

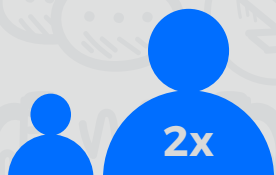
# Online Safety Guide

Children's use of the internet is becoming more mobile and interactive offering young people more opportunities to interact and meet new people, so it's never been more important to make sure you are helping your child stay safe in the digital world.

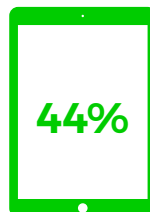


**15 hours  
a week**

Children's internet use has reached record highs, 5-15 year olds spend 15 hours a week online



The number of children with a social media profile doubles between the age of 10 and 11. 43% of 11 year olds have a social profile



44% of 5-15 year olds have their own tablet and together with smartphones are the most popular for going online.

## Get in control of parental controls



If using a smartphone, check content lock is set



Set parental controls on your home broadband



Control app downloads and purchases



Make the games console safe and secure



Use safety mode on YouTube and Google



If using social networks, check privacy settings

Go to [internetmatters.org/controls](https://internetmatters.org/controls) for step-by-step guides

## Managing privacy settings on apps

11-15 year olds use on average 5 different websites and apps to communicate with friends at home, the most popular being Instagram (60%).



Whatsapp



Snapchat



Instagram



YouTube

If your child is using these networking sites and respective apps, get up to speed on how they can manage their privacy settings with our "How to guides".

Go to [internetmatters.org/back-to-school](https://internetmatters.org/back-to-school) to download our "How to guides".

Helping parents keep  
their children safe online.

[internet  
matters.org](https://internetmatters.org)

## Get familiar with regular conversations

- ✓ Start a conversation when your children will be more receptive and engaged, such as on the way to or from school
- ✓ Ask them for advice on how to do something online and use this as a conversation starter
- ✓ Make sure they know they can come to you if they're upset by something they've seen online
- ✓ Be sensitive and encourage them when they share their online experiences with you
- ✓ If your child talks about an issue with you, stay calm and listen without judging them

## Check they know the rules

- ✓ Don't share personal information like their phone number or email address online
- ✓ Only talk to real life friends or family if they are on sites with a social media element
- ✓ Explain that people they meet online might not be who they say they are
- ✓ Tell them to be a good online friend and not to say nasty things even if it's just a joke
- ✓ Use secure and legal sites to download music and games
- ✓ Make sure they check with you before downloading any programs to avoid viruses

## Key issues you may want to discuss



### Cyberbullying

Prevention is always better than the cure when it comes to this issue. Help your child understand the consequences of what they share online and encourage them to be "kind online". If they are the target of cyberbullying, be sure to keep all messages as evidence and block the bullies on social networks.

For more advice about cyberbullying visit [internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying](https://internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying)



### Sexting

There are many reasons why young people get involved in sexting; exploring sex and relationship or pressure from a partner or friends. Having an open and honest conversation about it can help them understand the implications of sending a nude image and highlight that it is illegal.

If your child has sent a nude image and it has been put online; report it to CEOP and contact Childline who can help you get all known copies removed from the internet [internetmatters.org/issues/sexting](https://internetmatters.org/issues/sexting)

## Want more help?

For step by step guides and advice go to [internetmatters.org](https://internetmatters.org)

To report an issue around a sexual image of a child visit [ceop.police.uk/Ceop-Report/](https://ceop.police.uk/Ceop-Report/)

# Online safety tips for parents of 11-13 Year Olds

internet  
matters.org

*More than half of young people have a social media account by the time they are 13 years old*

\*Source: Ofcom Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2019



## Checklist:

### Have a conversation

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to **ask them to tell you about what they do and what sites they like to visit**. Discuss with them what they might come across. There are always stories in the press which will help to start a conversation. [See our conversation starter guide](#) for advice to help children open up about their digital lives.

### Agree on boundaries

Have a [family agreement](#) about where and when they can use the internet, how much time they can spend online, the sites they can visit and the type of information they can share. **It's a good idea to introduce tech-free meals times and encourage them to keep phones out of the bedroom at night** to help them build a healthy balance with screen time.

### Put yourself in control:

**Make use of parental controls** on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices that your child uses. You can [visit our parental control how-to guides](#) to learn how to set these up or visit your broadband or mobile network's provider's website. You can also set up safe search in Google by going to the Google Safety Centre.



If you are giving a child their first device, you can set all this up together before they start using it so they can see how they'll be protected. It can also be an opportunity to have a conversation about online safety.

Remember, although these tools can create a safety net to protect children online, they are not 100% foolproof so **it's important to continue having regular conversations with children** about their online use to equip them with coping strategies to deal with online risks.

## Check if it's suitable

The age ratings that come with games, apps, films and social networks **are a good guide to whether they're suitable for your child**. The minimum age limit is 13 for several social networking sites, including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok. [Visit our guide to check the minimum age of popular apps.](#)

## Get them clued up about social networking

**Talk to children about the benefits and risks of social networking** before they join any sites. Let them know that anything they upload, email, or message could stay around forever online. Help them to set their profile up so that they are in control of who can comment, message them etc. Get tips and insight from [our social media guide](#). If you have a child with SEND, [please visit our Connecting Safely Online hub for tailored advice](#).

Help them to be critical of things they see online and judge the quality and reliability of online sources.



## Know this stuff matters, but don't know where to turn?

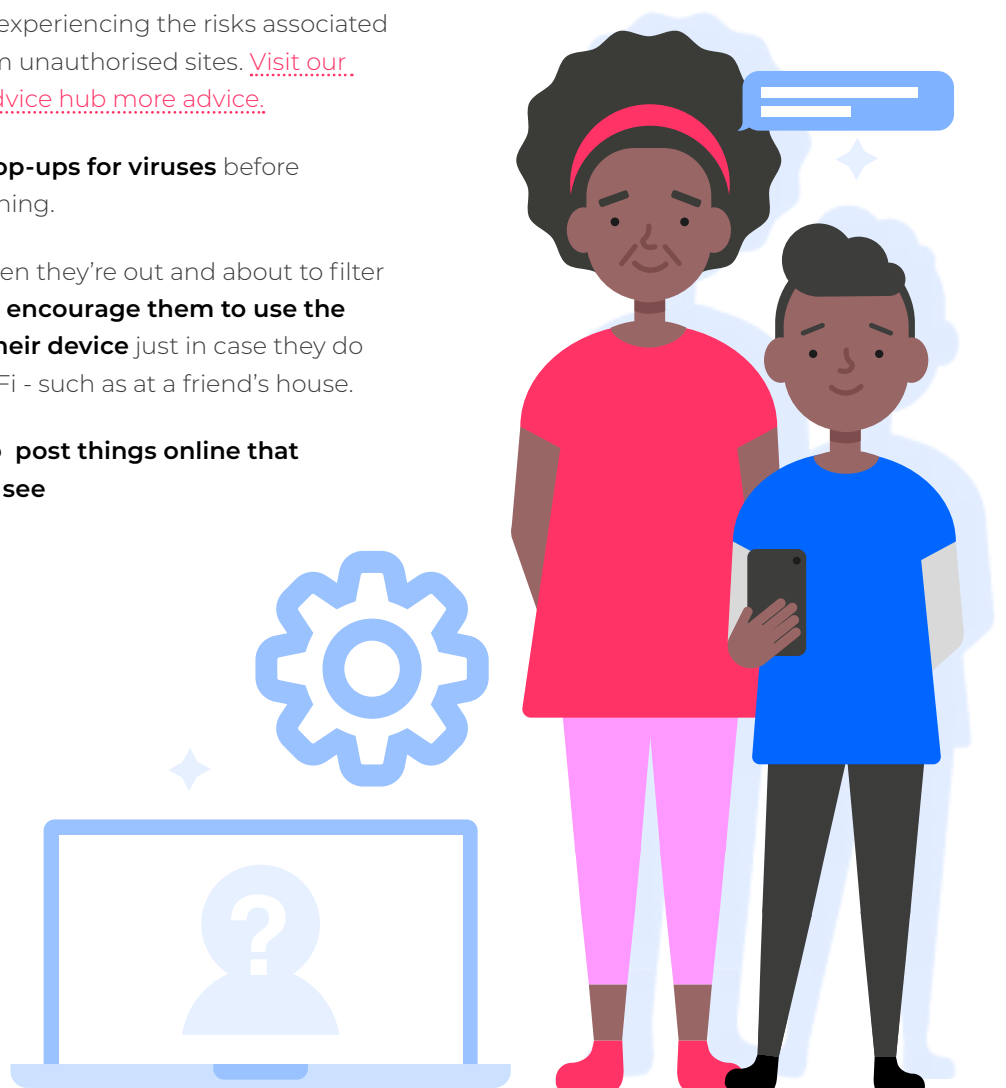
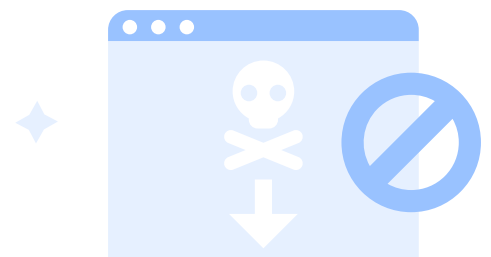
Internet Matters is a free online resource for every parent in the UK. We'll show you the best ways to protect your children online – with information, advice and support on all the big online safety issues.



