

We are here to help you.

## Keeping Kids Safe Online



The internet harbours many dangers online and children in particular can be easy targets for criminals. With online lessons, apps and social media instead of school and playgrounds, lockdown has meant our younger generations are spending more time than ever before on the internet.

**Strangers.** Children should be taught that 'stranger danger' applies online as well, especially on gaming forums.

**Friends or bullies.** Thanks to the internet cyber bullying or trolling can happen on a much bigger scale.

### Online Dangers

**Themselves.** Children may not be aware that once you post something online, it's there forever. It's important to teach children the dangers of oversharing.

**Digital Kidnapping.** This is when a stranger steals a picture of your child from one of their/ or your online accounts and then repurposes it for their own use.

Knowing how to keep your child safe against these dangers can be a never-ending battle but with the help of our IT experts, we have listed our top tips to help.

**Enable Parental Controls** or review their settings if already in place. There are many different methods you can control your child's time online, including restricting websites on the internet router, setting screen time limits and blocking access to app stores, including removing any links to credit cards to prevent in-app purchases.

**Review Social Media settings.** Whilst Facebook stipulates users must be 13 or over years old, this rule is often ignored. If your child has a social media account, it's important you educate them on the risks involved in posting personal details, such as location. All social media sites have privacy settings which can allow you to control who can see your child's account. If you post pictures of your child on your own account, it is also worthwhile reviewing your settings to ensure you're happy with who can see these pictures.

**Update Firewalls and Anti-Virus Systems.** This can be one of the easiest steps to take in protecting your child's device and any personal information it holds, such as passwords and payment details.

**Develop rules** for internet usage at home and regularly review them as rules will need to be updated and adjusted as children get older or circumstances change, for example a child will not need to spend as long online if they have been in school all day.

**Share your rules** with teachers, friends and family members so they can help to reinforce them. Also ask them to look out for any potential harmful behaviours in your child online.

**Make sure your child knows they are able to talk to you** about anything they may have seen online that made them feel uncomfortable. You can take this further by showing your child news articles of negative things that have happened to other people on the internet. By explaining what was wrong and how the person could have prevented it from happening will help your child to start establishing boundaries.

**Enable Tracking** on your child's devices and make sure they know that it is to remain enabled at all times.

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