



**For further advice please visit**

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

<http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/curations/stay-safe>

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

**For information on**

- Socialising
- Talking to people
- Searching
- Sharing
- Using a Mobile Phone

**Please pick up one of our leaflets**

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## Parents Guide



**What is my child  
doing online !**

## Growing up online

# Growing up online

As your child grows and becomes more independent. With all of the potential that the online world and new technology offers, young people now have access to huge opportunities. They use technology to express themselves, explore, and be creative; it has changed the way they communicate.

The internet has changed all of our lives, and your child has grown up during this change. Many of the things that confuse, baffle or even scare us, are part of the everyday for them. For many of us, this can all be a bit too much.

You might wonder whether what they are doing is safe, and you might also be thinking *how can I be as good a parent online as I am offline?*

## Top Tips

### **Be involved in your child's online life.**

For many of today's young people there is no line between the online and offline worlds. Young people use the internet to socialise and grow and, just as you guide and support them offline, you should be there for them online too. Talk to them about what they're doing, if they know you understand they are more likely to approach you if they need support.

### **Watch Thinkuknow films to learn more.**

The Thinkuknow programme has films and advice for children from five all the way to 16. Your child may have seen these at school, but they can also be a good tool for you to find out more about what young people do online and some of the potential risks.

### **Keep up-to-date with your child's development online.**

Be inquisitive and interested in the new gadgets and sites that your child is using. It's important that as your child learns more, so do you.

### **Set boundaries in the online world just as you would in the real world.**

Think about what they might see, what they share, who they talk to and how long they spend of technology does.

### **Know what connects to the internet and how.**

Nowadays even the TV connects to the internet. Your child will use all sorts of devices and gadgets; make sure you're aware of which ones can connect to the internet, such as their phone or games console. Also, find out how they are accessing the internet – is it your connection or a neighbour's Wifi This will affect whether your safety settings are online. It is important to continue to discuss boundaries so that they evolve as your child's use being applied.

### **Consider the use of parental controls on de-vices that link to the internet, such as the TV, laptops, computers, games consoles and mobile phones.**

Parental controls are not just about locking and blocking, they are a tool to help you set appropriate boundaries as your child grows and develops. They are not the answer to your child's online safety, but they are a good start and are not as difficult to install as you might think. Service providers are working hard to make them simple, effective and user friendly.

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### **Emphasise that not everyone is who they say they are.**

Make sure your child knows never to meet up with someone they only know online. People might not always be who they say they are. Make sure your child understands that they should never meet up with anyone they only know online without taking a trusted adult with them.

### **Know what to do if something goes wrong.**

Just as in the offline world, you want to help your child when they need it. Therefore, it is important to know when and how to report any problem.

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/secondary](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/secondary)

As a parent or carer you have a challenging job, you need to know what your children are doing online and also help them to do it in a safe way. With technology changing on a day-to-day basis, the best way to stay informed is to get involved.

Here are three good ways to help you keep up-to-date with your children and teach them the basics of staying safe:

### **Let them teach you**

The people who know best about what your children are up to online, are your children! Get them to tell you about the sites they're using. This is a good way to develop a trusting relationship with your child about what they are up to online.

### **Reach an agreement**

A good way to set boundaries with your child about what they can and can't do online is to create an agreement with them.

Here are some examples of the areas you might want to discuss:

- ☑ Limits on the amount of time your child spends online, or playing computer games.
- ☑ Having regular screen breaks – at least five minutes every 45-60 minutes.
- ☑ Not sharing any pictures they wouldn't be happy to share with you.
- ☑ Not giving out personal details, such as mobile phone number and address, to people they don't know and trust.
- ☑ Coming to you if they are concerned. Or, if not, knowing where they can go for independent help and support.

You can introduce an agreement after watching one of the **Thinkuknow films** @ <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk> The films are a great way to start conversations with them about what can happen online and what they can do about it. The films may also be a good way for you to learn about some of the pressures young people may face, what can go wrong and what you can do about it.

We would recommend that you watch the film on your own beforehand so that you're aware of the topics it covers.