



E-Safety: Information for Parents/Carers

Risks:

- Young people often feel like they are anonymous when they post information online. However, if they give out too many personal details, someone may be able to identify them.
- Not all online content is suitable for young people.
- Young people may make friends online but cannot guarantee that their 'friend' is who they say they are. Sometimes, these 'friends' may be trying to groom them.
- Young people may not realise that what they post online cannot be deleted.
- Young people often send messages or images to friends, but may not realise that their friends might share them with others.

Signs that your student may be at risk:

- Spending lots of time online (including accessing the internet from a mobile phone or tablet).
- Being very secretive, including about what they are doing online.
- Hiding a computer, tablet or phone screen from others.
- Having new items that they cannot or will not explain.
- Going to unusual places to meet people.
- Having older boyfriends/girlfriends or friends.
- Sudden change in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn or anxious.

Rules for Internet Safety (SMART):

- Safe – stay safe by not giving out personal information.
- Meet – only meet someone met online with parents'/carers' permission, and ensure that the young person is accompanied by a parent/carer.
- Accepting – only open emails or messages from trusted sources as they may contain viruses.
- Reliable – remember that not everyone on the internet is who they say they are.
- Tell – ensure that the young person knows who they can tell if something online makes them uncomfortable.

Tips for parents/carers:

- Encourage your student to talk to you about their internet usage.
- Ensure that your student is aware of strategies to use when they see online content that they are uncomfortable with such as turning off the screen and using an online reporting facility.
- Encourage your student to think before they post something – how could what they are posting affect them in the future?
- Ensure that your student understands the law, for example downloading or sharing online content with others.
- Ensure that your student has appropriate privacy settings on any social media accounts.
- Encourage your student to use a nickname online where possible.
- Remind your student not to give out their personal information online.
- Encourage your student to set up a PIN or a password on any devices, and remind them not to share this with others.
- Familiarise yourself with age ratings and ensure that your student cannot access inappropriate material.
- If your student is being bullied online, save all of the evidence and report the incident.

Further support and information:

- www.childnet.com – an organisation that aims to make the internet a safe place for young people.
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk – an education programme from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command.
- www.parentsprotect.co.uk – preventing child sexual abuse.
- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/> - information about online and mobile safety.
- <https://ceop.police.uk/> - make a report about something that has happened online.