Digital parenting

The modern family

Staying safe and still having fun in a brave new, connected world

Plus
Why you should think twice before sending a risky selfie
Setting up controls for smartphones, search engines and social media
Young mavericks taking cyberspace by storm
Advice on online bullying, stranger danger, in-app purchases and more
“Only by learning what our children do and see in digital spaces can we truly begin to understand the risks online worlds present”

Welcome

About Digital Parenting

Vodafone is committed to giving parents the knowledge and support they need to help them and their families get the most out of digital technology, and deal with any challenges that might bring.

Digital Parenting began life as a website launched in 2009. The following year we published the first Digital Parenting magazine and since then more than one million families across the UK have received copies for free.

In this latest issue, you’ll find step-by-step guides to help improve your family’s online security. These will help you set up parental controls on everything from Twitter to your security. These will help you set up parental guides to help improve your family’s online

The experts say that the short answer is

It’s an interesting question: how can we help children to read better at a younger age.

At the same time, we all remember media tales of children facing the dangers of cyberbullying, chatrooms and social networking, or the unwanted results of sending a revealing selfie. It’s an interesting question: how to make

Cindy Rose
Consumer Director, Vodafone

In this guide, you’ll find helpful advice from experts, plus our popular ‘How to’ guides, with step-by-step information on setting up parental controls, privacy settings and safe searches. Vodafone has been working hard to offer trusted tools, tips and information for parents – and to help them bolster their confidence when it comes to understanding how their children interact with and use technology every day.

For example, we’ve recently teamed up with the popular virtual world for children, Moshi Monsters, to create a series of free cards that offer tips for staying safe online – in the form of activities younger children can learn from and enjoy.

I hope Digital Parenting will provide the answers, or link you to the information, you need to support your children’s digital lives.

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Clearrules on content

The film classification board, Google and the games industry get serious about what young people can watch

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) has long regulated the language, sexual imagery and violence that children and young people can see on the big screen. Now, in response to increasing parental concerns about the content available to children with internet access, the government has said it wants the BBFC and the UK music industry to pilot an age-rating system for music videos uploaded to online video platforms, as soon as possible.

“Google has said that if we start to age-rate videos, they will call the BBFC age rating,” David Austin, Assistant Director of the BBFC, told the Guardian. If it goes ahead, the ratings for music videos online will mirror the U, PG, 12, 15 and 18 certificates currently used for films. The BBFC and the Dutch regulator NCAM have also been tasked by the European Commission and the CEO Coalition to build and test an age-rating system for user-generated content uploaded to video-sharing platforms. The trial went live in Italy in March.

And, after taking on the responsibility from the Mobile Classification Board in July 2013, the BBFC is now officially charged with regulating mobile internet content too. It handles the framework that enables mobile operators to restrict access to their commercial content considered unsuitable for anyone under the age of 18. This means the BBFC will bring its film and video standards to bear on internet content accessed on a mobile device, protecting children by limiting adult content to adults only.

The Chair of the Mobile Broadband Group, Harish MacLeod, commented: “With customers increasingly consuming content via mobile networks, we feel that the BBFC’s unparalleled expertise will be best suited to provide us with the independent framework and guidance for the future.”

Since 2012, games sold in the UK have been regulated under the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) scheme, instead of being certificate by the BBFC. There are 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18 ratings on games as well as diagrams on packaging to depict the content featured.

For more information about BBFC guidelines, go to bbbi.co.uk. To find out more about age certificates for games, go to pegi.info.

ISP filters for adult content: censorship or common sense?

Lots of parents see the value of internet filters as a means of helping to protect their children from age-inappropriate content. However, many feel uncertain about how to install the software properly. In 2005, the UK’s mobile phone networks solved this problem by turning on filters by default. Since then, to access any adult content the account holder has to go through an age verification process to prove they are over 18.

The government and many children’s organisations strongly encouraged Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to follow this lead. And in the summer of 2013, the UK’s four biggest ISPs – BT, Sky, Virgin Media and TalkTalk— agreed to offer network-level filtering. This simply means that all of them now have pre-installed filters. Anyone signing for the first time has to decide whether or not they want to use them. And before the end of 2014, existing customers will also be asked. Once installed, the filters apply to every device in the home that accesses the internet via the router each ISP provides.

However, there are differences between the mobile networks’ and the ISPs’ approaches. If an ISP customer decides they do not want to use the filters – equivalent to asking for the adult bar to be lifted on a mobile network – the ISP will not age verify who makes the decision. They verified the account holder was an adult when they first subscribed and assume it is the same person. But just in case it isn’t – and so they can keep track of what is going on – ISPs will email the account holder responsible for taking the decisions about using or later changing the filters.

Some ISPs offer different filtering options: one that bars adult content, one that bars nothing, and a third option, which restricts content to material suitable for younger people. A couple of mobile operators do something similar.

But who decides if a particular website should only be available to adults? Crucially the British Board of Film Classification, a highly respected independent body, oversees the operation of the systems used by the mobile networks. The ISPs have no common standard. Some of their filters were found to block access to perfectly legitimate sex education websites and those specifically designed to help young people. These mistakes were quickly corrected, but it provoked controversy. Members of Parliament have long regulated the language, sexual imagery and violence that children and young people can see on the big screen.

Stay safe with the Vodafone Guardian app

The Vodafone Guardian Android app is available on Google Play. It helps parents protect their child’s smartphone from inappropriate calls, messages and online content. Follow the steps (right), and you can block numbers, restrict outgoing calls to specific contacts, and transfer bullying text messages to a secure folder for evidence. To set parental controls on other phones see pages 37-39.

Set a parent contact
Download the app from Google Play, then enter a parent contact number so you receive a test if the app is deactivated. Click Save. You will also get a test if an emergency call is made from the phone.

Set a password
Create a password to control the app – no changes can be made to the Vodafone Guardian settings without it.

Enable Message Helper
Activate this and the app will show an ‘I Do Not Accept This’ button next to incoming messages. Pressing that button will make the message vanish from your child’s inbox.

Customise the settings
You can control the settings for making and receiving calls, text messages and phone features, such as Wi-Fi, the camera and web browser.

4 things you need to know about new web filters
1. They are in place now for all new customers
2. Existing customers will be offered a choice to opt in by the end of 2014
3. Different strengths of filtering are available
4. The filters are mainly aimed at protecting young people from age-inappropriate content

In brief

3.5 million tablet-savvy children
One in four children under eight years old owns a tablet, according to a uSwitch survey. What’s more, 11% of two-year-olds are able to navigate their way around menus and apps. For more stats on how kids are growing up online, see page 24.

11-year-olds to learn coding in school
Computer coding will be taught in schools as part of the national curriculum from September 2014. Children will be taught how to code and create programs, while the UK government is providing a £50,000 training budget for teachers to get up to speed.

Mike Warner, UK Engineering Director at Google, says: “The UK has a proud computing history, but with more and more industries wanting computer scientists, coding has never been in more demand. ‘It’s great that teachers will be trained to teach children from a young age and hopefully inspire the next generation of programmers.’” Read the success stories of seven digital entrepreneurs on page 26.

UK parents want more
invested in school IT
More than half (57%) of UK parents believe schools are not investing enough in IT, according to research from Samsung. The survey of more than 500 parents of primary and secondary school children also revealed that 56% think investment in IT infrastructure should come first, 45% that digital skills should be embedded in the curriculum and 40% that parents need to be trained to meet these increasing digital needs.
Who owns what you post on social media?

You might be surprised...

Clicking the ‘Yes’ button to indicate that you have read and agreed to a social media channel’s terms of use is, for most of us, often not quite true. The length and breadth of the legal speak involved sets up for failure – Facebook’s terms of service and data use, for example, runs to more than 15,000 words. But when you’re posting your entire life online, from important events to precious family photos, it’s advisable to have an idea of exactly who owns your content.

If you create it, you own it until you say otherwise. Under copyright law, from the moment you ‘fix’ your original creative work in a ‘tangible medium’, you own the rights to it.Typing a blog post on your laptop or taking a picture with your smartphone counts. So content that you create and then post to Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube or anywhere else is still yours.

By posting it online you have made it easier for people to infringe your rights by copying your content, but you haven’t given up those rights.

But that’s not the whole story. When you sign up for sites such as Facebook or Twitter, you grant the company a ‘non-exclusive, transferable, sublicenseable, royalty-free, worldwide license to use any of your photos, words or videos. This means they can use, copy, reproduce, process, adapt, modify, publish, transmit, display and distribute your content in any way, without notifying, crediting or paying you.

For example, a photo you post on Twitter remains your intellectual property, but you give Twitter the authority to do just about anything with the image. This caused a furore when Instagram was launched last year when the company amended its terms so that it owned the right to use members’ photos in advertising campaigns.

Jim Killock, Executive Director of the Open Rights Group, a campaign group for users’ rights online, says many of these terms are confusing: “People haven’t really understood what they’ve entered into. Often, companies will over-egg what they need, and it’s a land grab for users’ rights and content.”

Is it worth it?

Social network users can express their thoughts and feelings online and keep in touch with friends and family near and far. They can showcase work and give ideas a global audience that once seemed impossible to achieve. And they can also make new friends all over the world, in colourful and entertaining ways. But be aware of what you’re signing yourself up for when you post on social networks, and don’t let the somewhat universal terms of service put you off using them.

The key to protecting your child online is to equip yourself with a basic understanding of the things they do and say on the internet. Here are a few acronyms to watch out for:

**ASL**
Stands for ‘age, sex, location’. This could mean your child is using an anonymous chat room.

**POS or MOS**
Means ‘Parents over shoulder’ or ‘Mum over shoulder’. Similarly, GD9 means ‘code nine’, which implies parents are around, or KFC, which stands for ‘keep parents clued in’.

**IRL**
Stands for ‘In real life’ – worrying if your child is using it in the context of meeting someone they have met online, i.e. MIRL (meet in real life?) or LMIRL (let’s meet in real life). 

**PRON**
A deliberate misspelling of ‘porn’ to try and get round a web search filtering systems.

**Resources**
Teen trends change fast. If an acronym has you foxed, try netlingo.com.

Translating teenspeak

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10 apps for ages four to eight

Stimulate your little one's brain cells and funny bones with these apps, all available for iOS and Android (and read about in-app purchases on page 36).

**Stuart Dredge**
Guardian columnist and co-author of Apps Playground's 100 Best Pad Apps for Kids

**Dipdap, £1.99**
Based on the TV cartoon, this artistic app gives children drawing missions to help the Dipdap character progress. Whereas some drawing apps start with a blank screen and expect kids to fill it, this gives them a focus for their scribblings.

**Zoo Animals – Touch, Look, Listen, £1.49**
Pop-up books are fun in the real world, but the idea has also translated to apps. This book-app for pre-schoolers focuses on wildlife, with friendly narration introducing more than 60 animals.

**Ladybird: I’m Ready to Spell, £2.99**
This digital offshoot of Penguin’s much-loved Ladybird books is a polished spelling app based around a simple, fun mini-games – each with three levels to suit different ages and abilities.