# Learn about it:

## Teach your child some simple rules

- Make sure your child knows **not to share personal information like their phone number or email address online** and if they need to provide this or similar information to sign up for a service tell them to check with you first.
- Encourage them to only talk to **real-life friends or family** on social media sites and in chatrooms.
- **Show them how to use privacy settings** wherever they exist to keep their information private - remember that the default on many sites is set to public. [Visit our social media privacy guides for support.](#)
- As children may go online to widen their group of friends, **set some boundaries when it comes to new friends online.**
- **Advise them not to arrange to meet with people in real life** that they've only talked with online without talking to you about it and getting your support.
- **Advise them to use secure and legal sites to download music and games** to avoid experiencing the risks associated with streaming content from unauthorised sites. [Visit our 'Dangers of digital piracy' advice hub more advice.](#)
- **Check attachments and pop-ups for viruses** before they click or download anything.
- Use Public Friendly WiFi when they're out and about to filter inappropriate content. **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.
- Make sure they know **not to post things online that they wouldn't want you to see**



## Talk about it:

### Tips for a meaningful conversation

- **Ask them for advice on how to do something online** and use this as a conversation starter.
- **Make sure they know they can come to you if they're upset by something they've seen online** and remember to listen and not overreact.
- **Be sensitive and praise them** when they share their online experiences with you
- Make sure they know **how to block abusive comments and report content** that worries them.
- If your child comes to you with an issue, **stay calm and listen without judging them**
- **Tackle peer pressure** by explaining that if they are talked into bullying someone online or sending inappropriate images it may get reported to their school or even the police. Read this guide – So you got naked online– aimed at kids to get insight on [how to deal with sexting incidence](#).
- Teach them to treat others as they'd like to be treated online and set a good example with your own internet use. [Use the Stop, Speak, Support code](#) to encourage them to call out cyberbullying when they see it.



## Deal with it

You can find out where to get help and advice on the [Report issue page of internetmatters.org](#), where we include information on how to report problems - and which relevant organisations and agencies to turn to.

On this page, we also provide information on how to deal with any specific issues you may encounter with your child; such as [cyberbullying](#), finding [inappropriate content](#), your child's [online reputation](#), [online pornography](#) and [child grooming](#).

## Learn more about apps

It can be difficult to stay on top of what apps your child is using and who they are talking to online – [find out more about the latest apps at internetmatters.org/apps](#).

Visit [internetmatters.org](https://internetmatters.org) for more advice

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# Online safety tips for parents of teenagers 14+ Year Olds

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*As they get older 8 out of 10 teens spend most of their time online chatting to friends on social media or in games\**

\*Source: [In their own words: The digital lives of schoolchildren - Cybersurvey 2019](#)



## Checklist:

### Keep talking

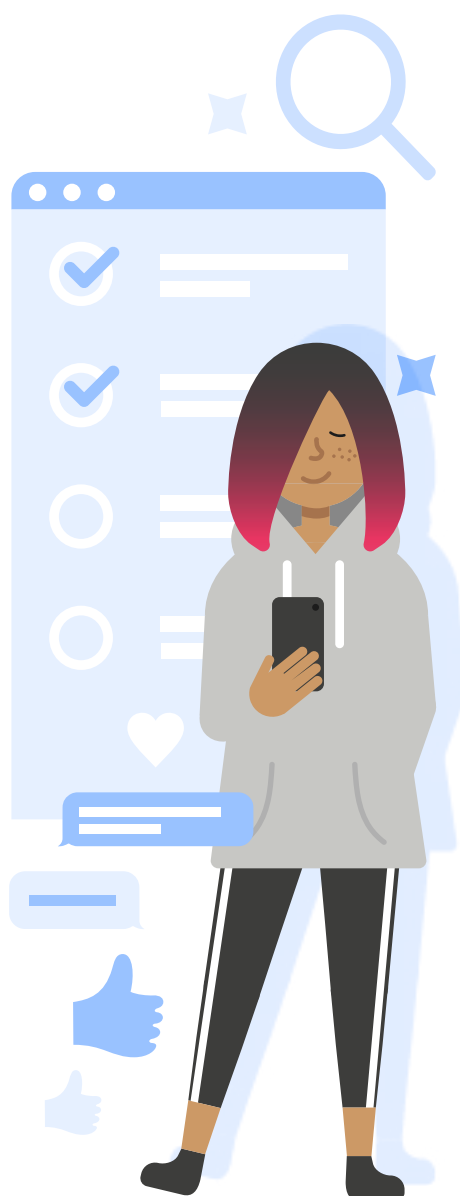
Stay interested in what they're doing online and discuss what they might have come across. **Don't be afraid to tackle difficult subjects like cyberbullying, and sexting and pornography.** Help them to be critical of things they see online and judge the quality and reliability of online sources. Acknowledge 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.

### 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

### 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 Centre](#). 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.

## 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.

## 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.



## Know this stuff matters, but don't know where to turn?

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## 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 unauthorised sites. [Visit our 'Dangers of digital piracy' advice hub](#) 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. [Visit our guide to see more tips on online peer pressure to support young people.](#)
- **Talk to them about how much time they spend online** and make sure this is balanced against other activities. [See our 'Screen time' guide for 14+' for age-specific advice.](#)
- Discuss how they can **report any harmful or inappropriate content or behaviour** that they encounter online - empower them to take control themselves.

