Online Safeguarding Newsletter

#learn about it, talk about it, deal with it

Safer Internet Day on the **5th February** is a great excuse to talk to your child about their digital lives.

Technology is developing at such a rapid pace, that many of us are struggling to keep up with new advances! Online safety seems to be something that many parents worry about, but we don't really know where to look for help or how to help our children to navigate the digital world. Recent research shows that 74% of parents want more help with keeping their children and themselves safe online. This newsletter will give you advice, hints and tips and signpost you to other websites dedicated to helping parents.

Parental Control: Did you know that all devices, tablets, gaming devices and even the Sky box have parental controls. It is really important that you take control of the controls and set your parental controls on all of the devices your children access. You can set up accounts for each child in your family with appropriate controls for their age.

You can set a limit the amount of time your children use the iPad for or what content they can view on YouTube. This information is very easily found by Googling the name of the device and ''parental controls' e.g. xboxone parental controls. There are easy step by step instructions to follow. The website internetmatters.org also has detailed, step by step instructions.

Do you understand PEGI rating?

PEGI stands for the Pan European Game Information and is the classification system for the images and action within computer games. In the UK this rating is supported and enforced by law. Retailers selling to underage children can be both fined and imprisoned. This rating is extremely important and children younger than the age on the case should not be exposed to the images or language within the game.

The PEGI rating does not relate to the difficulty of the game, but to inform parents of the suitability of the images and content of the game.

The PEGI website give the following advice:

- Always look for the age classification on the game package or via the search engine on this website.
- Try to look for a summary or review of the game content or ideally play the game yourself first.
- Play video games with your children, watch over them when they play and talk with them about the games they play. Explain why certain games are not suitable.
- Be aware that online games sometimes enable the download of extra software that can alter the game content and eventually the age classification of the game.
- Online games are usually played in virtual communities requiring players to interact with unknown fellow players. Tell your children not to give out personal details and report inappropriate behaviour.
- Set the limits by using the parental control tools of the game console or pc.

Do you know your apps?

You may think this is not applicable to your child yet, but it is never too early to raise your awareness and may help you with older children in your family and extended family.

Although child-friendly apps can make using the internet a more accessible and enjoyable experience, the thousands of apps available for different types of people mean it's important to make sure children use appropriate ones.

Did you know…

29% of mums and dads let their children download apps without their permission

80/100 In 2013, 80 of the top 100 apps were 'free' but made all money through in-app purchasing

Some apps that allow children to create and maintain online relationships raise some important safety issues that it's worth knowing about as a parent:

Chatting with strangers: Meeting and chatting with stranger's online poses risks to young people who might be vulnerable to grooming and online (and offline) forms of sexual abuse.

Sending inappropriate content: With the physical barrier of a screen, some people feel more empowered to pressurise others into sending messages, often of a sexual or derogatory nature.

Sharing a location: Many apps share the user's location. This can put children at risk from others who actively seek out children with the intention of meeting in the real world. Sharing a location can also raise concerns with identity theft and privacy.

The current most popular apps with children – do you know what they are by the logo?

> Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter all have an age restriction of 13 – so primary school children should never have an account. Advice on how to close an account is available on internetmatters.org
>
> Unless you have set your parental controls, your child could be only two clicks away from inappropriate content on You Tube via the recommendations on the left side of the screen

For more information, please take a look at:

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2019/education-packs/activities-parents-and-carers