Instagram

Is your child on Instagram? **You should be over 13 years of age to set up an account.**

Instagram is used to post photos and videos. Users can also DM (direct message), send disappearing messages, add to their stories (these disappear after 24 hours) and broadcast live.

Instagram have now introduced new age verification software to help confirm the age of users. Any user who tries to change their age will have to upload an ID document or take a video selfie. You can find out more here:

https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/instagram-rolls-out-age-verification-for-users

Personalised Digital Toolkit
Answer some simple questions and get age specific advice and recommendations: https://www.internetmatters.org/digital-family-

Parental controls

With Christmas nearly here and perhaps with presents including new technology or related games being received, we thought we'd provide you with a little reminder of how to set up appropriate parental controls.

Games/consoles

First, check the PEGI rating of any new games to ensure that your child is old enough to be playing them. PEGI provides age classifications for games and **considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty.** It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration the chat facilities within games. If a game does allow your child to communicate with others then you can adjust the settings so they are appropriate to your child - or disable it completely.

Secondly, for any consoles (new and old), it is important to set up appropriate controls such as restricting spending limits and again managing who they can communicate with. Follow the links below to find out how to set up Parental Controls for each device:

Xbox: https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/community/for-everyone/responsible-gaming

PS5: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/

Nintendo Switch: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1183145.html
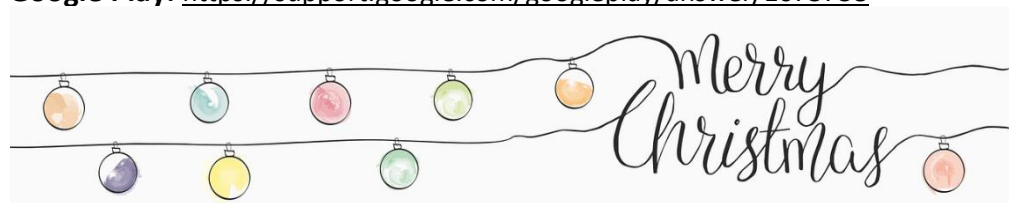
Tablets/Smart phones

As well as setting up parental controls on the device itself, remember to check any apps your child would like on their device. Is it suitable for their age? Review all settings and privacy options for each app. For the devices themselves use the available settings to prevent purchases, restrict content viewed and adjust privacy settings. Follow the links below to find out more:

iPhones/iPads: https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT201304

Google Play: https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738

Online Sexual Abuse

Talking to our children about online sexual abuse can be difficult, which is why the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) have developed the TALK checklist. You can access the checklist here:

https://talk.iwf.org.uk/

The TALK checklist covers:

T = Talk to your child
A = Agree ground rules
L = Learn about what your child is doing online
K = Know how to use apps and tools to help keep your child safe online

If you download the full resource, it also discusses why children with SEND may be at greater risk, how to deal with difficult questions and ground rules that you could set.

Unwanted sexual advances on social media

Report Harmful Content detail how you can report unwanted sexual advances on the more popular social networking sites below:
https://reportharmfulcontent.com/advice/unwanted-sexual-advances/

CEOP advice

CEOP have published several articles providing further information:
What is sexual abuse?
https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/What-is-sexual-abuse
Finding out your child has been sexually abused:
https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Finding-out-your-child-has-been-sexually-abused-or-exploited/

How can the law help me?

Whilst we wait for the Online Safety Bill to be passed, which will hopefully improve Online Safety, there are certain laws already established to help protect us online. For example, in the UK we have the Malicious Communications Act 1988 that states it is an offence to send a communication that conveys an indecent or grossly offensive message or a threat. We also have the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which covers threatening behaviour or harassment online.

Report Harmful Content have curated a list of laws that are relevant to online behaviour here:
https://reportharmfulcontent.com/when-should-you-go-to-the-police/

Mental Health

If your child is experiencing mental health issues, then it's important to know that there are organisations set up to help those who need support with their mental health. The NHS website sets out when you should seek professional help for your child, as well as links to online organisations. In addition, ChildLine and Calm can offer support and advice.

Find out more here:
- https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/mental-health-services-for-young-people/children-young-people-mental-health-services-cypmhs-parents-carers-information/
- https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/
- https://www.thecalmzone.net/get-support

CEOP: Updated 11-18 website

CEOP Education have updated and created one area for all 11 – 18 year olds to access. This website replaces the previously separated areas for 11-13s and 14+. You can find out more here:

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/our-views/2022/our-new-website-for-young-people-aged-11-18/

Screentime advice

We're often asked how long children should spend on their devices each day. Childnet have created a blog discussing why it is difficult to specify a limit and what you should consider. You can read it here:

https://www.childnet.com/blog/screen-time-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/