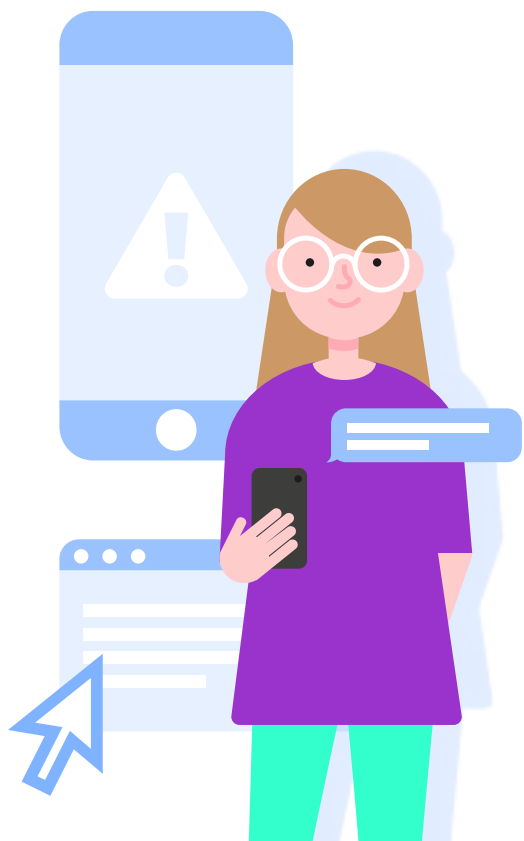
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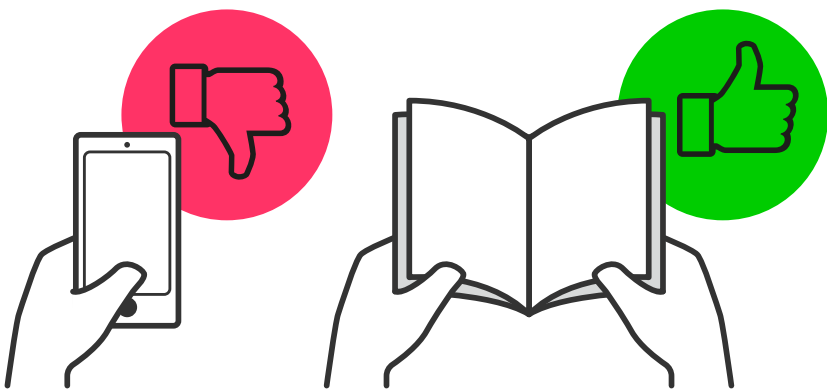
**internet  
matters.org**

# Five top tips to manage children's screen time

Help your child make the most of their time on and offline

## 1 Set a good example with your own device use

Children will tend to model their behaviours on you, so if you start reading a book, they may follow your lead.



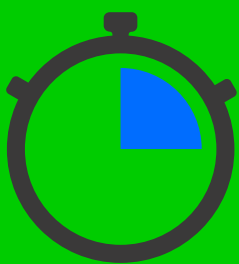
## 2 Talk together about the time they spend online

Understand what they're doing, and explain your concerns.



## 3 Agree an appropriate length of time that they can use their device

Put in place a family agreement to set some boundaries and don't break them.

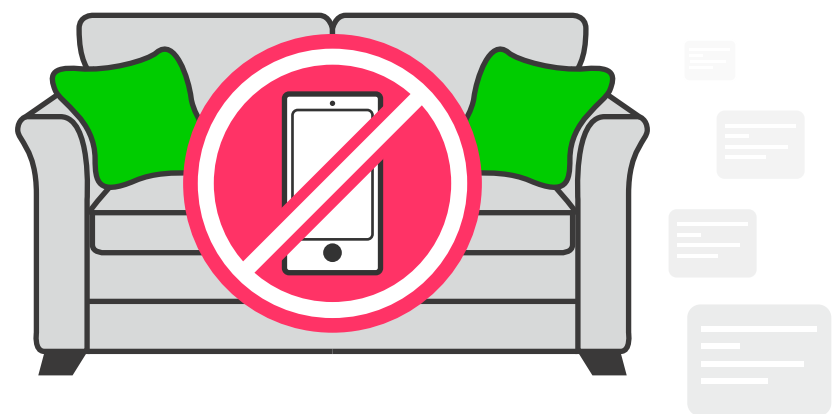


MON-FRI



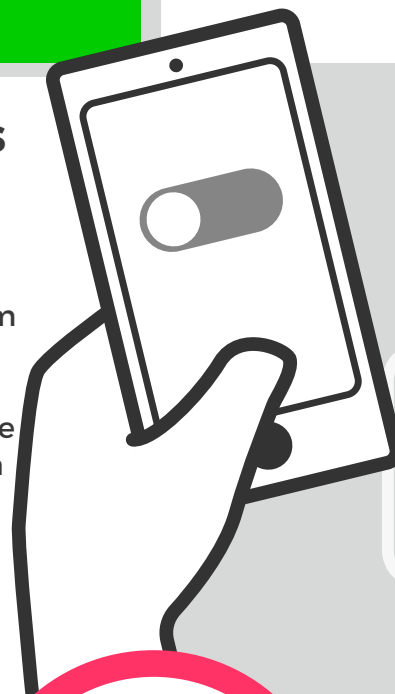
SAT-SUN

## 4 Get the whole family to unplug and create 'screen free' zones at home



## 5 Use technology and apps to help manage screen time

For example, the **Forest app** enables them to grow a beautiful forest each day they don't use their phone for a set amount of time. The iPad's '**Guided Access**' limits the time you can access any given app, which can be great for younger children.



60%

60% of parents are concerned their kids don't have interests outside the web

12

Parents of 12-year-olds are most concerned about lack of offline interests

26

Children aged between 11 and 16 post on average 26 times a day

# Internet Matters six tips for keeping children safe while online gaming

internet  
matters.org

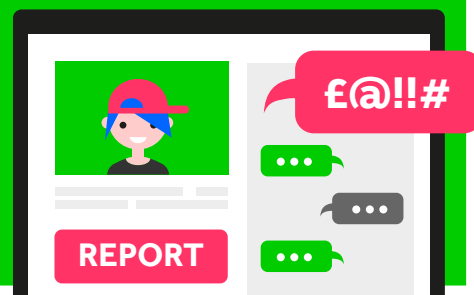


**Take an active interest in the games your children are playing** to get to grips with how they work and why they enjoy playing them

1

2

**Ask who they play with online, who they meet and talk to**, and talk about what kind of language is being used. Make sure your child knows how to do report abusive or anti-social behaviour

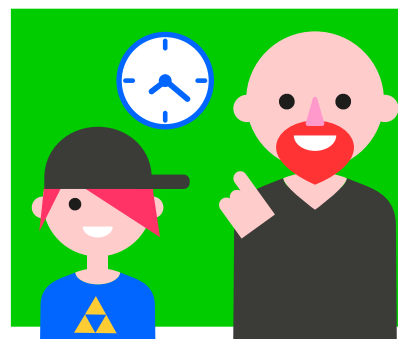


**For younger children, use 'airplane' mode settings** on your tablet or smartphone. That way, they can play offline without making accidental purchases or connecting with someone they don't know

3

4

Use PEGI ratings and App store ratings to ensure your children are playing age appropriate games. **Help children understand why some games are allowed and others aren't**

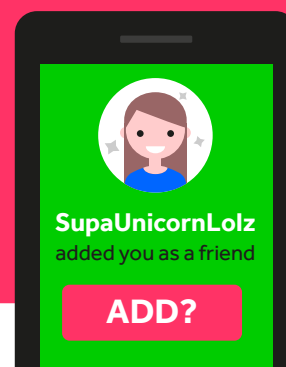


Gaming can be very addictive, so **agree boundaries and how long they're allowed to play** for and with whom they are allowed to play online with. Remind them that people may hide behind fake profiles and not be who they say they are

5

6

**Teach your children to protect themselves by thinking critically** – remind them not to share personal information and to keep gaming friends in the game only rather than adding them to their other social networks



# Child Safety Online:

## Why children use social media

- Entertainment
- Belonging
- Confidence
- Popularity
- Self-esteem
- Expression



*A practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media*

Social networking is hugely popular. Many young people are sophisticated in the way they use social media apps and websites, tailoring their communication for different audiences, and accessing them from a range of devices including smartphones, tablets, and games consoles.

