Making sure your home doesn't have an open door

Increasingly, young people are being contacted in their own homes on online platforms and apps and asked for sexual pictures and videos, while their parents and carers are totally unaware.

There is a significant rise in children being groomed and coerced online by abusers into sexual activities often in their own bedrooms and bathrooms. Those abusers record this content via webcams or livestreaming services and share it across their networks online. This type of child sexual abuse is now the predominant type of sexual abuse imagery found on the internet.

This is happening now, and it can happen to anyone's child. But you can do something about it; you can help prevent it happening to your child.

The Internet Watch Foundation have produced a guide for parents

All parents and carers need to be aware of the risks of online child sexual abuse and the scale of the issue affecting children today. Please help us spread the word.

Read and share the downloadable guide for parents and carers from Internet Watch Foundation:

https://talk.iwf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Parent_Resource_UpdatedJuly2023.pdf

Parental Control Tools

Parental control tools allow parents to protect their children's privacy and online safety according to various parameters. They can select which games children are allowed to play (based on the PEGI age ratings), limit and monitor their online spending, control access to internet browsing and online interactions (chat), and set the amount of time children can spend playing games.

All gaming consoles, handheld devices and operating systems for PC and Mac are equipped with parental control systems, allowing parents to protect their children's privacy and online safety according to various parameters. With these control tools, parents can:
- select which games children are allowed to play (based on the PEGI age ratings)
- control and monitor the use of digital purchases
- limit access to internet browsing by applying a filter
- control the amount of time that children can spend playing games
- control the level of online interaction (chat) and exchange of data (text messages, user-generated content)

More Information:
Consoles
Click on your console links:
- **Xbox Series X/S**
- **Nintendo Switch**
- **Sony Playstation 5**
- **Xbox One X/S**
- **Xbox 360**
- **Wii U**
- **Sony Playstation 4**
- **Sony PlayStation 3**

Image from: hacked.com

Smartphones, tablets and streaming
Click on your console links:

- **Google Play** devices (Android)
- **Google Stadia**
- **iPhone and iPad** (iOS)

Image from: cyber safety cop- Linkedin

PRIVACY - WHAT HAPPENS WITH MY KIDS' DATA?
All companies have a responsibility to protect the personal data of European residents, especially those of children, according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You can learn more about the data that different video game devices, platforms, and publishers collect by checking their privacy policies. You can always change your account settings to limit the amount and type of data that companies can collect and store:
Nintendo / **Microsoft Xbox** / **Sony Playstation** / **Google Play** / **Apple** / **Steam** / **Oculus**

Protecting Your Child Online

Lego Supporting E Safety

As you may know we love Lego. The education team at Lego have created some wonderful activities for children aged 6-9 years which I think would be very useful for parents and the classroom. There are six different topics which are designed to help children navigate the online world safely, including conversation starters. The topics include cyber bullying, screen time, false information and others. All the activities and resources are free.

For further information.
https://www.lego.com/en-gb/sustainability/children/buildandtalk?locale=en-gb&consent-modal=show&age-gate=grown_up

DEVELOPING ONLINE SAFETY SKILLS TOGETHER

Here are some games, recommended by 8 online safety games for kids | GoHenry, that can be played together to develop and enhance online safety awareness:
https://www.gohenry.com/uk/blog/online-safety/8-online-safety-games-for-kids

Cloud Quest – A fun, interactive adventure website with videos and activities teaching your kids about online safety. Cloud Quest has cartoons that teach online safety skills to a wider age range. Cloud Quest is designed for kids under the age of 10.
https://www.missingkids.org/NetSmartz

Safe Online Surfing – This is a range of fun games from word searches to matching games, aimed at kids aged 7 to 13. They cover everything from online etiquette to avoiding scams.
https://sos.fbi.gov/en/

Privacy on Patrol Squad – This is a free set of educational materials for children aged 7 to 11. It includes fun worksheets and quizzes to help your kids learn about internet privacy, passwords and cyber security. There's a big focus on privacy and data protection to make sure that your children lower the risk of identity theft in later years
https://www.onlineprivacymatters.org/education-initiatives

Cyber Defence Quiz – This is a fun quiz for ages 8 to 12 where your kids answer questions about password strength, email attachments and phishing. The website has a lot of other games and SPRING 2024 | PARENTS/CARERS STAFF - ONLINE SAFETY NEWS – SPRING 2024 – PAGE 2 learning material as well, so you will always find something to help your children learn about online security. It's worth either letting your child watch some of the videos, or you can help explain online security to your kids as they play the quiz.
http://www.carnegiecyberacademy.com/funStuff/quiz/academyQuiz.html

Managing Screen Time

The internet opens up a wealth of opportunities for children and has become a big part of how they develop, discover and see the wider world. However, when it comes to screen time, **moderation is key as it can have an affect your child's brain.** Too much screen time can affect children's development (including social and emotional development), their physical health and can disrupt sleep and affect sleep cycles. **Physical activity and sleep are really important. Make sure screens are not displacing these things by keeping screens out of bedrooms at bed time and by creating opportunities for your child to be active each day. Devices should be avoided in the hour before bed to promote healthy sleep.** One size does not fit all when it comes to screen time – it is more about getting it right for your families needs. Families should negotiate screen time limits with their children based upon the needs of an individual child and the ways in which screens are used.

Top tips to manage screen time:
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 are 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.
4. **Get the whole family to unplug and create 'screen free' zones at home.**
5. **Avoid using screen time as a reward.**
6. **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.