WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

- Get involved in your children's internet use. Discussing the opportunities and risks with children involves helping them to see for themselves how they might get into and out of difficulty.
- Agree rules as a family about not disclosing personal information, time spent online, and contacting people via the internet.
- Create a family email address for registering online.
- Bookmark your family's favourite websites. Add **www.ceop.gov.uk** to your favourites if you ever need to report online abuse to the police.
- Encourage children to talk to someone they trust if they feel worried or upset by something that happens online.
- Make use of available filtering and monitoring software. These can help to block inappropriate material but remember they are not 100% effective and are no substitute for adult involvement and supervision. For more advice see: **www.getnetwise.org**
- Make sure your children know the SMART rules. Childnet's SMART rules have been written especially for young people to remind them how to be careful online.

S — **SAFE:** Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your full name, email, phone number, home address, or school name – to people who you don't trust online.

M — **MEETING:** Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present.

A — **ACCEPTING:** Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R — **RELIABLE:** Someone online might lie about who they are, and information on the internet may not be reliable. Check information or advice with other websites, books, or someone who knows.

T — **TELL:** Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

FURTHER ADVICE AND RESOURCES

The Childnet International website gives internet safety advice and links for young people, parents, teachers, and other organisations. Childnet's Chatdanger website, accessible from here, gives information and advice about how to keep safe while chatting online.
www.childnet.com

Childnet's Digizen website provides information about using social network sites and social media sites creatively and safely, it shares advice and guidance on preventing and responding to cyberbullying, and it houses a number of classroom resources focused on encouraging responsible digital citizenship.
www.digizen.org

Childnet's Sorted website is a resource produced entirely by young people for young people and adults on the issues of internet security. It gives important information and advice on how to protect computers from the dangers of viruses, phishing scams, spyware and Trojans.
www.childnet.com/sorted

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre's website houses a range of information on how to stay safe online. It includes a unique link to the Virtual Global Taskforce that enables parents and young people to make reports of actual or attempted abuse online which the police will investigate.
www.ceop.gov.uk

The Internet Watch Foundation website is the UK's hotline for reporting illegal online content. It deals specifically with child abuse images hosted worldwide and criminally obscene and incitement to racial hatred content hosted in the UK.
www.iwf.org.uk

Childnet International

Know IT All

KEEPING UP WITH CHILDREN ON THE INTERNET

www.childnet.com/kia

... AN INTERNET SAFETY GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

THE INTERNET – ALWAYS CHANGING

Keeping up to date with children's use of technology is challenging for many adults. It can be hard to supervise what young people are viewing and creating online, who they are chatting to and texting, and what they are downloading.

Many children may have better technical skills than you; however they still need advice and protection when using internet and mobile technologies.

This Childnet Know IT All guide will help you to understand online safety issues and give you practical advice as you talk to your children so they can get the most out of the internet and use it positively and safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The risks for children when using the internet and mobile phones include inappropriate:

C CONTACT

Potential contact from someone online who may wish to bully or abuse them. It is important for children to remember that online contacts may not be who they say they are. Children must keep personal details private and agree not to meet unsupervised with anyone they have only contacted via the internet.

Children may also become targets of cyberbullying whereby people use information and communication technologies to deliberately upset someone else. It's important that you discuss with your child who they can report inappropriate conversations, messages, and behaviours to and how.
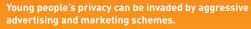
C CONTENT

Inappropriate material is available to children online. Consider using filtering software and agree ground rules about what services you are happy for your children to use. Give them strategies for dealing with any content they are not comfortable with – such as turning off the computer screen and telling an adult they trust.

There can be legal consequences of copying copyrighted content. Young people need to be aware that plagiarising content and downloading copyrighted material without the author's permission is illegal.

C COMMERCIALISM

Young people's privacy can be invaded by aggressive advertising and marketing schemes.

Encourage your children to keep their personal information private, learn how to delete pop-ups and block spam emails, and use a family email address when filling in online forms.

CYBERBULLYING

New technologies provide an apparently anonymous method by which bullies can torment their victims at any time of the day or night. While the victims may not be in physical danger, they may receive an email, chat or text messages or be the target of unfavourable websites or social networking profiles that make them feel embarrassed, upset, depressed or afraid. This can damage their self-esteem and pose a threat to their psychological well-being.

For more advice see **www.childnet.com/digizen**

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking sites or blogs are places online where young people can create personalised web-pages in order to express themselves and share ideas and opinions with others. The sites enable them to meet and socialise online by linking to other sites and therefore create an environment for the whole of their social network to easily exchange information and chat.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Personal information and contact details can be contained in a profile or could be disclosed during online conversations. Such information can lead to children and their social network receiving unwanted contact from inappropriate people. Children can also post comments or images of themselves or others online, which may compromise their or their friends' safety or be used as a means to bully others.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Learn from and teach children how to use these applications responsibly. Check the privacy preferences available and insist children make their profiles accessible only to people known offline. Encourage young people to keep their personal information to a minimum and to think very carefully before including a personal photograph of themselves or their friends in their profile. Photos online can easily be copied, changed and used elsewhere, and can potentially stay online forever.

For further information on blog safety visit:
www.digizen.org/socialnetworking

MORE RESOURCES

Childnet runs a special parents seminar which can be held in your school and there is further advice and resources for parents on Childnet's Kidsmart website, see: **www.kidsmart.org.uk/parents**.

To complement this leaflet Childnet also have a CD-ROM available for parents and carers on getting the most out of the internet and keeping children safe online.

This is free to order (for maintained schools in England) from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Please phone **0845 60 222 60** (or text phone **0845 60 555 60**) quoting reference **00308 – 2007CDO – EN**.

Childnet also produce leaflets for both primary and secondary school pupils. These and other resources can be ordered at **www.childnet.com/order**, by telephoning Childnet on **020 7639 6967**, or by emailing **info@childnet.com**.

DOWNLOADING, P2P AND FILE-SHARING

WHAT IS PEER-2-PEER (P2P)?

A file-sharing network enables people to exchange photos, videos, music, software and games directly between computers, by downloading P2P software.

IS IT LEGAL?

People who download or upload copyrighted material online without the author's permission are breaking the law. You can legally download by going to websites where this permission to share files has been given.

WHAT ARE THE PRIVACY AND SECURITY RISKS?

Your computer is at risk from spyware, viruses and other invasive programmes if you are sharing files on non-regulated sites. Protect your computer and personal files by visiting reputable sites and by installing a firewall and anti-virus software.

WHAT ABOUT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT AND CONTACT?

File sharing networks are the least regulated part of the internet. They can contain pornography and inappropriate content, often in files with misleading names. Direct children to legal downloading sites to reduce this risk.

For further information visit: **www.childnet.com/music**

THE INTERNET ON MOBILE PHONES

The issues about being safe online apply equally to mobile phones, especially as most phones now have internet access.

Whilst there are opportunities in terms of communication, interaction and entertainment in young people having mobile phones children can be at risk of accessing and distributing inappropriate content and images and talking to strangers away from your supervision. Children can receive abusive text messages, be vulnerable to commercial mobile phone pressures and run up large phone bills.

It is very important to encourage your children not to give out their mobile numbers to strangers either online or in real life and help them to use their mobile safely and responsibly.

For more advice visit: **www.chatdanger.com/mobiles**