But social media, like all forms of public communication, comes with some risks. Not all of these risks turn into actual problems; and if children never face any risks, they never learn how to deal with them. By helping your child understand what the risks are, you can play a big part in preventing them from turning into problems.

## Understand the risks children may need to deal with

### What they could see or do:

- Seeing or sharing of violent, sexual and pornographic content
- Inaccurate or false information and extreme views
- Promotion of harmful behaviours including self-harm, anorexia and suicide
- Over-sharing of personal information
- Actively or unintentionally getting involved in bullying or hurtful behaviour

### Who they might meet:

- People who might bully, intimidate or frighten
- People posing behind fake profiles for:
  - Mischief-making
  - Sexual grooming and stalking
  - Blackmail and extortion
  - Identity theft and hacking

### How this could affect them

- Fear of missing out leading to excessive use or exaggeration
- Getting upset by things they have seen and being uncertain about what to do
- Engaging, or being pressured into engaging in more risky behaviour either by accident or by design
- Developing unrealistic, and perhaps depressing ideals of body image and gender
- Becoming subject to peer pressure or interactions that are intense or too difficult to handle
- Creating an online reputation that may create problems for them in the future



## Practical tips to help minimise the risks your child might face

It's good practice for apps and websites to have safety advice and well-designed safety features which can make a real difference to how safe your child will be when using them.

Work through safety and privacy features on the apps that your child is using, or might use. Make sure they understand the point of these and how to use them. Don't be put off by believing your child knows more than you: the tools are actually quite easy to manage.

- **Ask them to show you** which social media apps they use and what they like about them. Talk about how they use them and what makes them so engaging.
- **Explain how you can use privacy settings** to make sure only approved friends can see posts & images.
- **Check if any of their apps have 'geo-location' enabled**, sharing their location unintentionally.
- **Show them how to report offensive comments** or block people who upset them.
- **Check 'tagging' settings** so that when others are posting or sharing photos online, your child's identity is not revealed. Also, get people's consent before sharing photos.
- Encourage your child to **come and talk to you** if they see anything that upsets them.

## Keep talking and stay involved

In a mobile age, children can't be completely protected, even by the best privacy controls; another child may use different settings. So it's important to keep talking to your child about the implications of social media.

Getting a sense of what they think is a useful place to start; you may be surprised by how much thought they may have given to the issues. Encourage your child to think carefully about the way they, and others behave online, and how they might deal with difficult situations.

- People may **not always be who they say they are online**: how can this create problems?
- Why is it **unwise to meet** anyone in the real world that you've only ever met online?
- Even if you think your messages are private, remember that words and images can always be **captured and broadcast**.
- People **present themselves differently online** - do they really look like that? Are they always having that good a time?
- Be aware that screens, and especially being anonymous, can lead people to say things they **wouldn't say to someone's face**.
- What does **being a good friend and a likeable person** online look like?
- There can be **pressure to be part of a particular group** online or to be seen to be **following a certain set of ideas**. How can you take a step back and make your own decisions?

### For more information

You can find out more about how children use social media, the apps they use, the risks they face, how to use privacy settings, and advice and tips about how to talk to your children at:

[www.childnet.com/sns](http://www.childnet.com/sns)

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

[www.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety)

[www.parentzone.org.uk](http://www.parentzone.org.uk)

[www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents)

[www.askaboutgames.com](http://www.askaboutgames.com)

### To make a report

Concerned about online grooming or sexual behaviour online? Contact CEOP: [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

If you stumble across criminal sexual or obscene content on the internet you should report it to the Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)



# How to report suicidal content on social media

Equip children on how to take action if they're worried about someone who may have posted suicidal content on social media with our guide.

## Spotting the warning signs

There are some key warnings signs that may suggest that a friend or a loved is at risk of suicide, particularly if the behaviour is new or is related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Are they writing about wanting to die or kill themselves?
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or having no reason to live?
- Talking about feeling vulnerable, trapped or being a burden to others
- Saying negative things about themselves
- Talking about seeking revenge

Many people will seek support before attempting suicide to show others they are in pain. Visit [Mind.org.uk](https://www.mind.org.uk) for advice on how to support someone who feels suicidal.

## Taking immediate action

All threats of harm to life should be taken seriously:

- Report to the police or local authority if they are in immediate danger, giving as much information about the situation
- Speak to a trusted adult to raise concerns and seek help
- Alert their family and friends so they can offer support
- If it is a close friend, encourage children to:
  - Have a conversation with the person to offer messages encouragement and support. Visit [www.samaritans.org/difficultconversations](https://www.samaritans.org/difficultconversations) for guidance.
  - Encourage their friend to contact counselling services such as [Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk), [Papyrus](https://www.papyrus.org.uk) or [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org)
- Helping someone with suicidal thoughts can have a big impact on your child, so ensure you discuss how they are feeling and give them the support they need

## Reporting suicidal content on social media



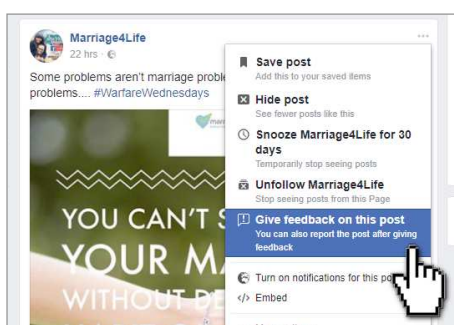
### Facebook suicide prevention

#### Report on desktop:

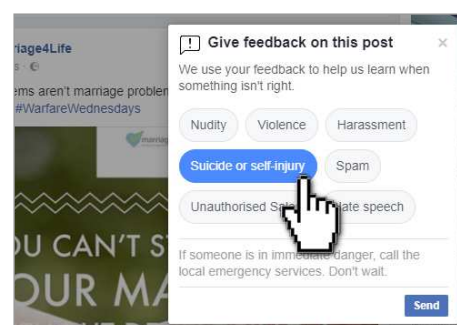
Visit [Facebook Help centre 'Report suicidal content' page](#) and follow the steps to report the content:



**Step 1:** Select the three dots at the side of the post



**Step 2:** Click on the option to 'Give feedback on this post'

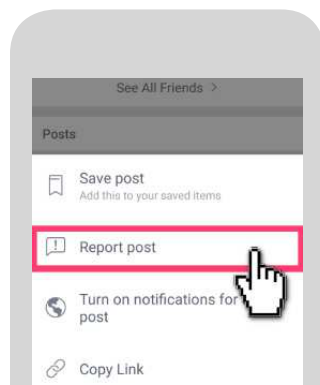


**Step 3:** Choose 'Suicide or Self-injury' option on the page, enter a message if needed and select 'Send'

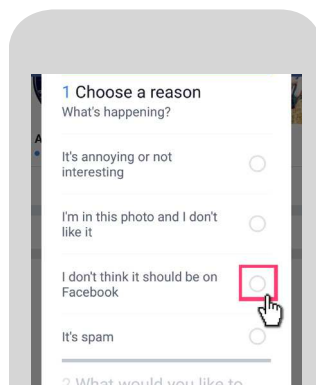
#### Report on mobile:



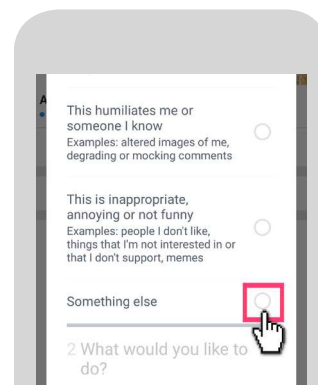
**Step 1:** Select the three dots at the side of the post



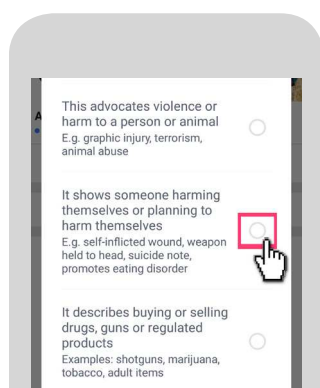
**Step 2:** Select 'Report post'



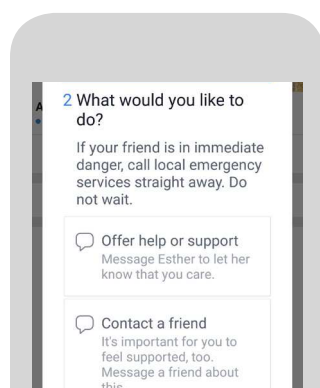
**Step 3:** Select 'I don't think it should be on Facebook'



**Step 4:** Select 'Something else'



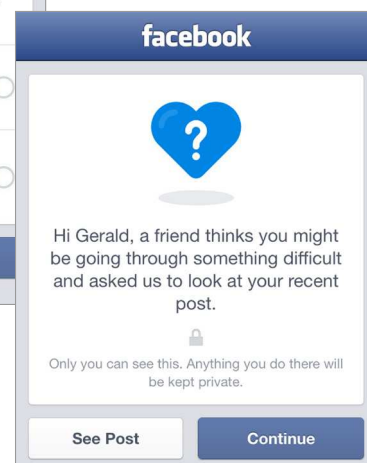
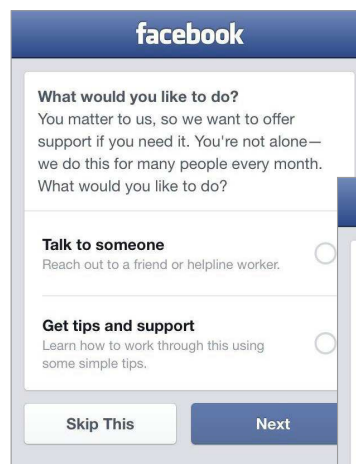
**Step 5:** Select 'It shows someone harming themselves or planning to harm themselves'



**Step 6:** Choose what you would like to do to support

## What happens next?

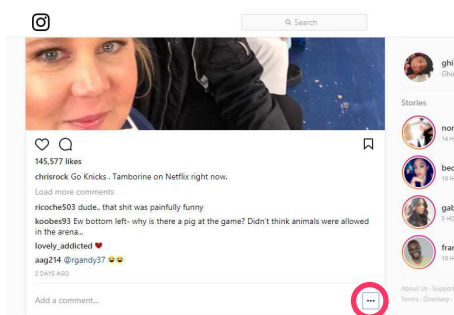
The reported user will get a message with options to reach out to a friend or get tips and support.



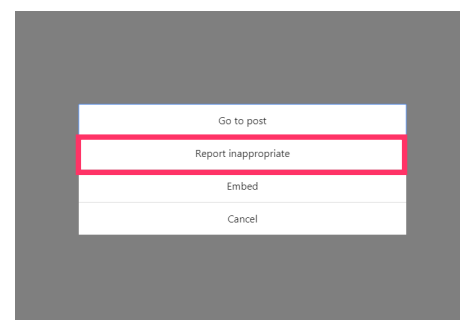
## Reporting on Instagram

Visit [Instagram Help Centre](#) for support

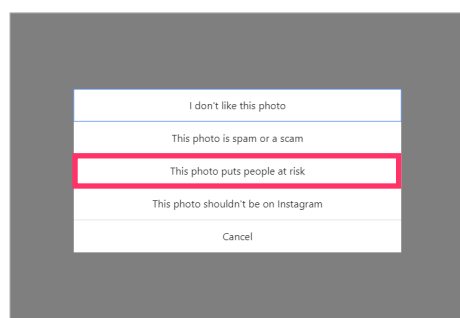
**Report on desktop:**



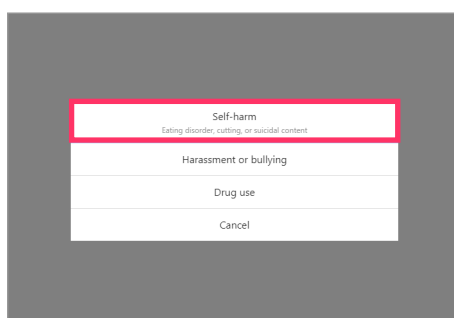
**Step 1:** Select **three dots** at the bottom of the post



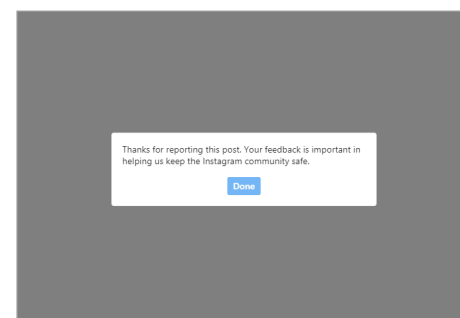
**Step 2:** Select the options to 'Report as inappropriate'



**Step 3:** Select 'This puts people at risk' option

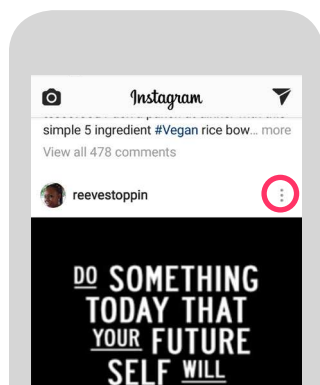


**Step 4:** Select 'Self harm'

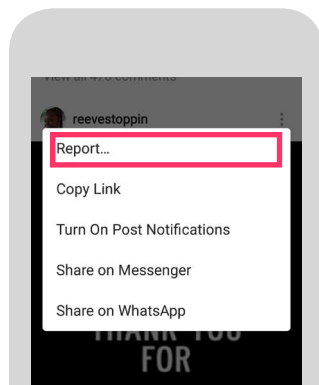


**Step 5:** You will get a message to advise that the process is complete

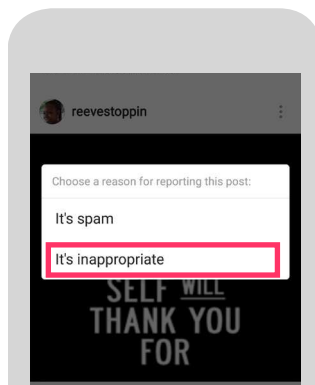
## Report on mobile:



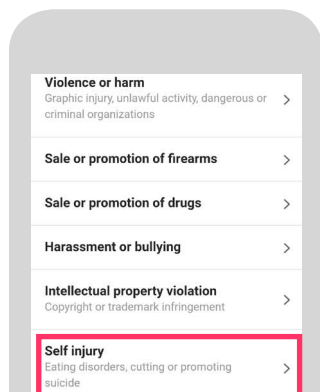
**Step 1:** Tap the **three dots** at the side of the post



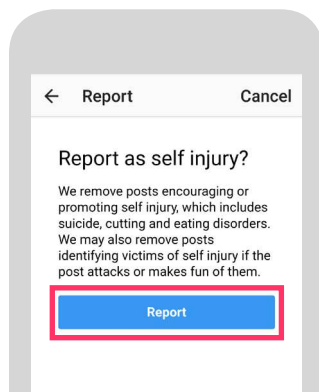
**Step 2:** Tap 'Report'



**Step 3:** Tap 'It's Inappropriate'



**Step 4:** Tap 'Self injury'



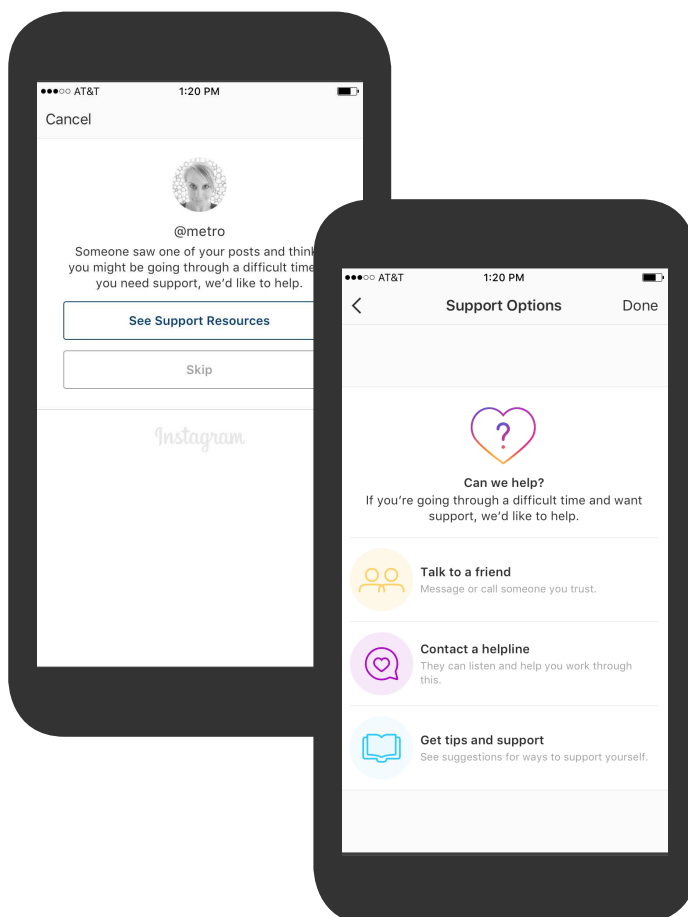
**Step 5:** Tap 'report'

## What happens next?

By flagging the post anonymously, your child's friend will be sent a support message that reads, "Someone saw one of your posts and thinks you might be going through a difficult time. If you need support, we'd like to help."

They will be taken to a list of support options, which includes a suggestion to message or call a friend, access more general tips, and support or contact a help line.

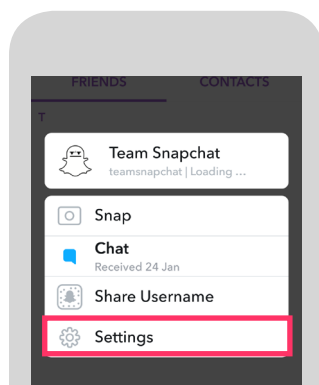
The app also directs users to the support message if they search for certain hashtags associated with harmful behaviours like eating disorders.



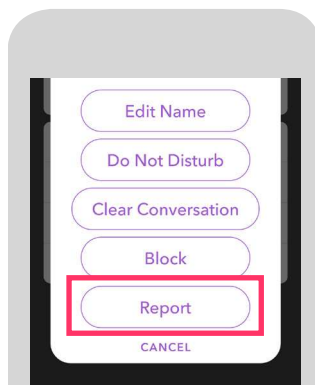


## Reporting on Snapchat

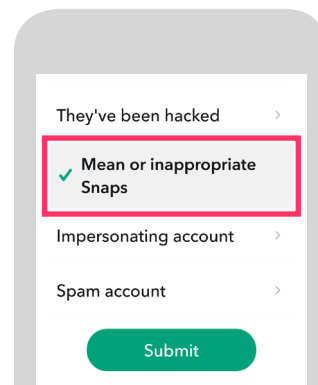
Visit [Snapchat Support](#) page to report



**Step 1:** Tap my friends and choose your friend from the list to see the menu and tap 'Settings'



**Step 2:** Tap 'Report'



**Step 3:** Tap the 'Mean or inappropriate Snaps' option and submit

### What happens next?

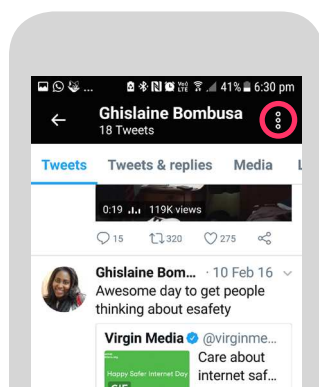
Once you have reported anonymously, action will be taken on a case by case basis. Unlike Facebook and Instagram there is no clear procedure of how users are contacted following a report.



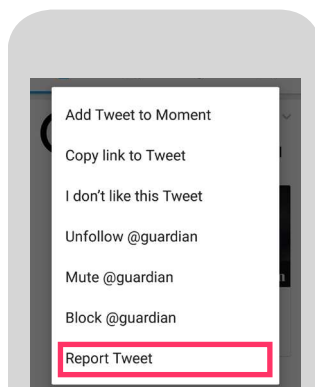
## Reporting on Twitter

Visit [Twitter Help Centre](#) about self-harm and suicide for support

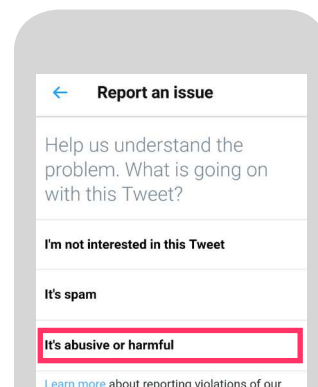
Visit <https://help.twitter.com/forms/suicide> and file a ticket with Twitter and report.



