents/ police as appropriate.

- Check contacts, messages, photos or videos stored on a phone (or mobile device).

## **SOCIAL MEDIA – FURTHER LINKS**

### **Instagram**

[Advice on blocking people:](#)

[Controlling your visibility:](#)

[Dealing with abusive and/or inappropriate comments:](#)

### **Facebook**

[Advice on blocking people:](#)

[Managing your privacy settings:](#)

[How to report abusive comments and/or posts:](#)

### **Snapchat**

[Changing your privacy settings:](#)

[Deleting and blocking friends:](#)

[Snapchat safety advice:](#)

### **Kidscape**

[A useful starting point for on line safety and support:](#)

### **ThinkuKnow**

[Access to advice and support on how to keep children safe from sexual abuse, both online and off:](#)

### **CEOP**

[Where you can report abuse and exploitation direct to CEOP:](#)

### **NSPCC**

[The NSPCC and O2 have teamed up to create this very useful website:](#)

## **NSPCC SHARE AWARE**

The NSPCC are currently running a 'share aware' campaign and have devised a template so that you can draw up a family agreement about keeping safe online. The template can be viewed below, and further details can be found at by

[NSPCC-Share-Aware-Family-Agreement.pdf](#)