**Endless Alphabet, from free**
A quirky spelling game that uses a troupe of noisy monsters to teach children more than 50 interesting words. The spelling aspect makes educational, but it’s playful nature means it never feels dull. Includes in-app purchasing.

**Mr Shing’s Paper Zoo, £1.99**
Kids create their own zoo of colourful animals, folding them together virtually using on-screen origami instructions. It teaches children to save virtual coins to spend in the game with no real-money in-app purchases required.

**BBC Cbeebies Playtime, Free**
TV's Octonauts, Alphablocks and Tree Fu Tom get engaging mini-games for pre-schoolers to play. It's been developed to ensure children can quickly play by themselves — although they'll want to share it with parents too.

**Toca Hair Salon 2, £1.99**
From the team behind Toca Builders, this turns kids into hairdressers – cutting, dyeing and brushing characters' hair however they like. It’s another open-ended app, with no specific goals other than to create and experiment.

**Endless Alphabet**

**Hakitzu Elite: Robot Hackers, Free**
An inventive app that teaches children the basics of computer programming by building and battling with giant robots. For slightly older kids, it’s a novel way to start them coding for fun. Includes in-app purchasing.

**FriendStrip Kids, free**
Let’s children feature in their own comic strips, with speech bubbles and suggested poses provided. They take photos to fill the frames, then star in more than 90 stories, which can be shared. Includes in-app purchasing.

**Spying on your kid’s online activity is not the answer**

Today's technology allows you to track everything your child is doing online. Thanks to key logging, web trackers and even simple history settings, parents have the power to snoop on their child's entire digital life. And with staggering figures showcasing children's online use, it's no surprise that some parents — as many as 53% in Britain — admit to secretly accessing their child's Facebook account or spying on their online activity.

More than two-thirds of children aged eight to 15 in the UK use a smartphone, tablet or computer to access the internet, and what they’re doing or seeing online is changing every day. New social networks or chat options open the door to inappropriate contact, and the sheer number of online destinations attracting our children’s attention can be baffling.

Just a couple of years ago, Facebook, YouTube and the occasional upstairs iChat roulette were all parents had to contend with. Now there’s Instagram, Snapchat, Fruit Ninja, Ask.fm and a host of other chat-enabled apps or websites. Combine this with the recent news that almost two million British children under 16 have been targeted by strangers on the internet and it’s clear why inappropriate contact or conduct you can bring the message home more effectively than by playing spy, says Joanna Malin, founder of Kiddiblog. "If you look too closely over your child’s shoulder, it gives them the impression you don’t trust them, which could make them more likely to go beyond your back and not tell you what they’re doing online. Send the message that you trust them.”

While a suite of parental controls is always a good idea — products such as Net Nanny or Norton Family filter inappropriate content — less monitoring and more dialogue is the answer to instilling in your child the tools they need to stay safe themselves.

**5 tips to help you find the ’trust balance’**

1. Agree limits with your child about how, and to what extent, you will monitor their social networks and their browsing history. "Spying" doesn’t have to be secret.

2. Keep an open dialogue with your child about their experiences online. Talk to them about what they use the internet for, what they enjoy doing and who they’re communicating with.

3. Stay observant and curious about your child’s life. How responsible and sociable they are communicating with others can be a good indicator of how much freedom you can trust them with online.

4. Remember what it’s like to be a teenager. It’s important that they know you trust them enough to give them some privacy and to let them make their own decisions. Don’t watch over their shoulder every time they use the computer.

5. Installing safety programs, parent controls or security software will help to keep your child safe and reduce the need for you to snoop on his or her online activities. Think Google SafeSearch, Net Nanny and Norton Family.

"As they get older, it’s really not OK to snoop on them. You wouldn’t hide in a bush and watch them or peek through a window at a party."

Comment

Jemima Gibbons
Author of Monkeys with Typewriters: Myths and Realities of Social Media at Work

Photo: iStock

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Mobile is at the heart of family

New research shows that the majority of UK parents and children believe their family relationships are enhanced by mobile

Mobiles are now firmly woven into the fabric of modern family life – so much so that 70% of under-18s feel their relationships with their parents, siblings and other relatives is much closer thanks to these smart devices.

According to the latest research from Vodafone, 89% believe mobile technology helps them to get along better with friends as well.

There are other benefits, with 50% of teenagers feeling more empowered to express themselves through technology – girls in particular say they are more confident texting or using online messaging than talking face to face.

The sense of security provided by their mobile is almost universal among teenagers too: 95% report that they feel safer leaving the house with their phone, mainly so they can call parents if they have a problem. One in five parents feel the same way, saying they wouldn’t let their child leave the house without a phone.

In fact, the mobile has earned its place in teenagers’ hearts that one in three say their mobile phone would be the one thing they’d save if their house was on fire.

When looking to the future, the differing views of parents and children are clear, with 63% of all the children surveyed admitting they are “looking forward to a time when all I need to carry is my phone”. The majority of parents, however, are still to be convinced. Just 34% of mums and dads can envisage “a future where mobile phones do everything”.

Teens are also having the last laugh. They can’t conceive of a life before the smartphone, with 50% of 16- to 18-year-olds admitting to feeling sorry for the dull lives their parents probably led in a pre-mobile world. “Our parents must have had a really boring time without mobile phones to entertain them,” said one empathetic adolescent.

“Our parents must have had a really boring time without mobile phones to entertain them”

Digital media boosts children’s reading age by 2.4 years

Technology is encouraging children to tackle more challenging books, according to recent research carried out by the University of Dundee for the What Kids are Reading report. Renaissance Learning, which compiled the report from the reading habits of more than 426,000 children, found that books were no longer ‘stand-alone products’. Instead, children are experiencing stories in multiple channels, with the top 10 dominated by titles from the Harry Potter series and The Hunger Games, which have been adapted into films, games or apps.

Finding out about stories from different sources is inspiring children to try more difficult reads too. The report found that five- to 10-year-olds in particular are enjoying books 2.4 years above their reading age.

Professor Keith Topping, at the School of Education, University of Dundee, who carried out the research, says: “It is wonderful what reading highly motivating books does for children. For years one-to-five, children are reading favourite books at far above their chronological ability, but are still maintaining a high rate of success.”

Create your own family IT policy

Some age-appropriate action plans to keep children safe online

Under 5

- The big issues
  - Create boundaries and rules for the amount of time your son or daughter can spend online. It’s never too early to start putting limits in place.
  - Compile a list of websites they’re allowed to visit and make sure they know why some websites are safer than others.
  - Discuss online privacy and the information they should never share online. Make sure they know they can’t use the internet increasingly for homework and socialising.

- The basics
  - Set parental controls on internet browsers by creating a user account for your child with appropriate settings. Check out Google’s safeearchkids.org for stress-free browsing.
  - Make rules for the length of time they can spend on games consoles, tablets and smartphones, as well as the computer.

- Worth checking
  - Online virtual worlds for children of this age. Visit, for example, bbc.co.uk/ceebies clubpenguin.com and moshiomnsters.com parents
  - The kind of language and acronyms used by children in chat rooms. Make sure you know what to look out for. Visit Head to netmama.com for demystifying cryptic teenspeak.

- Talk it through
  - Share your technology rules with grandparents, babysitters and older siblings, so that they stick to them when they look after your child or use the family computer.
  - Discuss the benefits and limitations of using the web to help with homework and school work.
  - Give the reasons behind boundaries, time limits and parental controls, and be prepared to start re-evaluating the restrictions in line with your child’s maturity.

- And finally...
  - The rules and conversations you have now will set the tone for your child’s internet use as they get older.
  - Other parents at your child’s school are a great source of information. Chat to them about how they help their children manage the digital world and make sure you’re all on the same page.
  - Tablets and games consoles shouldn’t become a regular ‘babysitter’.

6-9

- The big issues
  - Agree a budget for things like apps and music. Giving them control of their own spending money can be useful, but make sure your kids know how to manage their money responsibly.

- The basics
  - Choose an appropriate homepage on your family computer or tablet – for example, bbc.co.uk/ceebies

- Worth checking
  - The educational apps, games and TV shows on offer for pre-school children, and the age ratings and descriptions for them.

- Talk it through
  - Share your technology rules with grandparents, babysitters and older siblings, so that they stick to them when they look after your child or use the family computer.

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10-12

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13+

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Tablets and games consoles shouldn’t become a regular ‘babysitter’.
No tech at the table and other digital boundaries

You have rules for bedtime and homework but what about time spent online? Mummy blogger Anita Whittaker shares her tips for keeping her family safe and surfing

Do you have rules for your children about what time they have to be home, or how many snacks they can eat between meals? Maybe you have an entire list stuck to your wall, with instructions such as: “Speak kindly”, “Always tell the truth” and “Laugh louder”. Today, an agreement about technology dos and don’ts seems crucial. You might want to think about the age at which your kids can sign up to social media, whether their mobile phone usage counts towards their daily screen-time allowance, or if it’s OK for them to send selfies from the dinner table.

When you’re a busy parent, it’s easier to just set all this aside to worry about another day – probably when your child is older and more likely to get into trouble. But now, even pre-schoolers are getting online and using technology. A 2013 report from the EU Kids Online network, Zero to eight: Young children and their internet use, noted that, “very young children (eight and under) are showing particularly increased patterns of internet use” and tweens’ (nine- to 12-year-olds’) usage patterns “now resemble those of teenagers five to six years ago”. And thanks to blogs and social networking sites, where parents share scans and pictures, most babies under the age of two already have a digital footprint.

Meanwhile, a 2012/2013 CHILDWISE Monitor report spoke to almost 3,000 young people aged between five and 16 across the UK and found that 36% of nine- to 12-year-olds have a Facebook profile (in spite of the 13 years minimum age limit), while 30% of seven- to 16-year-olds who use the internet reported knowing someone who had nasty, unkind or untrue comments posted about them on social media.

“It’s always easy to be fearful of things you don’t know about and that’s something the media can play up to,” says Will Gardner, Chief Executive of Childnet. “But we’ve gone beyond the stage where it’s credible to throw the internet out. Children see how their parents use technology and they’re going to emulate that.”

As parents we’re role models, but let’s be honest: it’s hard to lay down the law if we’re addicted to technology and the internet ourselves. And who of us can say we’ve never checked our phone at the dinner table when a work text has come in, or sneaked onto Facebook while the children play at our feet?

We asked a mummy blogger – Anita Whittaker (onlyboysandtomboys.blogspot.co.uk), who has four boys, aged two to 19 – how she and her family created a workable set of digital rules.
When should kids get their own mobile?
Anita: I don’t think a child under 12 should have a phone, although Salvarni desperately wants one.
Salvarni: I know where my mum’s coming from. At times it’s a challenge, though, because I know a lot of what she’s telling me. I don’t use Twitter much, but when I do, I blocked my whole family. My Facebook is more open, so certain things I keep on the down-low because I have older relatives as friends. Instagram is a different story—I have all sorts of stuff up there. Lots of my friends’ parents don’t even know about sites like Instagram. That could be their downfall.
But really, it’s all about how smart you are. If you’re going to put something out there that you don’t want lots of people to see, then don’t put it out there. If you’re going to do it, have it all as private as possible or delete it after a while. It’s down to the individual.

