

Online Safety Guide for Parents and Carers

Why Online Safety Matters

The online world is full of exciting opportunities for young people to learn, connect, and play. But it also comes with risks such as exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and privacy concerns. This guide offers practical steps to help keep your child safe online.

The 4 Cs of Online Safety

Understanding online risks helps you support your child effectively. The 4 Cs summarise key areas to be aware of:

- 1. Content**
Make sure the websites, games, and media your child uses are age-appropriate and align with your family values.
- 2. Contact**
Talk to your child about who they interact with online. Use privacy settings and safe communication tools to limit interactions to known and trusted people.
- 3. Conduct**
Encourage respectful and responsible behaviour online. Help your child understand the impact of their words and actions in digital spaces.
- 4. Contract**
Teach your child the importance of protecting personal information. They should avoid sharing details like their full name, address, school, or passwords.



Key Safety Measures

To support safer online experiences:

- **Use Private Platforms Where Possible**
Encourage your child to use private or invitation-only servers and groups when gaming or chatting online.
- **Enable Parental Controls**
Set up built-in controls on devices and platforms (e.g. gaming consoles, chat apps, or video services) to manage access and content.
- **Choose Safe Games and Communities**
Help your child select games and forums that are age-appropriate, well-moderated, and promote positive behaviour.
- **Monitor and Check In Regularly**
Ask about what games they're playing, who they're talking to, and how they feel about their experiences online.

What You Can Do as a Parent

1. **Stay Involved**
Get familiar with the platforms your child uses—whether that's Discord, Steam, Roblox, or others. Be curious and interested in their gaming or online activity.
2. **Set Clear Boundaries**
Agree on screen time limits and behaviour expectations. Reinforce the importance of kindness and digital respect.
3. **Monitor Use Appropriately**
Without hovering, keep an eye on your child's online activity. Encourage them to talk to you about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.
4. **Keep Communication Open**
Build trust by having regular, honest conversations about their online experiences—good or bad.



Reporting Concerns

If your child experiences bullying, inappropriate contact, or harmful content online:

- Use the **report/block features** available on most platforms.
- Encourage your child to **speak to you or a trusted adult**.
- Consider contacting services like **CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)** or **NSPCC** for guidance.



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