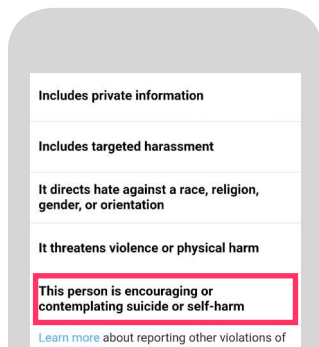
**Step 1:** Tap the arrow at the side of the tweet



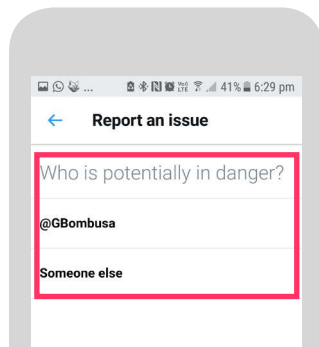
**Step 2:** Select 'Report Tweet' from the list of options



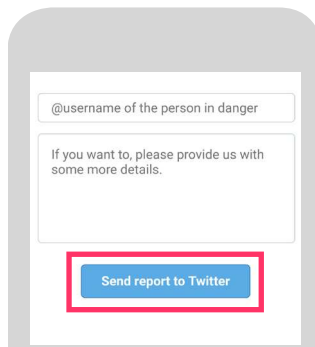
**Step 3:** Select 'It's abusive or harmful' option



**Step 4:** Select 'This person is encouraging or contemplating suicide or self-harm'



**Step 5:** Choose from the option who is at risk



**Step 6:** Add more information if required in the field and press 'send report to Twitter'

### What happens next?

Once Twitter has assessed the report they will get in touch with the reported user and let them know that someone who cares for them has raised a concern that they might be at risk. They will also provide the person with support resources and encourage them to seek help.

## Reporting on YouTube

If your child comes across a video about suicide, self-injury or depression encourage them to [flag the video](#) or [comment](#) on YouTube.

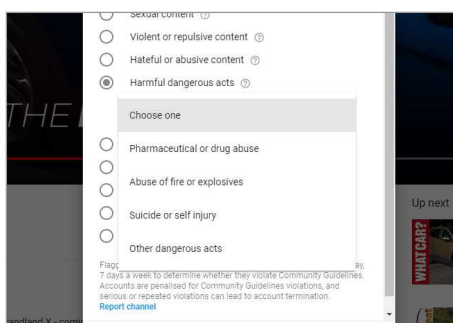


### Report on desktop:

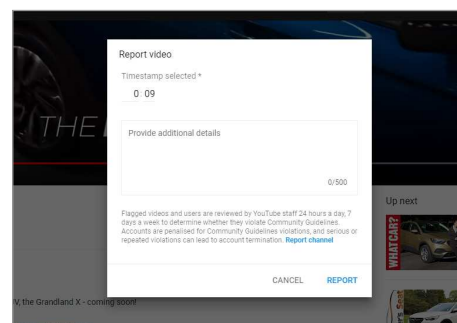
Follow these steps to flag a video:



**Step 1:** Ensure you are logged into your account. Below the player for the video that you want to flag, click the **three dots** symbol and choose **Report**.

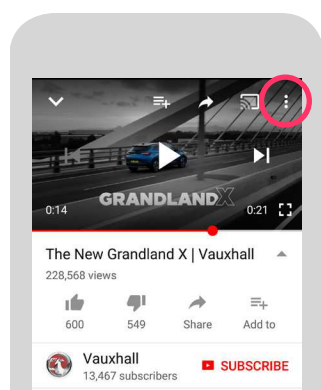


**Step 4:** Select '**Harmful dangerous acts**' from the options and in the next box tap '**Suicide or self-injury**' and click next

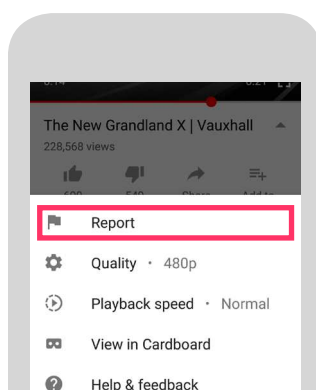


**Step 5:** Provide any additional details that may help the review team make their decision, including time stamps or descriptions of the violation.

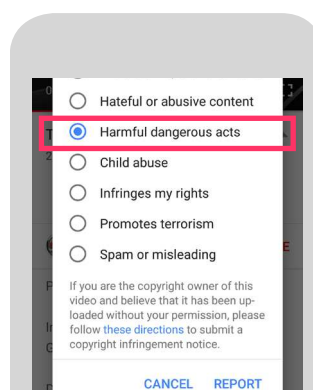
### Report on mobile:



**Step 1:** Make sure you are logged in, tap the video to see the **three dots symbol** and tap it.

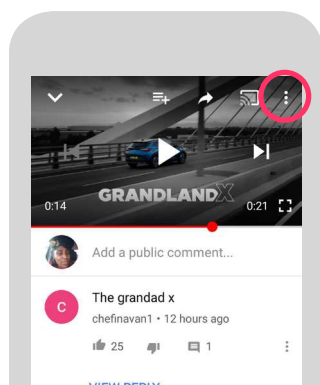


**Step 2:** From the menu tap '**Report**'

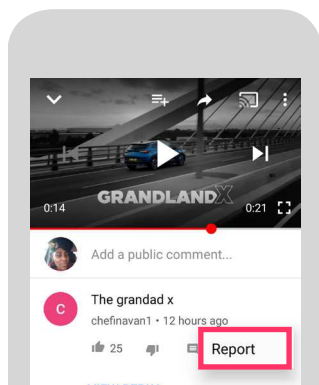


**Step 3:** Select '**Harmful dangerous acts**' from the options and tap **report**

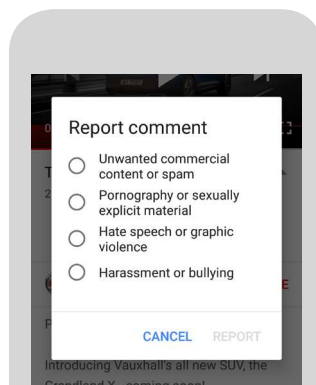
Follow these steps to flag a comment:



**Step 1:** Go to the comment that you'd like to report. **Click the three dots** at the side of the comment



**Step 2:** Click **Report** spam or abuse.



**Step 4:** Select the reason for flagging.

## What happens next?

YouTube will reach out to the person with resources to support them and works with suicide prevention agencies to help when possible.



## Reporting on Tumblr

**Step 1:** To report simply email [support@tumblr.com](mailto:support@tumblr.com) or [abuse@tumblr.com](mailto:abuse@tumblr.com) and provide as much information about the person as possible including any screenshots of the content on the account.

**Step 2:** You can also report promotion of self-harm content through their online form: <https://www.tumblr.com/abuse/selfharm>

## What happens next?

A member of Tumblr's Safety Team will send the user an e-mail with advice of where to get further help and support.

### Promotion or glorification of self-harm

Encouraging others to injure themselves in ways large or small, or celebrating such injuries in any fashion. Glamorizing anorexia, bulimia, or other eating disorders.

Content you're reporting

URL of the post

A little about yourself

Name

Optional

Email address



I'm not a robot



Submit

# Digital Resilience Toolkit

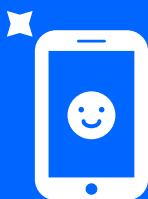
internet  
matters.org

*Advice for parents of 11–13 year olds*

Help children become more digitally savvy  
and get the best out of their online world

## What are they doing online?

Research shows that  
the average age a child  
gets a smartphone is  
aged 10 and 11



51%  
of 12-year-olds have  
social media accounts

Only 1 in 8  
12–15s who have seen  
something worrying or  
nasty online have  
reported it



Source: Ofcom Children's and parents'  
media use and attitudes 2017

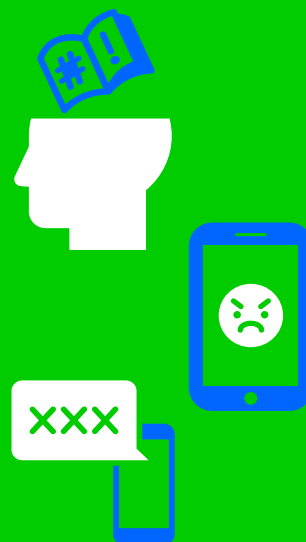


## What challenges can they face?

At this age they are socialising online for the first time and building friendship groups which means they could face issues such as online peer pressure and cyberbullying.