How is your system working for your family?
Anita: When Zach and Alexander are Salvarni’s age, we won’t have done anything differently. But what we’ll do is make sure our youngest children know that I’ll be monitoring his account—his private space, it’s still public information.
Salvarni: How is your mum’s coming from. At times it’s a challenge, though, because I know a lot of what she’s telling me. I don’t use Twitter much, but when I do, I blocked my whole family. My Facebook is more open, so certain things I keep on the down-low because I have older relatives as friends. Instagram is a different story—I have all sorts of stuff up there. Lots of my friends’ parents don’t even know about sites like Instagram. That could be their downfall.
But really, it’s all about how smart you are. If you’re going to put something out there that you don’t want lots of people to see, then don’t put it out there. If you’re going to do it, have it all as private as possible or delete it after a while. It’s down to the individual.

How is your system working for your family?
Anita: When Zach and Alexander are Salvarni’s age, we won’t have done anything differently. But what we’ll do is make sure our youngest children know that I’ll be monitoring his account—his private space, it’s still public information.
Salvarni: How is your mum’s coming from. At times it’s a challenge, though, because I know a lot of what she’s telling me. I don’t use Twitter much, but when I do, I blocked my whole family. My Facebook is more open, so certain things I keep on the down-low because I have older relatives as friends. Instagram is a different story—I have all sorts of stuff up there. Lots of my friends’ parents don’t even know about sites like Instagram. That could be their downfall.
But really, it’s all about how smart you are. If you’re going to put something out there that you don’t want lots of people to see, then don’t put it out there. If you’re going to do it, have it all as private as possible or delete it after a while. It’s down to the individual.

Kaliyl: The idea of my mum monitoring what I’m doing is quite spooky. I can understand if there was a problem though, like people saying rude things to me.

How is your system working for your family?
Anita: We don’t look back and think we should have done anything differently. But what will we do when Zach and Alexander are Salvarni’s age, we honestly don’t know. When Salvarni was Kaliyl’s age, none of these things existed. In another 10 years the internet will be a different place entirely. We’ll just roll with it so we’re able to support the boys, whatever crops up.

How would you deal with cyberbullying?
Anita: We work behind the scenes to ensure our children are confident, so that bullying is not an issue for them, either on or offline. We understand the tech we use, and we encourage a traditional family situation where we try to talk about these subjects together as regularly as possible. For more advice on bullying, turn to our feature on page 29.

What are your rules around buying things online?
Anita: If I don’t know what something is, I Googled it. There are so many blogs and websites out there that can help you understand what to do. When I first heard about Instagram, I had no idea what it was, so I Googled it. Now I’m signing up and use it all the time—much to Salvarni’s disdain. Try things out for yourself and you’ll get a feel for what your kids are using.

What boundaries should I set?
Time Setting screen-time limits that periods that print watching TV, gaming or online are done consciously and with the intention of enjoying them before switching off to focus on something else.

Money: What are your rules around buying things online?
Anita: If I don’t know what something is, I Googled it. There are so many blogs and websites out there that can help you understand what to do. When I first heard about Instagram, I had no idea what it was, so I Googled it. Now I’m signing up and use it all the time—much to Salvarni’s disdain. Try things out for yourself and you’ll get a feel for what your kids are using.

Sharing: It’s illegal to publish video or images of friends without their consent, which means children should be very careful about social media. Kids should also be aware that photos they send of themselves should never tell someone, including people from their friends, about their school they go to or details they should automatically assume that anyone they write about will never tell someone, including people from their friends, about their school they go to or details that might identify them.

Content: For kids who are media savvy and have their own blog, remember that online seldom means private. They should automatically assume that anyone they write about will one day read their words—including mean comments about teachers, parents or schoolmates.
Your loved-up teen decides to take a casual flirtation up a notch by sending a risky self-portrait to their current crush’s phone. Instead of keeping it private, though, the recipient shares it online. What happens next?

Start with the facts
Explain that, if a teen has an indecent image of another minor, they are committing an offence.

Help them consider
the consequences
What parents and children worry about is vastly different. Young people worry more about their friends today than any future implications such as job opportunities.

Focus on issues rather than technologies
It’s important to understand the link between off and online vulnerability. Cyberbullying, for example, is often a continuation of bullying in the classroom, so making a bullied child close their social network accounts is unlikely to resolve the problem.

Make it relevant
Experts no longer label content inappropriate and encourage parents to consider what is ‘staged appropriate’. Be realistic and avoid shame or being dismissive of any sexual content outright. For example, a common phrase is “porn isn’t real sex, it’s just fantasy”, when in fact online porn is real and sex can involve fantasy.

Think about your worst case scenario plan
If the worst does happen, it’s important to know what to do and who to turn to for support. There are a number of charities and government organisations to help parents and young people who have fallen victim to abuse or exploitation online or through mobile devices. See page 23 for more information about support.
Got Naked Online, it can be worth increasing the
7hey could do it to fi  t in proYe their se[Xuality
if they have had a bad experience. In this instance,
hard enough from fi  nding it
there. You won’t stop those that are searching
adult site which is hosted outside the UK, it’s out
its removal. (networks, you can contact the site and ask for
understand. If it has been shared on social
it is the fi  rst option In many instances theyȂll
that can be done. Asking the recipient to delete
yar is free to download and is available
that posted the content
峃re a third party is involved
Contact third parties
5here a third party is involved, it’s Zorth contacting the person
because online content and safety.

Zipit app helps kids say no to sexting
Childline has launched a new app that gives teens a unique way to combat the sharing of intimate pictures or videos via text.
The Zipit app includes advice and funny pictures that young people can send to someone in real-time via the internet.

Prevention is better than cure
6ifferent young people to
think first, post later.
6iscuss potential negative
sequences with them. NSPCC
includes a specific advice section for parents explaining the ‘sexting’ phenomenon and where to get help.

Advice for parents:
theparentzone.co.uk has a digital parenting section with videos, how to guides, and features.
NSPCC.org.uk includes a specific advice section for parents explaining the ‘sexting’ phenomenon and where to get help.

Zipit is free to download and is available
for Android, Apple and BlackBerry smartphones (and Pod touch).

That’s GR8 M8 ;-)
Games for good

The power of play

From problem-solving to conflict resolution, video games are a great way for kids to develop core skills

Once the preserve of testosterone-fuelled teenage boys obsessed with shooting everything that moved on their computer monitors, video games now have universal appeal. Driven by the popularity of consoles and mobile devices, everyone from toddlers and teens to parents and grandparents are spending serious chunks of time exploring virtual worlds.

And, played in moderation, it seems they’re not bad for us either. A decade-long study of 11,000 UK children, recently published in the British Medical Journal, found that playing video games from as young as five years old doesn’t lead to behavioural or emotional problems later in life.

In fact, research suggests that video games can be a force for good – improving kids’ spatial awareness and problem-solving skills, as well as boosting their creativity. And their potential applications as an educational tool are attracting serious interest in the UK and abroad too – and they’re showing respect for the virtual worlds their friends have built.

“For me, Minecraft is the best ‘hook’ you could possibly have. If you say, ‘today, kids, we’re going to look at X using Minecraft’, a loud cheer erupts across the room. They’re learning through play, and it’s learning that sticks with them.”

Inspiring the next generation

Introducing online play in the classroom is more than just a handy study aid, though. Game-based learning could also inspire the next generation of game designers, and give children a leg-up when it comes to vital 21st-century skills.

Little Big Planet is a puzzle-based platform game published by Sony Computer Entertainment (SCEE). The point of the game is to navigate cute mascot Sackboy through all of the levels – you have the ability to create your own levels too. And the Little Big Planet EDU project has seen teachers use the game’s level creator for subjects as varied as science, technology, engineering, art and maths.

Barrow’s Primary School in Merseyside has even used it to bring Anthony Horowitz’s bestselling Stormbreaker novel to life, coding levels that would help to develop the protagonist’s skills. Deputy head at Barlow’s, Stacey Feenan, said the project was a revelation in game-based learning: “It has enabled pupils to develop programming, logic, teamwork and problem-solving skills, while having fun. They’ve seen their games console in a whole new light, discovering the science behind the play. In a world where students are on the lookout for the next big thing in technology, this game allows them to be the next big thing themselves, through exciting creation and logic tools.”

Dr Maria Stukoff, Head of Academic Development at SCEE, also believes that game-based technologies have much to offer in terms of child development. “Future-fit skills such as programming, art and design, 3D world-building and dealing with challenges help develop critical thinking – these are skills that will be required from our future workforce in engineering, science and the creative industries,” she says.

It’s not a case of games making children smarter – more that using them in a classroom environment can change young people’s attitudes towards what’s being taught, focus their attention and open up other avenues of creativity. So before you tell your child to switch their console off, or put their tablet away, consider the good that the time they spend with games could be doing for their future skills.

Adapting technology to aid lives

Beyond education, games can help to improve kids’ quality of life too. SpecialEffect is a UK charity that modifies equipment and consoles to level the gaming playing field for people with disabilities – and help them enjoy the inclusivity, competitiveness and fun of video games.

Personalised technology brings to life the gaming experience – and enables them to interact and socialise with friends and family in a way that we tend to take for granted. “Although our primary focus is on helping people benefit from the fun and inclusivity through video games, there’s often a wider impact to our work,” says charity spokesperson, Mark Saville. “Erin is a girl with severe disabilities who is using an eye-gaze system to play music, paint pictures and turn the pages of an onscreen book. Then there’s Rob, a young man who had a car accident that left him quadriplegic just days before he was due to go to York University last year. Using the eye-gaze system that we’ve lent him, he can type and access the internet, and he’s just been offered an unconditional place at Bristol University.”

5 tips for staying safe in online multiplayer games

1. Encourage your child to use a nickname and not their real name when playing online.
2. Make sure they know not to share personal information that could identify them, like their school, address or phone number.
3. If you allow your youngster to use the voice chat function on their console, remind them that the people they talk to are still strangers, and to be cautious.
4. If someone says or does something online that makes your child uncomfortable, make sure they know they can report this.
5. If in doubt, keep your child’s online multiplayer experience to real-life friends only. You can oversee their friends list, restrict their contacts through the console’s parental controls, and even disable multiplayer entirely.

Did you know?

Around 33 million people in the UK play video games – 23% of them are aged 16-24. There’s a 51% to 49% split between men and women
Digital skills for kids
Vodafone and Moshi Monsters have teamed up to help kids discover more about staying safe online

The internet can be a fun place for young children keen to explore the world and share their lives with family and friends. But it’s important that they know how to do this safely. And that’s why Vodafone has partnered with the hugely popular virtual world Moshi Monsters to produce a series of six free ‘Web Super Skills’ cards.

