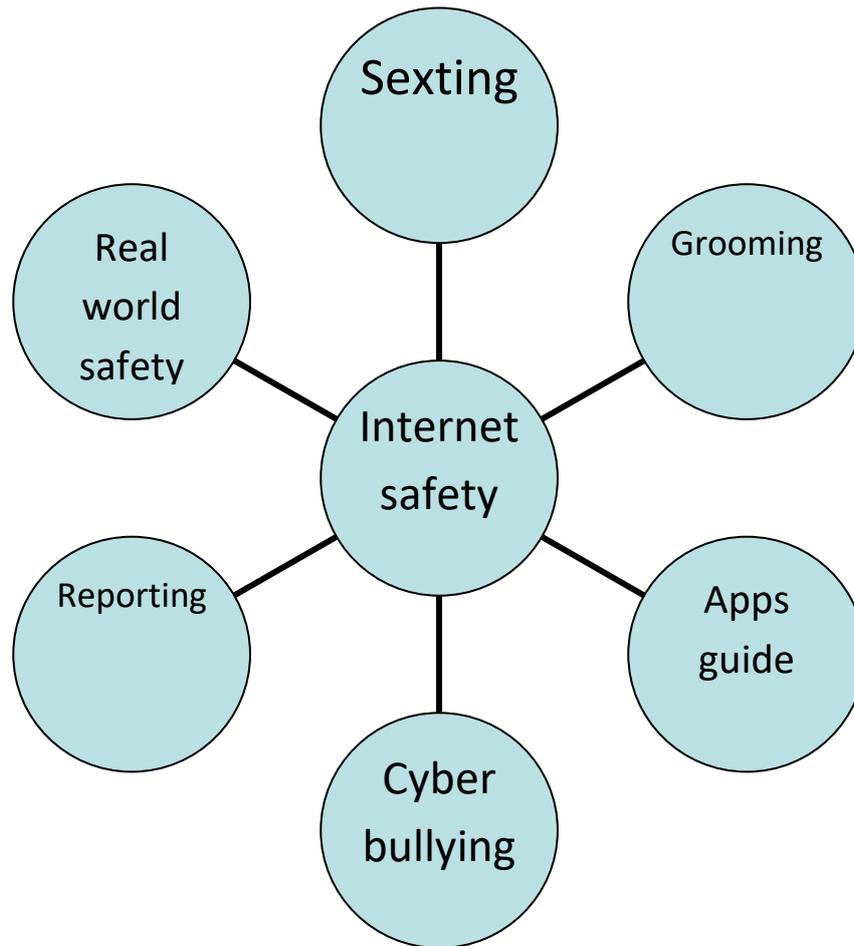


## Increasing Safety for your Child On-line and in the Real World.

### **Highlight the concerns:**

The issues we want to increase safety around include:



We recommend you talk about these issues regularly with your child so they know they can come to you if they have any concerns. You will find a list of websites at the end of this information, where you can go to find out more.

### **Who is most at risk?**

Every child who has internet access can be at risk of getting into trouble on-line, but some are more vulnerable than others. Things that might increase a child's risk are:

- Living in a chaotic or dysfunctional household (including parental substance use, domestic violence, parental mental health issues, parental criminality)
- History of abuse (including familial child sexual abuse, risk of forced marriage, risk of 'honour'-based violence, physical and emotional abuse and neglect)
- Recent bereavement or loss

- Gang association either through relatives, peers or intimate relationships (in cases of gang-associated CSE only)
- Attending school or being friends with young people who are sexually exploited
- Children with SEN, learning disabilities or physical impairment
- Unsure about their sexual orientation or unable to disclose sexual orientation to their families
- Homeless
- Lacking friends from the same age group
- Living in a gang neighbourhood
- Living in residential care
- Living in hostel, bed and breakfast accommodation or a foyer
- Low self-esteem or self-confidence
- Young carer

### What can parents do to minimise the risks, home and away?



Talking to your child about what they are doing, online as well as in the real world and share any concerns you have around their behaviour, or the behaviour of other people they may be in contact with.



Know what gaming sites your children are playing on, and what social media platforms they are using. As you would want to know where they are in the world, make sure you know where they are in the virtual world as well. Children are especially vulnerable late at night, so consider putting a time limit on internet access.



Talk to your child about healthy relationships, and let them know they can come to you if they are upset or disturbed by any behaviour they see others displaying, online or in the real world.



More than 50% of the referrals which come to the Child Sexual Exploitation Team are from concerns which start off on-line, so it is essential that parents know how to encourage their kids to stay safe on the internet.

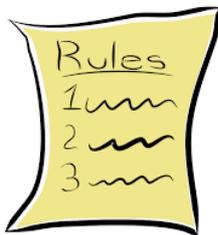
There are a number of things you can do at home to increase your child's safety while using the internet:



Talk to your internet provider about setting parental controls on your wi-fi. This will help prevent your child from accidentally accessing unsuitable material.



Think about where in your house you want your children to be able to access the internet. If you have a desk top computer, is it in a public place where others can see what is being done? Do you want your child to have a tablet in their bedroom? Routers can be set so internet access does not reach certain parts of the home.



