

Dear colleagues

Safeguarding young people online can be a real challenge as technology is moving at such a fast pace. Recently, we have been made aware of a number of concerns in primary and secondary schools involving WhatsApp and social media. Have put some useful tips on how to safeguard young people online and hopefully some useful resources. Please scroll to the bottom and as always, keep calm, carry on and teach safer internet use.

Keeping safe on WhatsApp

- If young people are in group chats remind them to only communicate with people they know
- Be careful in group chats as people can easily see what's being said and get hold of contact numbers, especially strangers
- **If you feel uncomfortable, leave the group and tell an adult**
- You can also block people if need be
- Look out for a profile picture in chats if we are worried – **No pic, no click!**
- Through settings turn off read receipts – like with any app, once downloaded we need to alter the settings to high
- Be extra careful sharing your location on WhatsApp, via settings on the phone we recommend location is switched off
- You can also change the "last seen" information in your settings again we recommend those are off
- In your bio don't give out personal information or don't have anything

More information on WhatsApp can be found in this useful [parent guide](#)

Keeping safe on Snapchat

• A gentle and calm reminder to young people that sharing pictures or videos on Snapchat comes with risk

- **Remind young people meeting anyone online they do not know is dangerous**
- Remind young people actually what a sex offender is and looks like, age appropriately of course
- **If the images being shared are of a sexting nature we highly recommend you look at and share with staff the [UKCCIS guidance](#)**
- Don't forget videos and images can be shared on Snapchat rapidly via a status, sharing information with everyone and sending information to specific people
- Ideally location should be set to ghost mode
- **Remind young people on Snapchat to report, block and tell a trusted adult if something concerns them**
- A number of the concerns we are seeing on social media are all about online behaviour, we recommend this is addressed via PSHE. Check out [Crossing the Line](#) for 11-14 year olds. We also recommend you have a good look at the peer pressure section.
- Some of you may already have these but the Snapchat [checklists](#) are wonderful

- You can also share this with young people, great advice from [Childnet International](#)

Do's and Don'ts

Do

- If needed report to MASH
- **Contact us for more information and support – email onlinesafety@northamptonshire.gov.uk**
- Calmly speak to parents if necessary and put a family agreement in place, email us for an agreement
- Address this in PSHE and challenge behaviour not technology
- Peer pressure is something that really needed to be addressed at the moment

Don't

- Deal with this in assemblies
- Shout and shame young people for their online behaviour

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