Drawing on advice from trusted experts, the Moshi Monsters cards feature tips for staying safe online, in the form of activities that children can learn from and enjoy. They teach kids about everything from safe downloading and sharing, to the difference between online and offline friends. They also cover how and when to report things to adults and good online behaviour – for example, not saying mean things to people online that you would never say in real life. The ‘Web Super Skills’ cards were created after Vodafone research uncovered that half of children under ten years of age think it’s OK to look at photos or videos they find online, and more than a fifth of kids have done or seen things on the internet that have scared them.

One of the best ways to encourage a safe and rewarding online experience for you and your child is to communicate with them about the risks and the best ways of staying secure. You can pick up your free Moshi Monsters cards in any Vodafone store or download them at vodafone.co.uk/moshi.

Protecting users from distressing online content
You can’t unsee what you’ve seen but you can report it, says the IWF

The internet is much like the offline world. On the whole, it’s a positive experience for everyone who uses it. Inevitably, however, there are some people who use it for illegal purposes and even innocent browsing can lead curious young people to parts of the web that contain illegal or distressing content. When that happens, it’s important to know what to do and where to turn. That’s where we come in.

“It’s important that internet users don’t just sign off when they encounter disturbing content and are aware of the ways to report it”

Suzie Hargreaves, CEO, Internet Watch Foundation, iwf.org.uk

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) is funded by 116 companies and organisations, including the biggest internet service providers and mobile phone operators. We work hard, monitoring the internet to make sure that disturbing bits of content – such as online child sexual abuse images and videos – is removed quickly and that the everyday person doesn’t have to worry about what we see. We want all UK internet users, young and old, to be aware of the ways they can report illegal content or images to the proper authorities. People do innocently stumble across child sexual abuse images and videos while browsing – we get thousands of reports each year from people who do just that. But if this happens, don’t just sign off and erase your browser history. Report it. It’s tempting to try and wipe it from your memory – and your PC’s. But you can’t unsee what you’ve seen but you can report it, says the Internet Watch Foundation.

Reporting to the IWF

1. Help your teenager get clued up on what to do if they accidentally find child sexual abuse imagery online by telling them about the IWF website: iwf.org.uk
2. The reporting process is all online – it’s simple, confidential and anonymous.
3. Reporting is the right thing to do. The person who comes across the illegal content is also a victim and won’t be questioned by the police or anyone about what they have seen.
4. It’s perfectly normal to be upset by this type of content – reassure your teenager that, if it happens, they can talk to you.
5. You can find a list of other useful organisations for other types of online content on the IWF website at iwf.org.uk/resources/useful-links

Here’s a novel way to learn about on- and offline friends. The card encourages children to draw their online friends, so they can see how easy it is to hide behind the internet.

What happens if your child sees something scary online? This card encourages them to talk about it with an adult, using key words in the wordsearch to help them.

Teach your child about stranger danger. A quarter of young children in the UK have admitted to sharing personal details and images with people they don’t know. We’ve all seen headlines about large bills from in-app purchases. Use the ‘Ask First’ card to teach kids about downloading apps and games and how they can accidentally spend money online.

This one’s for mum and dad – a card with details on setting up parental controls. Finding age-specific advice for kids and ways to report online concerns to the authorities.

We all know some young people who stumble upon upsetting content. What if your teenager found something really shocking? The reporting process is all online – it’s simple, confidential and anonymous.
Generation internet

Photos online before birth, a digital presence by the age of two, and your first mobile before you’re five – what it really means to be a digital native

Today’s children are digital from before they’re even born

23% of UK kids begin their digital lives in utero, with parents uploading their scans online

73% of children have a presence online by the age of two

They’re spending more time on mobile technology

They get their gadgets early

1 in 10 children are given their first mobile before they’re five years old

74% of eight- to 11-year-olds have access to an iPad or other tablet at home

63% of children get their first smartphone before they start secondary school

3,500,000 of the UK’s under-eights now have a tablet

Children have emotional concerns about using the internet, while parents’ concerns are much more practical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children worry about…</th>
<th>Parents worry about…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean things others have written</td>
<td>Receiving spam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing things that are too old for them</td>
<td>Viruses on the PC or laptop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other people pretending to be them</td>
<td>Unsolicited emails with questionable links</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pressure to appear popular or attractive</td>
<td>Seeing something nasty or offensive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, where is the internet? Kids think it’s…

“Inside our computer” 81%

“Everywhere” 23%

“In outer space” 8%

30% 23% 8%

While they’re surfing, they’re also learning new skills…

Researchers say social media enhances 21st-century skills including communication, creativity, collaboration, leadership abilities and technological proficiency

19% delete their internet history

12% have amended settings to use their browser privacy mode

6% uninstall filters designed to stop certain websites being visited

…but, being savvy doesn’t come with common sense

But points of conflict still emerge

70% of four- to 11-year-olds think it is OK to look at any videos or photos on the internet

Almost half of four- to 11-year-olds agree that some of their online friends might be pretending to be someone they are not

70% of four- to 11-year-olds recognise that some online content is for adults or might be rude

Adults are laying down the law, like time spent online

83% of four- to 11-year-olds have to follow rules when using a smartphone, tablet or computer, including:

Which websites they can visit 81%

How long they can be online for 72%

Where they can use their devices 41%

More than three-quarters of parents have spoken to their children about internet safety, but are they leaving it too late?

Nearly a third of all parents feel they need more support when it comes to internet safety

Support

Children worry about…

Parents worry about…
“Yeah, man. I’m a media mogul”

With a little risk and a lot of initiative, internet-savvy teens and twentysomethings are forging their own career paths in the digital world.

Jamal Edwards, 23
Who is he? YouTube entrepreneur and owner of SBTV
Claim to fame SBTV is worth more than £8 million. Sir Richard Branson is a close friend.
Words of wisdom “The more hits you get, the more interesting all advertisers’ eyes. We’ve got the creative ideas, the platform and reach. That’s why brands come to us.”

When Jamal was 15, he started using his video camera to film friends singing and rapping. What started as amateur filmmaking quickly turned into something bigger as his YouTube channel, SBTV (the SB stands for SmokeyBarz, Jamal’s rapping name) started to get hundreds of thousands of hits. After becoming a YouTube official partner on his third attempt (meaning he’s entitled to a share of the ad revenues his videos make), Jamal quit his day job at Topman to run SBTV full time.

Today he has 12 staff, a hub website and his own clothing line. In October 2013, Mitroma Ventures bought a share in SBTV for an undisclosed sum. Jamal now has his sights set on conquering America.

“I started my business online because I felt it was the most democratic space to start a business. It helped keep my costs down and it’s enriched my life. I’ve been catapulted into a global community, making the world around me more accessible,” he says.

Savannah Ali, Shanice George & Sana Sodki, 16
Who are they? Campaigners behind ‘Oi My Size’, a website educating young people to talk to each other with respect.
Claim to fame Beating the BBC to win the 2013 Nominet Award for making the internet a safer place.
Words of wisdom “We think the reason the website works is because it was created by young people for young people, so we know how best to communicate with them.”

Savannah, Shanice and Sara are three astute 16-year-olds behind educational website ‘Oi My Size’, which is run by Peabody as part of their Big Lottery-funded project, ‘Staying Safe’. The phrase ‘Oi My Size’ is a common chat-up line with teen boys and roughly translates as ‘you’re my type’. The name sets the tone for the site’s content, which includes a healthy dose of comedy video and relatable observations to educate young people about relationships and treating their partners, and each other, with respect.

The girls have proved themselves fearless in producing content that tackles weighty topics such as sexting, cyberbullying and violent relationships. “We wanted to educate boys on how they talk to girls and create a site that young people would watch… and, for four months, nobody did,” Savannah says. “Then Dailymotion told us that the girls did a ‘Beat the BBC’ interview in the Telegraph. ‘You’re putting your life out there on the web, so every day you’re working, whether you want to or not. It’s tweet or take a photograph every time I’m out – you never switch off.’”

And that doesn’t look likely to change. They have invitations to speak at conferences around the world and a social network based on JacksGap is already in the pipeline. It looks like that gap year project is going to run and run.

Jordan Casey, 14
Who is he? Self-taught computer programmer, founder and CEO of Casey Games.
Claim to fame Jordan was Europe’s youngest iOS app developer. He secured funding to develop his firm from Junior Dragon’s Zen’s Peter Casey.
Words of wisdom “Coding is amazing because you can be so creative with it. You can imagine something and do anything with it. You can make games, websites, even clocks or watches.”

Jordan began programming aged just nine. A year later, he turned his talents to producing games and music, swiftly becoming one of the most subscribed YouTube video bloggers in Ireland. In 2012 he founded Casey Games, an independent games company run by kids. The company has created four games to date, including the successful Alien Ball vs. Humans, for iPhone and Android. He recently launched a campaign called Make Coding Cool to promote coding for kids, and has his sights on launching The Kids in Technology Awards in 2014. “I think of starting young as a head start,” says Casey. “In ten years, I’ll be 24 and I’ll already have 11 years of experience working in this industry.”

Jack & Finn Harries, 20
Who are they? Jackson founded YouTube channel JacksGap. Together the twins run Digital Native Studios Ltd.
Claim to fame JacksGap is the 144th biggest YouTube channel in the world. It’s been viewed 50 million times.
Words of wisdom “The secret is our honesty. It’s real. We’re not putting up the wall that TV and film have. We’re just saying, ‘Hey, look, connect with us.’ That’s the charm of it.”

Jack Harries created his YouTube channel, JacksGap, in 2011, as a way of documenting his gap year travels for his family and friends. The idea that he could connect with people, wherever he was in the world, was so appealing that he was keen to give it a go. Not that he believed anyone would watch… and, for four months, nobody did.

All that changed with a guest appearance from his identical twin, Finn. When Jack’s main female fan base found out there was another brother just like him, subscribers went from zero to more than two million in the space of just two years.

Today, the brothers are official YouTube partners and the revenue from their videos blogs has seen them put university on hold – initially to keep travelling and now to concentrate on their film enterprises “Offers are coming in”, says Jack. “It’s allowed us to make it our full-time job.” But working 24/7 has its drawbacks. “We don’t have a lot of time to do other things,” he said, in a recent interview in the Telegraph. “You’re putting your personal life out there on the web, so every day you’re working, whether you want to or not. It’s tweet or take a photograph every time I’m out – you never switch off.”

And that doesn’t look likely to change. They have invitations to speak at conferences around the world and a social network based on JacksGap is already in the pipeline. It looks like that gap year project is going to run and run.
Parental responsibility

Tread carefully, digital footprints can last a lifetime

It’s tempting to share family moments online, but how will your ‘future teen’ feel about that cute toddler shot?

Vicki Shotbolt
CEO, The Parent Zone,
theparentzone.co.uk

Hidden in a corner of my mother’s cupboard is a family album showcasing some of the worst outfits of my teenage years. She knows better than to get the album out. I’ve also made sure it’s tucked behind the one that showcases my sister’s even greater fashion faux pas.

My son can’t use the same tactic:

“My son can’t use the same tactic. I can share photos of him at the press of a button. And I’m not alone. According to research by print site Posterista, 94% of UK parents post pictures of their children online, while two-thirds only use Facebook to post updates about their children or parenting issues.