They may be exposed to content that is inappropriate for their age, especially if they are using devices that aren't protected by the correct parental controls.

Children at this developmental stage are more impulsive and so may not be fully conscious that they are creating a digital footprint that will affect them as they grow older.





# How do I get them prepared to deal with these challenges?

## 1. Have conversations about their online world

- Talk to your children about **what they're doing online**, what apps they're using and how you expect them to behave online
- Talk to them about what the things they **value offline**, such as **kindness** and how that should translate online
- Explain to them **why it's important for you to keep an eye on their social media** so they can understand that just like riding a bike, you need training wheels to learn safely before riding independently



## 2. Discuss digital footprint

- Remind your child that **everything they post online will be recorded** and this could affect them in later life
- **Use the t-shirt test** - if they wouldn't feel comfortable wearing it on a t-shirt, don't post it online. This applies to photographs, comments and videos
- Talk to them about the **consequences of what they post** - something that might seem funny now might not be funny down the line

## 3. Finding their identity and source

- At this age, children will be wanting to identify with a certain group so ensure you've talked to them about **checking the sources of their information**
- They will also be looking to identify with friends who share interests, make sure they have the **correct settings on the platforms** they use so they're talking to children their own age and who they know in real life



- Remind them that if they do come across something online that's left them confused or upset, it's perfectly normal as they may not have been **emotionally mature enough to see it**

## 4. Use Stop, Speak and Support to deal with challenges online

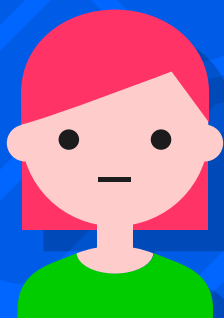
- Talk to your child about the importance of **speaking out if they come across cyberbullying online**
- **Familiarise yourself with Stop, Speak and Support** introduced to empower them to support their peers online and take a stand against cyberbullying
- Remind your child that they can always **come to you or a trusted adult** if they've been upset by something online

## 5. Talk about resilience:

- If your child has been affected by a comment they've received online, ask them to think about the intent behind it
- Calling everything bullying can be dangerous - as being a victim can be disempowering. Teach them to **spot the difference between banter and bullying**
  - Do this by asking them to consider the context of how a comment was made
- Help them understand the difference between 'messaging up' and bullying
- **Discuss the impact words** can have on another person's emotional and mental wellbeing and remind them of the importance of being a good digital citizen



Even with the right controls and settings, there's still a small chance children can come across something they shouldn't.



"What happens if things go wrong?"

- Try and understand what has gone on, where it has happened, who is involved and if there are any settings you can apply to stop it happening again
- Show your support and make a point to give them the confidence that you will deal with it together
- Talk it through openly and validate their feelings and emotions about what they've experienced
- Depending on the situation seek advice from specialist organisation or your GP to give them the best chance to recover and regain their confidence

# Digital Resilience Toolkit

internet  
matters.org

*Advice for parents of teens (14+ year olds)*

Help children become more digitally savvy  
and get the best out of their online world

## What are they doing online?

- Most teens turn to **video content** first for all types of content that are important to them

1 in 10

12-15s who go  
online have 'gone live'  
on a social network



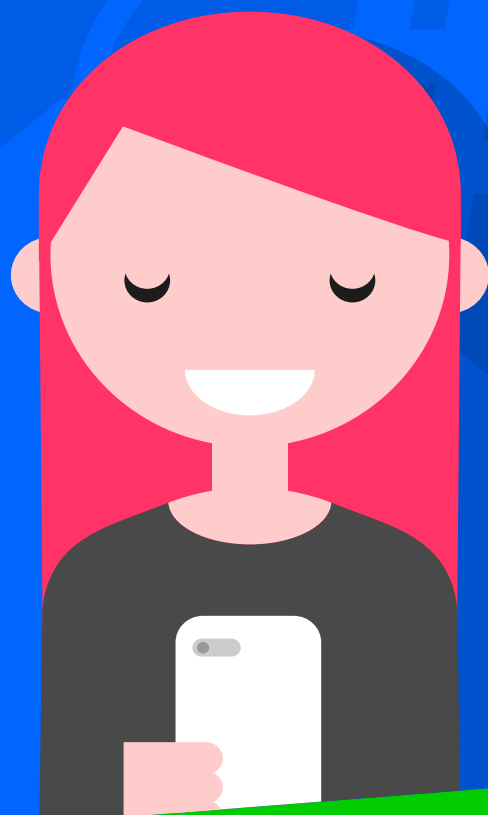
## What are they concerned about?



1 in 8

12-15s with a social media  
profile say there is pressure  
to look popular all of the time

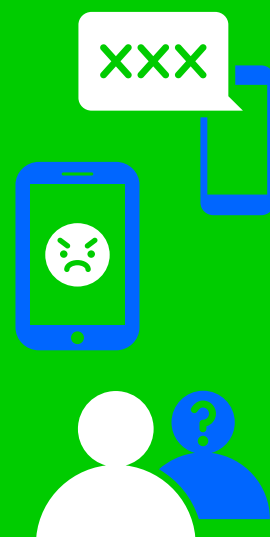
Source: Ofcom Children's and parents'  
media use and attitudes 2017



## What challenges can they face?

At this age your child might be starting to date and growing their network of friends through social media.

As they increase their exposure and consumption of the online world, there is the potential that it may affect their body image, or how they form their identity on and offline and potentially be exposed to cyberbullying and sexting.



### *Have conversations about sex and relationships in the online world*

- Discuss how the changing nature of relationships can affect trust
- Get them thinking about their feelings around being pressured to send images online or offline
- Encourage them to stand their ground and not to follow the norm among friends if they feel uncomfortable
- Share your views on sexting and reinforce the fact that it's always a bad idea in the long run

### *Discuss managing their online identity and critical thinking*

- Help them critically assess what other people say about them online
- Remind them about the dangers of body shaming and making trivial comments on social media posts
- Teach them to question the importance of seeking comments and likes on social media
- Get them thinking about possible sub-text associated with some comments

### *Talk about the time spent online and health implications*

- Talk about what you consider as appropriate
- Encourage them to spend time away from their device to help create a healthy norm
- Get them thinking about the health implications this can have on their sleep and memory

## How do I get them prepared to deal with these challenges?

**"First step – Having open and honest conversations"**



**"Second step – Have an open door policy"**

*Encourage them to talk to you if they feel concerned or worried about an issue*

- Reassure them that you're here to support them and not judge if they have an issue they feel embarrassed to share
- If they feel they can't talk to you make sure they know that they can talk to a specialist organisation like [Childline](#) or another trusted adult



Even with the best intentions, there may be times that a child gets off track and is affected by something they've experienced online. Like falling off a bike, it's the recovery and getting back on the bike that often matters more than the fall.



**"What happens if things go wrong?"**

### *Assess the situation and find ways to deal with it together*

- Try and understand what has gone on and who is involved
- Don't overreact, show your support and make a point to give them the confidence that you will deal with it together
- Depending on the situation seek advice from specialist organisation or your GP to give them the best chance to recover and regain their confidence
- Agree a course of action together with your child so they feel supported