Have the same rules for on-line activities as you do for real world activities. For example, know **where** (web sites / gaming sites / social media platforms) your children are spending time. Know **who** they are playing with. If you do not allow sleep overs in the week, do not allow your children to take their phones to bed with them.



Age restrictions on games are not only there to protect your child from the content of the game. If they have an on-line element, they also protect your child from socialising with people significantly older than themselves.

There are a number of things you can do to keep your child safer when using their phones out and about...



Know what apps your child is using. You can look on <https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> to find guides for all the most popular apps.



Use the app guide mentioned above to help you set privacy settings for each of the apps and social media platforms your child uses. Make sure you set privacy on all the devices which your child uses to access the apps or platforms. Check they are updated regularly.



Check your child's friend list and make sure they know who all their contacts are. If they have friends they don't know, delete them. You need to do this regularly.



If possible, give your child a contract phone, rather than a pay as you go. Having a contract can make it easier for you to set rules around usage. If something goes wrong, you can retrieve a list of incoming and outgoing contacts on a contract phone, which is not possible on a pay as you go account.

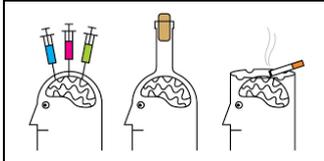
You can also download something called a 'Nanny App' which allows you to set restrictions on which apps can be downloaded to any device, and when internet access is restricted. An example of this is "Our Pact" but there are many others.

**Top ten tips:**

<b>Know where your kids are, on and off line.</b>	<b>Know who your kids are spending time with, on and off line.</b>
If your kids go out, make sure they are contactable. Their phone needs to be <b>charged</b> and have <b>credit</b> .	If your kids go out, know <b>how</b> they are getting back and <b>when</b> they will be back.
Talk to your kids about their increased vulnerability if they are drinking alcohol.	Talk to your kids about <b>healthy</b> and <b>respectful</b> relationships.
Create an environment where your kids can come to you if they are worried, or they have questions or concerns.	Set rules around internet use. Make use of age restrictions; discourage phone use after a certain time at night. Lead by example.
Understand the law in relation to sexting, and talk to your child about the risks. Help them to understand the consequences that might result from sending compromising images of themselves.	Be aware of your child receiving 'things' for free, either gifts and money, or drugs and alcohol. Talk to them about possible expectations of payment.

**What are the signs a young person may be at risk?**

Even when you put all the right measure in place, things can still go wrong, and so it is important to know what are the signs that something is not right.

	<p>Extreme mood swings</p>
	<p>Disturbed sleeping patterns</p>
	<p>Change in appearance – either to become more provocative, or to make themselves appear as unattractive as possible.</p>
	<p>Moving away from old friendship groups and becoming friends with a totally different crowd</p>
	<p>Self harm</p>
	<p>Drugs or alcohol use</p>
	<p>Excessive or obsessional phone use.</p>
	<p>Secrecy</p>

	<p>Having unexplained items, gifts or money.</p>
	<p>Being in a relationship with a significantly older partner</p>
	<p>Going missing from home.</p>
	<p>Concerns around sexual health</p>

Many of these behaviours are ‘normal’ teenage behaviours, but as a parent, you know your child best, and may be able to spot when behaviour changes are extreme, or when there is a combination of changes which might indicate a concern. If you are worried about your child, then take action.

**What to do if you spot any signs:**

If your child is in immediate danger, or you are concerned for their immediate safety, then call the police.

If you are worried about the safety of a child, but do not think the threat is immediate, then call First Response Children’s Duty on 0116 305 0005.

If you have concerns around a child’s safety, online or in the real world, but feel the concern is around risk, rather than actual harm, then talk to your child’s school.

Report concerns on-line to the platform or game where they occur, and also via <https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Keep a note of your concerns to allow you to spot any patterns.

**Where to go for further information:**

This is a list of the most useful websites you can use to learn more. These are local as well as national organisations.

## **The most useful sites for parents...**

**Leicestershire Police** - <https://leics.police.uk/advice-and-information/information-zone/child-sexual-exploitation>

Includes info on awareness raising, link to Kayleigh's love story, Link to Info Sharing Tool  
**None emergency – call 101**

**Leicestershire Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB)** - <http://lrsb.org.uk/concernedadults>

Includes info on awareness raising and a selection of leaflets which can be printed and shared on keeping children safe. **Call the boards on 0116 305 7130.**

**Child Exploitation On-line Protection (CEOP)**- <https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Info on setting privacy settings on popular apps, and a platform to report concerns or abuse witnessed on-line. Includes the 'Think you know' campaign.

**NSPCC** – <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation>

Advice and information and e-learning, with separate sections for children, parents and professionals. **You can talk to a professional at the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000**

**Barnardos** - <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/>

Advice and information and e-learning, with separate sections for children, parents and professionals, including films which can be shared. **Regional Office number is 0121 550 2594**

**Parents Against Child Exploitation (PACE)** - <http://paceuk.info/>

Info and support for parents, including telephone support. Also an e-learning module to raise awareness. **For confidential help and advice, call Pace on 0113 240 5226**

**National Working Group** - <http://www.nwgnetwork.org/>

Info and support for professionals, parents, and young people about staying safe on-line and in the real world. **Call for advice on 1332 585371**