And it’s not just photos – apparently the worst thing I’ve done to my son is share an audio recording of him singing as a boy treble, which is now his grandmother’s ringtone. As a cool 15-year-old, he regards his chorister years as something he’d rather not be reminded of. Who’d have guessed?

Well truthfully, I would. But I didn’t think about it. When my son was eight, his teenage years felt like another journey – one I wasn’t quite ready to make.

But it is worth pausing for thought. The intimate images and messages we share and forget in a week or two will last a lifetime online. In 2009, David DeVore posted a video of his young son still wobbly after a trip to the dentist. It went viral. “That was really the only time we thought, ‘Maybe we should take it down’... not until a year or two later and it really became a digital footprint,” he told CNN.

This year, the number of children contacting Childline about being bullied online rose by 87%. The charity BeatBullying estimates that one in three young people in the UK is a victim of cyberbullying. And that 33% of that number have attempted suicide.

What are the effects of cyberbullying?

In the ‘real’ world bullying was once confined to the playground, in its new online form, cyberbullying can be carried out through social media sites, texts, websites or instant messaging, and can present itself in upsetting or threatening messages, rumours or embarrassing photos or videos posted online.

Because children can access these channels 24/7 the victim can often feel there is no escape. “Cyberbullying increases isolation and impacts on mental health more than other forms of bullying,” explains Luke Roberts, National Co-ordinator of the UK’s Anti-Bullying Alliance. Readily anti-bullying websites and forums discuss the same potential effects, including depression, destroyed confidence, isolation, self-harming, and a reduced sense of security.

According to psychologist and author, Dr Terri Apter: “Some children are able to ignore online bullying, but most take it very personally, and are haunted by these anonymous and vicious expressions of ridicule and disdain. Not knowing the source, they may feel distrustful of anyone who might be – or is colluding with – the bully, and hence they withdraw from a wide circle of friends. The combination of anonymity with direct communication is highly unsettling.”

Amy-Louise Paul knows these feelings well. After a disagreement with a school friend, the then 13-year-old faced a trade of online hatred. Her tormentors set up a Facebook group called ‘We Hate Amy-Louise’. For all those people who hoped she was dead already, “I didn’t believe it at first. Then when I realised it was true, I was shocked.”

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“Even a teacher at my school would say something while I was online. It invaded everywhere.”

Our children are digital natives. Technology is part of their everyday lives. And the benefits it brings are well documented – from developing IT skills and providing a quick and easy way to research school projects, to allowing them to communicate globally and access exciting sources of entertainment.

But new tech has a darker side. “Trolls who send abusive messages to anyone they take an instant and often irrational dislike to are now as established on the online scene as they once were in fairy tales,” says Jane Wakelield, BBC’s technology reporter.

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5 tips to consider before posting

1. Take advantage of privacy settings and make sure your pictures are only seen by family and friends. Remember that even if your privacy settings are robust, once you’ve shared a photo it can be passed on.

2. Never share a photo of your child without their clothes on – even cute toddler shots.

3. Before you post, consider the potential ‘teenage cringe factor’.

4. Remember that children read things online and might not understand them properly. An angry online note to a friend, partner or even a teacher at your child’s school could easily be read by your child.

5. Ask yourself: “Would I have been happy if my mum had posted that for me?” If you don’t think you’d have liked your mum or dad to share something, the chances are your children won’t thank you for it either.

“51% of parents who use Facebook to post about their children have thought about the embarrassment it could cause in later life”

7 tips to consider before posting

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3. Before you post, consider the potential ‘teenage cringe factor’.

4. Remember that children read things online and might not understand them properly. An angry online note to a friend, partner or even a teacher at your child’s school could easily be read by your child.

5. Ask yourself: “Would I have been happy if my mum had posted that for me?” If you don’t think you’d have liked your mum or dad to share something, the chances are your children won’t thank you for it either.

“51% of parents who use Facebook to post about their children have thought about the embarrassment it could cause in later life”

Online bullying
7 ways to help your child if they’re being bullied

1. Let them share their concerns and what they want to happen.
2. Take their concerns seriously, while trying to remain calm.
3. Try not to attribute blame, even if your child has done something you advised them not to.
4. Report and take action to address the cyberbullying. Save any messages as proof, take screenshots of private messages – and don’t delete anything.
5. Take action to prevent further bullying: remove the bully from friends lists, set your child’s profile to private, if it isn’t already, and block any offending phone numbers.
6. If the bully is someone at school, talk to a teacher or the headteacher and find out what their anti-bullying policy is.
7. Remain sensitive to your child’s feelings. So, for instance, don’t indefinitely ban their use of all internet-enabled devices.

Please note: much of the advice here was created in consultation with the NSPCC Participation Unit, speaking directly with children and young people about how to tackle cyberbullying.

Even after her cyberbully was made to take the Facebook page down in front of the headteacher, there was no escape for Amy-Louise. “People were still talking about it. I felt suicidal and told my mum I didn’t want to be here anymore. That really scared her, so she encouraged me to contact ChildLine. I found talking to them easier than speaking to someone I knew. I was able to go at my own pace. They gave me advice on how to get through it and helped me speak to my family again too. I’m at college now and am coming to terms with what happened. But I know ChildLine are always there if I need them,” Amy-Louise says.

Tackling the taunters

According to statistics, girls are twice as likely as boys to fall victim to or to perpetrate cyberbullying. Research also shows that those with special needs, in receipt of school meals or from minority groups are at risk too. But only one in 10 victims of cyberbullying will tell a parent or trusted adult of their abuse – so what can parents do to reduce the chances of their child being affected?

David Elstone, headteacher at Hymers College in Hull, thinks parents need to be educated about what is happening in the digital space. "A huge number of parents just don’t understand today’s digital world. And because [of that], they can’t teach their kids how to use it appropriately.”

Anthony Smythe, Managing Director of Beattalking, says parents must explain to children how to enjoy the internet safely. “We found that more than a quarter of 12- to 16-year-olds had witnessed bullying online, but only half did something about it.” He advises children being bullied online to “save and print out bullying messages or pictures they receive, noting dates and times. They should never respond or retaliate, as this can make things worse. Instead, they should block the users sending the messages.”

One in five children think being bullied online is part of life. It doesn’t have to be that way. Young people should always report anything abusive they see online to the site concerned. Flag it, report it, and talk to someone about it.

Resources

The Diana Award runs a national anti-bullying programme, training young people to stay safe on- and offline. diana-award.org.uk/news-events/stay-safe-in-cyberspace
NSPCC has trained counsellors available alongside advice pages for parents: nspcc.org.uk/online-safety or call free on 0800 800 5000
ChildLine allows children to email, chat online or post to its message boards. It’s free, private and confidential with advice on how to report bullying. childline.org.uk/Explore/Bullying/Pages/online-bullying.aspx or call 0800 1111
beattalking.org offers advice for parents on how to speak to their child if they are being bullied online, and how to report abusive content on social networks.
facebook.com/safety/bullying Tips to help those affected by bullying stand up for each other.
anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk is a coalition of organisations and individuals that works together to stop bullying. It supports a network of schools and colleges and coordinates Anti-Bullying Week.
Vodafone Guardian can help with bullying as it lets you reject messages from particular numbers (see page 4 for details).

What to do if your child is the bully

Young people who have never bullied anyone in real life could be drawn to cyberbullying because they think they are anonymous. They may do or say things they wouldn’t dream of doing face-to-face, because they think they are behind a screen.

They might succumb to peer pressure and pass on a bullying email or join in a conversation on a social media site without thinking of the consequences.

And, like all bullies, cyberbullies rely on others to endorse their behaviour, do not join in or simply not challenge them. Cyberbullying can also be aimed at adults they want to ridicule or upset – for example, teachers.

If you think your child could be bullying someone

1. Talk to them openly about what they are doing and why it is unacceptable.
2. Listen to what they say – they may genuinely not understand the effect they are having on someone else or that what they are doing is bullying.
3. Try to find out why they started bullying someone in the first place. They may be trying to impress a new group of friends or may themselves be the victim of bullying.
4. Be proactive and talk to their teacher if necessary – assure the school you are working with them to prevent it from happening again.
5. If someone accuses your child of cyberbullying, listen to their concerns. Your first reaction may be to defend your child, but you must remain calm, promise to speak to your child and get back to them straight away.
6. If they have been bullying someone, accept that your child can make mistakes, take action and find a way to move on. Ignoring the problem will mean your child is likely to bully again.
7. Implement consequences by limiting internet time or making their device away. Explain what you expect of them in order to regain your trust and the use of their device.

Online bullying
Better safe than sorry

Net-wise teens can access the latest tune or film at the click of a button. But that “free” content can bring unwelcome added extras

"If you’re worried about striking a balance between safeguarding and lock-down, apply the same rules you would in real life"

Internet security

Tony Neate
CEO, Get Safe Online
gotsafeonline.org

Perhaps in 40 years, this generation will look back on the world of digital natives from the year dot – and instinctively teach their kids how to stay safe online. Today, though, parents can feel intimidated by the complex, fast-moving digital world.

All too often, a nasty new virus will sprout up like wildfire across the internet, another peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing network will pop up, or a fraudulent ‘phishing’ scam will dupe the unsuspecting into giving away their valuable personal details.

And burying your head in the sand, hoping nothing bad will happen, isn’t the answer. Parents need to do a bit of homework to understand the ways in which computers, phones and other devices can be compromised, and how to prevent this.

Things to watch out for

Computer viruses include Trojans (malicious code contained within seemingly harmless programmes), spyware (software that covertly sends your hard drive data to another person or reveals your online activities – including surfing and payment information), ransomware (which locks your computer until you’ve paid a ransom), malware (software designed to damage your machine) or adware (software that bombards you with unwanted advertisements).

And there are three main ways to ‘contract’ these viruses: opening harmful email attachments from strangers or spambots; downloading files from the internet; or visiting malicious websites.

Unfortunately, however, there’s no definitive guide to spotting or avoiding such potential risks to your computer and what’s in it. But there are things you can do – such as never opening email attachments from unknown senders; and not downloading apps or data files from an untrusted source. Of course, it’s impractical to think you can ever be completely certain, so it’s a good idea to make sure you’re always watching what your child does online – at some point they’ll probably visit a risky site, open an unsolicited email and download something dodgy.

And most times you won’t even know your computer has been invaded. So parents need to ensure they have up-to-date security software on all their devices. Trusted solutions from providers such as Kaspersky or Symantec can both prevent infection and let you scan for any suspects.

That copyright chat

When it comes to downloading, meanwhile, most youngsters are using P2P file-sharing sites that are free and typically illegal – they don’t see the consequences of this activity in the same way they’d view walking into a shop and stealing a DVD. In a survey by the Board of Film Classification, a third of 11- to 12-year-olds admitted they had recently downloaded or streamed a film from a pirate site.

Communication is part of the answer. Parents should be aware of the copyright laws their children could be falling foul of – together with the other consequences of downloading files from the web – and discuss these with them.

