

ONLINE SAFETY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- 99% of 12-17-year-olds have their own mobile phone
- 98% use video-sharing platforms
- 92% have their own social media profiles
- 75% play games online

Source: Ofcom Children and parents: media use and attitudes 2022 report



CHECKLIST:

Keep Talking

Stay interested in what they're doing online and discuss what they might have come across. **Don't be afraid to tackle difficult subjects like cyberbullying, and sexting and pornography.** Help them to be critical of things they see online and judge the quality and reliability of online sources. Acknowledge that this is difficult considering how content can be manipulated online to persuade even the most savvy people. Talk together about how to manage some of these challenges and why it is important.

Adjust Controls

Adjust the parental controls on your broadband and internet-enabled devices, depending on your child's age. Your broadband provider can tell you how. Find out how to set up safe search in Google by going to the Google Safety Center. Remember that at this age they are likely to have friends with unfiltered devices and whilst parental controls and filtering is important this needs to be done alongside dialogue and discussion.

Stay Safe On The Move

Make sure safety and privacy settings are activated on their mobile devices and they aren't sharing private information. Be aware that using public WiFi might not filter inappropriate content, so look for friendly WiFi symbols when you're out and about. **Also, encourage them to use the parental control tools on their device just in case they do connect to an unfiltered WiFi - such as at a friend's house.**

Manage Their Online Reputation

Let them know that anything they upload, email or message could stay online forever. **Remind them that they should only post things online that they wouldn't mind you, their teacher or a future employer seeing.** There are lots of stories in the media that highlight the importance of online reputation and clearly demonstrate how things that happened years ago can resurface in the future. See our online reputation advice hub to get tips to support young people on this issue

Privacy Matters

Make sure they set high privacy settings on social networks. Encourage them to regularly change their passwords and never to share or put online any of their personal details like phone number, address or their school. Use our social media privacy how-to guides to support them.

Learn about it: Teach your child some simple rules

- Make sure your child knows how to **block abusive comments and report content** that worries them.
- Teach them to **respect others online and think about comments before they post them** and discuss how easily comments made online can be misinterpreted.
- Don't arrange to meet people in real life that they've only talked to online and **remind them that some people may not be who they say they are.**
- Advise them to use **secure and legal sites to download music and games** to avoid experiencing the risks associated with streaming content from unauthorized sites. Visit our 'Dangers of digital piracy' advice hub for more advice.
- Check attachments and pop-ups for viruses** before they click or download anything.
- When using the internet for homework, **make sure they use information appropriately** and explain things in their own words rather than copying.

Talk about it: Tips for a meaningful conversation

- Make sure your child knows **they can come to you if they're upset by something they've seen online** and make sure that you listen and don't overreact - the important thing is that they have come to you for help and support.
- Tell them you trust them to do the right thing** rather than over monitoring their internet use
- If your child comes to you with an issue, **stay calm and listen without judging them** and don't threaten to take away their devices.
- Tackle peer pressure** by explaining that if they're talked into bullying someone online or sending inappropriate images it may get reported to their school or even the police.
- Talk to them about how much time they spend online** and make sure this is balanced against other activities.
- Discuss how they can **report any harmful or inappropriate content or behaviour** that they encounter online - empower them to take control themselves.

Stop Bullying on the Spot

When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior they send the message that it is not acceptable. Research shows this can stop bullying behavior over time.

Parents, school staff, and other adults in the community can help kids prevent bullying by talking about it, building a safe school environment, and creating a community-wide bullying prevention strategy.



WANT MORE HELP?

For more information visit: <http://uintaaware.com/>

Sources: www.stopbullying.gov/

