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1. Home (https://www.gov.uk/)
2. Crime, justice and law (https://www.gov.uk/crime-justice-and-law)
3. Coronavirus (COVID-19): keeping children safe online
   (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online)

Part of

Education and childcare during coronavirus (https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-taxon/education-and-childcare)

1. Department for
   Digital, Culture,
   Media & Sport (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-digital-culture-media-sport)
2. Department
   for Education (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education)
3. Home Office (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office)

Guidance

Coronavirus (COVID-19): support for parents and carers to keep children safe online

Updated 25 June 2020

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Whilst there are huge benefits to being online in order to stay connected to family and friends during this period, the government recognises many parents may feel concerned about the activities and content their children are accessing. This guidance outlines resources to help keep children safe from different risks online and where to go to receive support and advice.

Keep your child safe online

It is important to have regular conversations about staying safe online and to encourage children to speak to you if they come across something worrying online.

These resources provide guidance for parents and carers to keep children safe online. They will, amongst other things, support you to talk to your child about a range of online safety issues, set up home filtering in a child-friendly way and set up age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices:

- Thinkuknow (https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/) by National Crime Agency-CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) provides resources for parents and carers and children of all ages to help keep children safe online
- Childnet (https://www.childnet.com/) has developed guidance for parents and carers (https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have-a-conversation) to begin a conversation about online safety, as well as guidance on keeping under-fives safe online (https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics/keeping-young-children-safe-online)
- Parent Info (https://parentinfo.org/) is a collaboration between Parent Zone and NCA-CEOP, providing support and guidance for parents and carers related to the digital world from leading experts and organisations
- NSPCC has guidance for parents and carers (https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety) to help keep children safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre (https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers) provides tips and advice for parents and carers to keep children safe online - you can also report any harmful content found online through the UK Safer Internet Centre (https://reportharmfulcontent.com/)

What harms might my child experience online?

You may have concerns about specific harms which children can experience online. There are more resources to help you understand and protect your child from different harms online, including:

- child sexual abuse – a definition (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf#page=103)
- exposure to radicalising content
- youth-produced sexual imagery ('sexting')
- cyberbullying
- exposure to age-inappropriate content, such as pornography
- exposure to harmful content, such as suicide content

Child sexual abuse

If you are concerned call 999 or report it to the National Crime Agency-CEOP (https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/).

If your child has been a victim of child sexual abuse – online or offline – and you believe they are in immediate danger, you should call 999 and ask for the police. The police will continue to respond to emergency calls.

If you are concerned that your child has been a victim of online sexual abuse or you are worried about the way someone has been communicating with your child online, you can report it to National Crime Agency-CEOP (https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/) (Child Exploitation and Online Protection).

These resources provide information and support for parents and carers on what to do if you're worried about child sexual abuse:

- you can contact the NSPCC helpline (https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/our-services/nspcc-helpline/) (0808 800 5000) for support and advice if you have concerns about your own or another child's safety. The Together, we can tackle child abuse campaign (https://tacklechildabuse.campaign.gov.uk/) also provides information on the signs of child abuse and neglect
- Thinkuknow (https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets/) by National Crime Agency-CEOP has developed activities to support your child's safe use of the internet and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation's Parents Protect (https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/) website also provides advice on how to help protect children from child sexual abuse
- if you see sexual images or videos of someone under 18 online, report it anonymously to the Internet Watch Foundation (https://report.iwf.org.uk/en) who can work to remove them from the web and help to identify victims and survivors
- you can contact Stop It Now! (https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/) for information and advice if you have concerns about someone's behaviour, including children who may be displaying concerning sexual behaviour
- you can contact The Marie Collins Foundation help@mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk for support, including advice and individual counselling, for your child if they have been subjected to online sexual abuse - support is also offered to parents and carers

Radicalising content

If you are concerned that any family member, friend or loved one is being radicalised, you can call the police or 101 to get advice or make a Prevent referral, so that they can get safeguarding support. Support is tailored to the individual's needs and works in a similar way to safeguarding processes designed to protect people from gangs, drug abuse and physical and sexual exploitation. Receiving support through Prevent is voluntary, confidential and not any form of criminal sanction. If you need further help, you can also contact your local authority safeguarding team.

Educate Against Hate Parents' Hub (https://educateagainsthate.com/parents/) provides resources and government advice for parents and carers on keeping young people safe from extremism, including online.

Let's Talk About It (https://www.ltai.info/staying-safe-online/) provides support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation.

Any member of the public can report terrorist content they find online through the GOV.UK referral tool (https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism). More information about what to report and what happens when you make a report can be found on the Action Counters Terrorism campaign (https://act.campaign.gov.uk/).

'Sexting' (youth-produced sexual imagery)

If you are worried about your child sending nude images or videos (sometimes referred to as 'youth-produced sexual imagery' or sexting), NSPCC (https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/) provides advice to help you understand the risks and support your child.

If your child has shared nude images, Thinkuknow (https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) by National Crime Agency-CEOP provides advice on talking to your child and where to get help.

Cyberbullying

If you are concerned about cyberbullying, you can find government advice and information about how you can protect your child (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying) and tackle it if it happens.

Age-inappropriate content and parental controls

If you have downloaded new apps or bought new technology to help stay connected at this time, remember to review and adjust privacy and safety settings if you or your child is signing up to a new online service.

Internet Matters has provided step-by-step guides (https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/) on how to set up parental controls so that you can control what content your child can access online.

The UK Safer Internet Centre (https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parental-controls-offered-your-home-internet-provider) has developed guidance on how to switch on family-friendly filters to prevent age-inappropriate content being accessed on devices in your home.

The NSPCC (https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/inappropriate-explicit-content/) provides more information for parents or carers with concerns about their child seeking inappropriate or explicit content online.

Apps to help children stay safe online

The BBC have a website and app called Own It (https://www.bbc.com/ownit). The website has a lot of content for children to help them navigate their online lives, and the free smartphone app comes with a special keyboard which can intervene with help and support in the moments that children need it the most. It can be downloaded for free in the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

SafeToNet (https://safetonet.com/foundation/covid/) is an app for parents to help them safeguard their children from online risks like cyberbullying and sexting, whilst respecting their child's rights to privacy. The SafeToNet Foundation is providing UK families with free access to 1 million licences during coronavirus.

Suicide content

If you are worried about your child's mental health, the government has published guidance for parents and carers (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak) on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

If you are worried that someone you know is suicidal, including your child, Samaritans provides advice on how you can support others (https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/support-and-information/worried-about-someone-else/what-do-if-someone-you-know-suicidal/).

Support for children

If your child is worried or needs support, they can receive advice and support from Childline (https://www.childline.org.uk/) (0800 1111) or download the 'For Me' app.

If you need help to support your child's mental wellbeing, this list of online education resources for home education (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#mental-wellbeing) includes mental wellbeing resources which provide guidance on how to support the wellbeing of children and young people.