Parents can even direct their kids to sites including FindMyFilm.com – where users can watch, stream or buy films legally.

Having a frank, helpful chat might not be a cure-all, though. In which case, it’s worth keeping an eye on for parental security software that allows you to review your child’s downloads. If you’re worried about striking a balance between safeguarding and lock-down, apply the same rules you would in real life. You wouldn’t let your child go to the park alone at a very young age. But as they get older, you may go with them and sit on a bench some way off.

Don’t forget smartphones

A common mistake is to protect a home computer. But not mobile devices, which kids are increasingly using to access the internet. Gadgets that run on Microsoft or Android are both more vulnerable than Apple phones or tablets powered by iOS, and the danger of being hacked via rogue apps is online activity.

Fortunately, there are free apps you can download that include effective filters and firewalls – such as Avira or Avast – as well as plenty of premium, paid for options. Vodafone offers its customers Vodafone Protect, which includes anti-virus software. Find out more at vodafone.co.uk/protect.

7 ways to keep your kids safe online

1 Ask your child to show you their favourite websites, and revisit them in your own time. Explore the space and find out how to set up safety features.

2 To spot spam, look out for messages with poor spelling and grammar, and requests to forward an email to multiple people. Always have your spam filter switched on to minimise the risks.

3 Phishing emails make offers that seem too good to be true, or have a strong sense of urgency. If an organisation you trust is requesting personal information, don’t click on any links – go direct to their website to make sure it’s genuine.

4 Protect all your devices with anti-virus software and make sure you regularly install updates to any programs or apps.

5 Do not open attachments from any unknown sources.

6 Never open or forward a suspicious-looking email, or respond to a social media message from someone you don’t know.

7 Teach children not to use an unsecured Wi-Fi hotspot when out and about, especially if what they are doing is personal or private.

Too much of a good thing?

Most families balance online and offline activities. But what do you do if your child shows signs of screen addiction?

Recent studies have revealed that, by the age of seven, the average British child will have spent the equivalent of a whole year of his or her life in front of a screen, and one in five children has used a smartphone or tablet before they can talk.

They’re striking statistics which show how much technology is part of children’s lives. Few of them can comprehend a world without the internet, or in some cases when all phones could do was make calls.

And while, for most, activities such as school, socialising and family time don’t stop with bedtime, in extreme cases, children denied online access can display behaviour similar to a gambling addict who can’t place a bet.

Child psychiatrist Dr Richard Graham, founder of the UK’s first dedicated Technology Addiction Service for Young People, at Capio Nightingale Hospital, has first-hand experience of the effect that excessive use of digital technology can have on families.

For children displaying addictive traits, having internet access takes over to such a degree that even essential needs such as eating or sleeping are replaced by their desire to stay online.

There are a couple of cases that I have been involved in where parents tried to restrict their teenager’s access to devices and were met with such desperate and violent reactions that the police had to be called,” says Dr Graham.

And it’s not just game-obsessed teens that he’s treated. His youngest patient was a 13-year-old who was so obsessed with playing on his parents’ iPad for three-to-four hour stretches that they needed advice on what steps to take. “We’ve had success,” says Dr Graham. “Younger and younger children are more engaged with technology and the internet. We need to be mindful of that and set boundaries from the beginning of life, really.”

So how can you tell if your child is heading towards addiction? Dr Graham and his team start by asking the child how much internet use affects the rest of their life. How much they crave it, and if they deny they are using it or underplay how long they spend online.

Their responses to these questions help Dr Graham identify the level of difficulty the person has being offline.

Some young people are wedded to their consoles because online they can achieve considerable success in games and gain status, yet struggle to leave the house, even to go to the community. “You have to have the family to accompany very ordinary things, which builds confidence.”

But how? Child behaviour is hard when technology is such an integral part of our daily lives. For the most addicted of Dr Graham’s patients, however, a week-long digital detox is prescribed. “In tandem with diet and exercise, this seems to improve the mood,” he says. “To create a healthier online/offline balance, Dr Graham suggests alternating tech-off at set time each evening or for one day a week. And that doesn’t just mean your child’s smartphone. As Dr Graham explains, parents’ behaviour can be highly influential. ‘The issue isn’t just about reducing children’s access. Adults need to be modelling a healthy balance and stop themselves constantly checking their devices for emails and texts. In fact, a good way of moving forward is for everyone in the family to take a break from technology for one or two days a week. It creates a feeling of fairness that helps with achieving a good balance.’”

In stead of each other, talk instead. Rather than watching YouTube, have quality family time. Go out or do a physical activity you all enjoy. Some withdrawal symptoms of going offline are reduced by having something to do, especially if it involves all your senses. You may end up enjoying each other’s company, and at the end of the detox, you’ll have something ‘real’ to tweet about.

7 ways to keep kids’ screen-time in check

1 Pay attention to how much time your child spends online. Is it increasing rapidly or interfering with their offline life?

2 Recognise any underlying problems that may be supporting internet addiction. Is your child feeling left out at school going through distress in another area of their life? They could be using the internet to cope.

3 Modify the time your child spends online step by step. Make a commitment to turn off the computer, tablet or smartphone at the same time each night, or set limits on using electronic devices before chores are completed.

4 Organise offline activities and opportunities to balance out time in front of a screen.

5 Get support from partners and other family members. The more experience your child has in real life, the less they will need to turn to the internet for social interaction.

6 Organise online activities and discuss these with them. As Dr Graham’s patients learn, there are plenty of premium, paid-for options. – such as Avira or Avast – as well as free apps you can download.

5 ways to keep kids’ screen-time in check

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Digital detox

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Resources

Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/resources/youngpeople

YoungMinds youngminds.org.uk

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Digital detox

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Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/resources/youngpeople

YoungMinds youngminds.org.uk

Your digital detox plan

To report online fraud actionfraud.police.uk

For advice on staying safe online get safe online

tosafety.net

Resources

To report online fraud actionfraud.police.uk

For advice on staying safe online get safe online

tosafety.net

For tips on protecting your home or business from cybercrime cyberstreetwise.com

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tosafety.net

For tips on protecting your home or business from cybercrime cyberstreetwise.com
Stranger danger

Online grooming is rare, but it does happen. Louise Chunn, founder of wellbeing.org, explores how to guard against and report suspect behaviour.

Gain your child’s confidence
It works like this: abusers contact young people online, sometimes disguising their identity, and try to entice them to swap images or communicate about sex online. They might be using social media, in a chatroom or in a multiplayer game, but often they will try to lure the young person somewhere more private. If they do manage to get a sexualised image from a child, they will use it to blackmail the child into further sexual acts or even self-harm captured on webcam. And if the child won’t co-operate? Then they threaten to send the original image to the child’s friends and family.

Research by EU Kids Online shows that just under a third of children in the UK have had contact online with people they hadn’t met before. CEOP is also getting around 1,600 reports a month, as extortion is becoming more common. This doesn’t mean that the internet is inherently dangerous for your children, but it does mean that you ought to take the situation seriously. You may not have the technical know-how to stop such people in their tracks, but you can arm your children with the necessary skills for snuffing out suspect behaviour.

Agree the limits
Removing all digital devices is not an option. For teens and tweens, phones and computers signal independence and, most importantly, keep them in contact with friends. Taking them away is likely to backfire.

Jonathan Baggaley, Head of Education at CEOP, advises that parents seek to guide their children. “Young people need to understand that there are some areas – such as sex – that are not safe to talk about online. They need to know what is appropriate and what is not. Parents need to have a conversation with their children to agree the limits of sensible behaviour.”

Notice the warning signs
Children don’t always understand that people can pretend to be who they’re not online. They should also be warned against anyone who, from the beginning, is excessively attentive and flattering, especially about their appearance and ‘sexiness’.

“Children being groomed by online predators often undergo subtle behavioural changes,” says Baggaley. “They may become secretive about who they are talking to and where they conduct their online conversations. In the real world we treat strangers with caution. Similar care should be given to your child’s new online ‘friends’.”

Remember to communicate
Show an interest in what your children do online, who their friends are and what sites they visit. Young people can see things in extremes, but even in serious circumstances, with help from the police, it is never too late, and the situation is never hopeless.

3 quick tips
Watch ‘Thinkuknow’ films
A resource explaining online stranger danger to school children and young adults. Your child may already have watched one of these CEOP films at school – they’re a great way to start a conversation about what can go wrong online. Find them at thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

Are you an adoptive parent? Many adopted children and young people encounter negative experiences in their childhood that can make them more vulnerable to risks online. Recognise the added dangers and talk to your child.

Report inappropriate contact
Let your child know that it can be easy to get into trouble online and you’re there to help. If they’ve experienced inappropriate contact, report it using the red ClickCEOP button at ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

“Young people need to understand that there are some areas – such as sex – that are not safe to talk about online”

Recognising risks

Catfish: a person who pretends to be somebody else on social media

Nev Schulman and Max Joseph, makers of MTV’s docudrama, Catfish, share their tips on how to spot a fake online profile

Check Facebook pages
If you’ve met a person online, look at their Facebook page and see how real they seem. Do they know the people posting on their wall? Do they seem to be in a normal acquaintance circle? Check how many friends they have. A few friends under 1000 means it’s either a new profile or a fake one. An excessive number of friends is a red flag too.

Investigate their photos
Has the person posted lots of photos of themselves? If they have, are the pictures tagged? If so, and you follow the tag, does it lead to profiles for people who seem real? If their pictures aren’t tagged, the person probably doesn’t know the other individuals—or it’s not them in the photos. If their photos seem to be all professional or publicity shots, they could be fake. Ask for proof. If you’ve met a person online, ask them or her to take a photo holding up something specific, like a daily newspaper or driver’s licence. If they won’t do this, it’s suspicious.

Beware of extravagance...
Keep an eye out for anyone with a super glamorous career. Catfishes love to say they’re models. If the person you’re talking to online seems to live an extravagant lifestyle with private jets and famous friends, that’s an alarm bell right there.

…and too much drama
It’s a warning sign if the person you’re talking to has a lot of intense drama in their life—for example, car crashes, terminal diseases and deaths in the family. Often, the catfish will use tragic situations as a way to elicit sympathy and prevent the other person from asking too many questions.

Ask to live chat via webcam
The biggest red flag is if the person you’re talking to is reluctant to live chat via webcam, FaceTime, Skype or Google Hangout. Most computers, laptops and phones have cameras built in. If the person you’re talking to claims they don’t have a webcam, suggest they find one. If they won’t prove they are who they say they are, they’re not that person.

If it seems too good to be true, it probably is
Bottom line: do your research and use common sense. Google the person – be persistent and search for at least 30 minutes. Make them earn trust before revealing too much.
The real cost of ‘virtual coins’

The Office of Fair Trading is urging developers to take action to ensure kids don’t run up big bills from in-app purchasing. And, it says, parents need to act too.

You’ve run out of virtual coins. You can buy more now! It’s a familiar offer for anyone who enjoys playing games on their tablet or smartphone. But gaming apps that encourage users to purchase costly add-ons are coming under fire from UK consumer groups, who say this sales tactic leaves users, and kids in particular, vulnerable to unexpected costs.

