

Top tips for keeping children safe with Digital Technology and Social Media

It is important to talk to your children from an early age, about how to stay safe whilst using digital technology. They will all access it at some point. The internet can put children at risk and make them very vulnerable if not used appropriately.

1. Talk to your children early

It is essential that you talk to your children about safety online, at an early age. Children are spending more and more time on the internet these days and you could talk with them about their safety regularly. Keep up to date with changes in technology to ensure you understand the risks.

2. Ensure sites are age appropriate

Always check sites, games and social media to ensure that they are age appropriate for your child. Some websites and online games have minimum age limits to use them. Please don't be pressurized by your children in allowing them to access these sites.

3. Set Boundaries

Agree rules and boundaries with your children together. Think about:

- How long they are allowed to spend online
- When they can go online
- What sites they are allowed to access—look at age rating for online games
- Sharing pictures and sharing potential information—ensure you know who they are playing online games with and that they do not share personal information
- How to treat people—not to post anything unkind

4. Show an interest in what they are doing

Spend time with your child while they are on the internet and find out what they enjoy and what sites they spend time on most. This will help you have more awareness of what they access and how to keep them safe. You never know, you may also learn something from them as children these days often appear to know more than us!!



Useful Websites

PACE— parents against child sexual exploitation— support for parents and information on CSE

Its not Okay—Website that has useful resources and information regarding CSE

See me Hear me—Useful tips and advice for parents and young people who are concerned about CSE

CEOP—Child Sexual Exploitation and online protection centre—tips for keeping safe online and access to report online abuse

Blast Project—Resources and support for parents and boys that have been or are at risk of sexual exploitation

NSPCC—Tips on how to identify Child Sexual Exploitation

Action for Children—information on how we support Families, Children and young people across the UK

www.stopitnow.org.uk

www.barnados.org.uk

www.parentsprotect.co.uk

Www.safeandsound.org.uk

Together we can prevent Child Sex Exploitation



This leaflet will help parents recognize the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse, in which a child or young person is manipulated or forced into taking part in a sexual act. This could be as part of a trusty relationship or in return for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol or somewhere to stay.

The abuser will put them into dangerous situations forcing the young person to do things they don't want to do. They may physically or verbally threaten the young person or be violent towards them. They will control and manipulate them, and try to isolate them from friends and family.

Signs to watch out for:

- Changes in behaviour— withdrawn, mood swings
- Change in personality
- Becoming secretive
- Change in appearance
- Bed wetting
- Self-harming
- Unsociable
- Displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Unexplained gifts
- Infections and sexually transmitted diseases
- Being seen with older people

Signs and indicators that a young person may be a risk:

- Children/young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability)
- Recent bereavement
- Poverty
- Family breakdown
- Bullying
- Accessibility to social media
- Looked after children
- Visiting unknown areas

What to do if you suspect Child Sexual Exploitation:

- Speak to a member of staff
- Contact the POLICE
- Visit useful Websites for advice
- Contact Sandwell Child Sexual Exploitation Team—0121 563 2618 or 0121 569 8391
- Sandwell Woman's Aid—0121 553 0090 or 0121 569 5641

What kind of situations are we talking about?

Here are some examples

1. Inappropriate Relationship

This usually involves an individual who exercises inappropriate power or control over a young person. There may be a significant age gap. The victim may believe they are in a loving relationship initially, but then feel trapped and used.

2. Boyfriend/Girlfriend

A man/woman befriends and grooms their victim into a sexual relationship by presenting themselves as an 'ideal boyfriend/girlfriend.' He/she then forces or coerces the victim into having sex with friends or associates, for social status, financial or other gain.

3. Organised exploitation and trafficking

Victims are trafficked through criminal networks, sometimes within the same town but often between town and cities— where they may be forced or coerced into sex with multiple men/women and used to recruit other victims.

Sexual abuse, including exploitation, can happen to any young person—

boys as well as girls!