Bills you didn’t bank on

In-app purchases (IAPs) are a big win for game developers, who are reacting to our increasing reluctance to pay for apps upfront. But pricey IAPs mean young players unwittingly rack up huge sums on games where spending is charged against a parent’s bank account. In the current marketplace, for example, more than 50% of the online games sold in the UK are advertised as ‘free’, but carry hidden costs.

One potentially expensive example is the My Little Pony app, a game aimed at six- to nine-year-old girls, which offers users the chance to purchase a virtual ‘mountain of gems’ for a real life £69.99.

Such temptations can prove irresistible to a child caught up in playing to win. Last year, five-year-old Danny Kitchen from Bristol ran up a bill of £1,700 on his parents’ iPad in just 10 minutes buying costly add-ons from the game Zombies vs Ninja.

Similarly, eight-year-old Lily Neale from Somerset unknowingly spent £4,000 playing Campus Life, My Horse, Hay Day and Smurfs’ Village on her dad’s iPad – all games aimed at children under 10. The money was eventually refunded to Lily’s father. But many parents end up taking the hit and paying a significant amount for a few minutes of child’s play.

“Five-year-old Danny Kitchen ran up a bill of £1,700 on his parents’ iPad in just 10 minutes buying costly add-ons from the game Zombies vs Ninja”

The OFT urges fair play

Headlines such as the one above played their part in the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) carrying out a five-month investigation looking at 38 web and mobile apps likely to appeal to children. It found some included “potentially unfair and aggressive commercial practices” and children’s “inexperience, vulnerability and credulity” were being exploited by the app creators.

The OFT said it was particularly concerned about games which imply the player would somehow be letting down other players or characters if they did not obtain something by making a purchase – and about blurring the distinction between in-game currency and real money.

The resulting Children’s Online Games report concludes that the app-based games industry “needs to do more to protect children”.

As a result of the report’s findings, the OFT has ordered gaming app developers to clean up their act, and if they continued to engage in potentially unethical commercial practices, it will take action.

However, the OFT also urged parents and carers to protect their children and their bank account. Chief Executive, Clive Maxwell, said, “Our advice is that parents check their device settings, play their child’s games themselves and read the game’s description online. Parents will also be encouraged to report concerns to Citizens Advice.”

Creating standard practices

Many app developers welcome discussions on setting commercial standards for IAPs, and the recognition that parents, as well as the industry, have a part to play in protecting children from the excesses of IAPs.

For many developers, the use of IAPs is essential to help fund research and development of new games to bring to market. “These responsibly, micro-transaction-based business models give choice and value for both players and businesses,” Dr Jo Twist, Chief Executive of the British games industry body UKIE, told the Guardian. “Flexibility for companies to operate different business models is crucial, and it is good to see the OFT recognise this.”

3 ways to avoid bill shock from in-app purchases

1 Try it yourself

In-app purchases aren’t bad in themselves, as long as they’re used responsibly and under the full control of parents. Whenever you’re downloading a free game for your child, it’s a good idea to play it yourself first, to understand how in-app purchasing is used, and whether you’re comfortable with it.

2 Set a password

Both iOS and Android devices let you force a password to be entered before purchases can be made on the device. Don’t share this password with your children – a tip that may sound obvious, but which many parents don’t follow. And never check the ‘Remember Me’ box, because it will override parents don’t follow. And never check the ‘Remember Me’ box, because it will override.

3 Give your kids digital pocket money

Talk to your children about in-app purchases, and encourage them to take a responsible attitude towards them. As they grow older, consider giving them ‘digital pocket money’ in the form of an iTunes or Google Play gift card, so they can spend within limits, and may learn about budgeting too.

In-app purchases for children

In-App Purchases can be a tool for building a child’s increased independence. Here’s how to keep on top of their mobile lives.

Setting up smartphone controls

Smartphones are a big part of your child’s increased independence. Here’s how to keep on top of their mobile lives.

Enabling restrictions

You can enable Restrictions, also known as parental controls, on iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

Restrictions stop you from using specific features and applications, automatically block access to adult websites or only allow access to a specific set of permitted websites.

Tap Settings > General > Enable Restrictions and enter a passcode. You can use the passcode to change your settings or turn off Restrictions. If you lose or forget your Restrictions passcode, you will need to perform a factory restore to reset it.

Using restrictions

You can restrict access to applications and features, including Safari, Games, App Stores, FaceTime, iTunes Store, iBooks Store, the Games Center, Including Multiplayer Games and Adding Friends.

Privacy settings

You can prevent changes to privacy settings, including Location Services, Contacts, Calendars, Reminders, Photos, Bluetooth, Sharing, Microphone, Twitter, Facebook, and Advertising.

Content types

You can prevent access to specific content types including Ratings (select the country in the ratings section to automatically apply the appropriate content ratings for that region), Music and Podcasts, Movies, TV shows, Books, Apps, Siri, Websites, and the time necessary before a password is required to purchase content.

Manage your child’s account

If your child is over 13 or has an account through the Apple ID for Students programme, you may want to explore the possibility of allowing him or her to make purchases from iTunes using iTunes Gifts or a monthly allowance.

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Get a Microsoft account
If your child has a Windows Phone mobile, they’ll need a Microsoft account to use it. If they use Xbox Live, Outlook, Windows 8 or OneDrive, they may already have an account and can sign in with that.

To create a Microsoft account, your child needs to follow the setup instructions on their phone, or visit live.com. Once they get to the ‘Keep Your Life in Sync’ page, select ‘Create One’ to set up a Microsoft account. You will also need an account to monitor their settings.

Allow app and game downloads
1. Set up ‘My Family’ – a feature that lets you turn on app and game downloads for your child’s phone. You can also set the game ratings they can access.

2. Go to the Windows Phone website, and hover over the ‘Explore’ option. From the dropdown that appears, access ‘My Family’ and sign in using your Microsoft account.

3. On the My Family page, click ‘Get Started’. If you’ve used My Family before, you may not see this option, in which case select ‘Add a Kid’.

4. To add your child, hit ‘Go’. When prompted, enter their Microsoft account email address and password.

5. On the My Family homepage, click ‘Change Settings’ next to your child’s name. From here you can block your child from downloading apps and games. You can also decide if they only download free apps, or both free and paid for.

6. Click ‘Change Rating’ to go to the Microsoft Family Safety website.

Set up Kid’s Corner
If your child is too young to have a smartphone, but loves playing with your Windows Phone mobile, you can set up a protected Kid’s Corner. This feature is like having a phone within a phone, and gives your child access only to the apps and features you choose for them. You can let them take pictures, play games, watch videos, listen to music and personalise their Start screen, safe in the knowledge that they’re playing Angry Birds, not texting your boss.

1. At the ‘Start’ menu, tap ‘Kid’s Corner’, then ‘Next’.

2. To add content, tap ‘Games’, ‘Music’, ‘Videos’ or ‘Apps’ and select the items you want them to be able to view.

3. Tap ‘Done’, then ‘Next’, and select ‘Finish’ to save.

4. Set a passcode for your phone so that your child can’t access your homepage. To do this, go to ‘Settings’, and ‘Lock Screen’. Turn ‘On’ Password, then enter text into the ‘New Password’ box. Tap ‘Done’ to save.

6 steps to enable Parental Controls
1. On the homescreen, click ‘Settings’.

2. Next select ‘Security and Privacy’.

3. Click ‘Parental Controls’, and then turn the app to ‘On’.

4. Next, follow the prompt to set up your parental controls password.

5. You can now select from a series of options to allow or limit the use of services such as Phone Calls and Text Messages, Camera and Video or the BlackBerry World store. Your options will be saved automatically.

6. You can change the Parental Controls settings by taking steps one to three and entering your password.

Remember
BlackBerry parental controls are also available for BlackBerry OS 7.1. To upgrade your software, visit: uk.blackberry.com/services/blackberry

If your child’s BlackBerry smartphone doesn’t have parental controls built-in to the Settings menu, download the app on BlackBerry World at appworld.blackberry.com
All the UK mobile operators sell their phones with parental control filters set to ‘On’. If your child has a phone previously owned by an adult, it would be worth checking that the parental controls are still on. Visit the website of your network operator for details. For more information and to turn on Content Control, go to the My Account section of the Vodafone website: vodafone.co.uk

## Tame your teen’s mobile spend

With their appetite for texting and downloads, teens’ mobile costs can soar. Here are a few suggestions for keeping them in check.

### Pay monthly vs Pay as you go

The first decision you’ll have to make is which type of contract to choose. Pay monthly or Pay as you go? Pay monthly customers must be over 18, so if that’s the route you prefer, you’ll have to set up the contract on your child’s behalf – and you’ll be liable for any charges.

Choose a tariff that reflects their usage so you’re not paying more than you need to, or over the odds for usage above monthly allowances. And go through monthly bills with your child, so they understand where the money is being spent.

A Pay as you go plan, where calls and texts are paid for in advance, will allow children greater control over their mobile spending. Top-ups or credit could be given instead of pocket money, and can be purchased easily via the mobile provider, or while out and about.

### Mobile payments

It’s easy to buy products or services from a mobile device. Teach your kids to think before they buy. Look out for the Payfort trust mark – companies signed up for this will clearly explain any charges and send you a receipt via text message.

Setting a password for purchasing and downloading apps will encourage older children to think before they click. You may want to go even further and disable mobile payments completely – your network provider can help you with this. If that seems extreme, some companies set limits, per transaction or monthly, to prevent overspending. Alternatively, you can request that receipts for apps are emailed to you so you can monitor purchases.

### Premium services

It’s not just mobile payments that can rack up charges – premium-rate numbers, apps, games and content could carry charges that fall outside your price plan. Premium-rate numbers generally begin with 09, 118, 0871, 0872 or 0873. But even calls to 0843, 0844 or 0870 numbers can cost more from a mobile. To check costs, use the PhonespayPlus Number Checker at phonepayplus.org.uk.

Children can also be tempted to pay extra for items such as food, treasure or weapons in a game, especially when the charges seem low and they downloaded the original app or game for free. If a child is using your credit card or Pay monthly mobile account, the only limit that applies is your own credit limit. Be sure to set a password to avoid nasty bill shocks. (See page 36 for more advice on in-app purchasing.)

### Travel and data roaming charges

Trips abroad can mean eye-watering charges when you return, unless you manage your mobile use carefully. Though new EU regulations will limit data roaming charges from July 2014, it will still cost more to use your mobile abroad – and calls, texts and data use won’t be covered by your normal price plan.

The easiest way to prevent charges from sky-rocketing is to switch off data roaming in your settings before you travel. If you want to go further, you could switch off all mobile data. Make sure children understand the charges, and that they’ll incur costs even for receiving calls and texts.

Before you travel, check whether your network provider offers a roaming package. These are often more cost-effective than paying the regular charges for overseas use – just ensure you know what’s included.

### Resources

Visit phonepayplus.org.uk, which regulates premium-rate services in the UK, payfort.org is the simple and safe way to buy content and charge it to your phone bill.

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**How to…**

**How to…**

**Android**

Control the type of apps downloaded to the phone

1. First, click on Google’s Play Store app to launch it. It’s pre-installed on all Android phones.
2. In the top right-hand corner of the screen, there are three small blocks sitting on top of each other. Click on them to reveal a drop-down menu, then choose ‘Settings’.
3. Now, under the ‘User Controls’ menu, you’ll find an option for ‘Content Filtering’. This lets you choose a maturity level for the apps you’ll be able to download. They’re rated for ‘Everyone’, ‘Low Maturity’, ‘Medium Maturity’ and ‘High Maturity’, or ‘Show All Apps’. Once you’ve made your choice, only apps you’ve deemed appropriate can be downloaded to the phone.

Set a password for app purchases

Android’s default setting requires you to enter a password before downloading an app. To change this, go to the ‘User Controls’ menu and click on ‘Require password for purchases’. You’ll get three options for when a password is needed to buy apps: ‘For all purchases through Google Play on this device’, ‘Every 30 minutes’ and ‘Never’.

Prevent apps from revealing your location

1. Click on the application icon at the bottom right of your phone’s home screen.
2. From the ‘Settings’ menu, choose ‘Location’ and ‘Security’.
3. Choose ‘Off’ to prevent apps from revealing your location.

How to enable Content Control

1. Log on to your account or register for an account on the Vodafone website. Here you can manage your tariff plan, extra top up on Pay as you go, call barring and Content Control. You can find the ‘Content Control’ setting under ‘My Settings’.
2. If the Content Control setting is off, you can put it on. This setting will charge the next time the handset or SIM is used to access the internet.

Remember...

You can also change and manage the settings via Customer Care or at a Vodafone shop. Also, bear in mind that parental controls offered by the mobile networks will only be active when browsing via the mobile network. When the phone uses Wi-Fi, the phone will pick up the settings from the Wi-Fi network. Vodafone Content Control only works when your child is using the Vodafone network, and not on Wi-Fi.

How to manage your mobile account

1. Click on <ou may want to go even further and disable mobile payments completely – your network provider can help you with this. If that seems extreme, some companies set limits, per transaction or monthly, to prevent overspending. Alternatively, you can request that receipts for apps are emailed to you so you can monitor purchases.

### Android Tips

- Control the type of apps downloaded to the phone
- Set a password for app purchases
- Prevent apps from revealing your location
- How to enable Content Control
- How to manage your mobile account

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**How to…**

**PhonepayPlus help’s customers**

Use the My Vodafone app to keep track of your account. You can check your usage or your price plan information, find free Wi-Fi, and access Vodafone support.

Pay monthly customers can text 44533 to receive a free text showing their usage information, and register for free online itemised bills. Itemised paper bills carry a small additional charge.

With Vodafone EuroTraveller, Pay monthly customers can also use their UK price plan in our Europe Zone for just £3 a day, on top of the usual monthly charge.

Consider Vodafone’s Red Sharer plan, which lets families share one data allowance across multiple devices each month.
Control what kids find online

As they get older, your children will be doing internet research to help with homework. Here’s how to keep adult content out of search results.

Google

To set up Google SafeSearch
1. Go to google.co.uk and type a keyword into the search box. Click ‘Search’ and the gear icon will appear on the top right-hand corner of the page. Click on the gear icon, then on ‘Search Settings’ from the drop-down menu.

2. On the ‘Search Settings’ page, tick the ‘Filter explicit results’ box, then click ‘Search’ and the gear icon will appear on the top right-hand corner of the page. Click on the gear icon, then on ‘Search Settings’ from the drop-down menu.

3. When SafeSearch is locked in place, you’ll see a set of coloured balls at the top right-hand corner of all search pages. If you can’t see them, SafeSearch is not locked. Refer to the instructions above to lock SafeSearch.

Remember...
1. Google SafeSearch activates ‘strict filtering’. However, if some adult content sites or explicit pictures slip through the net, then you can report it to Google at google.com/webmasters/tools/safesearch.
2. To lock SafeSearch, you need a Google account. If you don’t lock your settings, they will stay in place but can be changed by anyone using the computer.
3. If you use more than one browser, you will need to set Google SafeSearch on each one. Likewise, if you have different user profiles for everyone who uses your family computer, you’ll need to set up SafeSearch for each of them.

For more information on Google’s family safety policies and features, go to google.com/goodtoknow/familysafety.

Manage your child’s playtime

Today, video games are as much a part of growing up as TV. Here are a few tips to take charge of what your kids can access.

Xbox 360

Set a Console Safety Passcode
1. Go to ‘Settings’ and select ‘Family’.
2. Click ‘Ratings and Content’.
3. Set the game rating of your choice: Early Childhood, Everyone, Everyone 10+, Teen, Mature, Adults Only.

Restrict games
1. Go to ‘Settings’ then select ‘Family’.
2. Click ‘Ratings and Content’.
3. Set the game rating of your choice: Early Childhood, Everyone, Everyone 10+, Teen, Mature, Adults Only.

Set a Family Timer
1. Go to ‘Settings’ then select ‘Family’.
2. Set ‘Console Safety’ to ‘On’ and enter your passcode.
3. Toggle ‘Family Timer’ to ‘Daily’ or ‘Weekly’.
4. Use the left stick to select a time period.
5. Select ‘Continue’, then save and exit.

Customise Xbox Live online safety and privacy settings
1. Go to ‘Settings’, then select ‘Family’.
2. Select the account you want to manage, then click ‘Online Safety’.
3. Choose ‘Change Settings’ to customise the features your child can use. This includes friend requests, video communications and web browsing.

Wii

Choose an age rating
1. From the Wii menu screen go to ‘Wii Options’ then ‘Wii Settings’.
2. Click the blue arrow on the right to access ‘Wii System Settings’.
3. Select ‘Parental Controls’ then ‘Yes’ to activate.
4. You’ll need to set a four-digit PIN, and a security question. Follow the prompts and click ‘OK’.
5. Go to ‘Game Settings’ and ‘PIN’ and choose ‘Highest Game Setting Allowed’.
6. Use the up and down arrows to the right of the screen to choose which age rating you want for your Wii without needing a PIN.
7. Select ‘OK’ then ‘Confirm’ to save your settings. Your Wii will now only play games of the rating you have set, and anything higher will require the PIN.

Restrict game content
1. Go to ‘Settings’ then scroll to ‘Security Settings’.
2. The default password is 0000 but you can change this under the ‘Change Password’ option by following the on-screen instructions.
4. You can now choose the game content you’re comfortable letting your family access. The lower the number, the stricter the settings:
   - Early Childhood
   - Everyone
   - Everyone 10 and up
   - Teen
   - Mature
   - Adults Only
5. From ‘Parental Controls’ you can also block access to online play by toggling ‘Internet Browser Start Control’ to ‘On’.

PlayStation 3

Restrict game content
1. Go to ‘Settings’ then scroll to ‘Security Settings’.
2. The default password is 0000 but you can change this under the ‘Change Password’ option by following the on-screen instructions.
4. You can now choose the game content you’re comfortable letting your family access. The lower the number, the stricter the settings:
   - Early Childhood
   - Everyone
   - Everyone 10 and up
   - Teen
   - Mature
   - Adults Only
5. From ‘Parental Controls’ you can also block access to online play by toggling ‘Internet Browser Start Control’ to ‘On’.

Parents can also create sub-accounts for younger users, which gives them the option to block access to features such as web browsing.
How to...

Social networking safer

Social media sites let teens socialise online. Here’s how to review privacy settings for your peace of mind

Facebook

This guide will take you through the basic security and privacy settings you need to protect your teenager when they are using the internet browser-based version of Facebook. Facebook is also available as a mobile app for Android and iOS devices, and the privacy settings are dictated by how you set up your teen’s Facebook account on the computer. If you alter your privacy settings, the change is universal and will affect how people view your teen’s Facebook via the app or on the website.

Step 1

5 simple steps to making Facebook safe for your teen

1. Ask your teenager to log in using their email address and password. Click the cog at the top right corner of their newsfeed page to access “Settings”.
2. The ‘Privacy’ page lets you control who can see and find your teen’s posts. Select ‘Who Can Contact Me?’ to restrict who can befriend your teen or make friend requests.
3. Use the ‘Blocking’ setting to block invites, users and app requests. You can also block invites to download apps or play games from specific users here.
4. Turn ‘SafetyMode’ on or off and go to: https://www.facebook.com/settings?tab=safety. Click ‘Save’. If you have a YouTube account and lock ‘SafetyMode’ video. For more information, go to: https://www.facebook.com/safety.
5. By putting security and privacy settings in place on the browser-based version of Twitter, you can control how your teen interacts with others on the site.

Twitter

Security and privacy settings

Go to ‘Settings’, then select ‘Security and privacy’. For the most secure settings, follow these steps:

1. Login verification – select ‘Send Login Verification’ to My Phone’ and enter your phone number.
2. Password reset – check this box to ensure additional personal information is required when a password is reset.
3. Tweet privacy – check this box so that no-one can read your teen’s tweets without their prior approval.
4. Tweet location – leave this box unchecked to prevent location details being included in tweets.
5. Discoverability – leave both boxes unchecked to prevent people finding details of your teen by email address or phone number.
6. Promoted content – leave this box unchecked to prevent Twitter using your personal information to tailor adverts.

YouTube

YouTube SafetyMode lets you opt out of being shown videos that have mature content or that have been age-restricted. These videos will also not appear in searches or in the ‘Related Video’ menu.

To set up YouTube SafetyMode

Go to any YouTube page. Near the foot of the page is a ‘Safety’ button; click to open the ‘Preferences’ setting. Turn ‘SafetyMode’ on or off and click ‘Save’. If you have a YouTube account, you can sign into your account and lock ‘SafetyMode’ so that no-one else can change the settings.

Google

If you or your child come across an inappropriate video, you can report it by clicking the ‘Flag’ button located below the video. For more information, go to: https://www.google.com/policies/safety.
For your information

Vodafone would like to acknowledge the following sources of statistics, press release extracts and comments

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Special thanks go to The Parent Zone for their invaluable contribution in Digital Parenting...
“If you look too closely over your child’s shoulder, it gives them the impression you don’t trust them” p9

“Try things out for yourself and you’ll get a feel for what your kids are using” p15

“The aim is to get kids to stop and think before they send” p19

“By using Minecraft, students are improving their problem-solving skills, communication skills and collaborative working” p20

“I’ve been catapulted into a global community, making the world around me more accessible” p26

“How will you advise your ‘future teenager’ on what’s appropriate to post if you’ve been posting embarrassing shots of them throughout their childhood years?” p28

“Some children are able to ignore online bullying, but most take it very personally, and are haunted by these anonymous and vicious expressions of ridicule and disdain” p29

“The issue isn’t just about reducing children’s access. Adults need to be modelling a healthy balance and stop themselves constantly checking their devices for emails and texts” p33

“In the real world we treat strangers with caution. Similar care should be given to your child’s new online ‘friends’” p34