



Socialisation during Social Isolation

Keeping our children safe online

- Social networking has been – and still is – one of the revolutions of the online age and when used correctly is an excellent way of keeping in touch with friends and family.
- But it can also be a source of harm for your child (or for you and other family members, via your child).
- Encourage your child to tell you which sites they're using, and ask them to show you how they work.

Teenagers are seen to be anti-social because they're always in front of their devices; however at this time of isolation I have no doubt their devices connecting them to those around them are a vital source of comfort. But have we taken the time to find out what they are actually doing, rather than what we think they're doing? The safest way to keep our children safe is to have open conversations and take comfort in sharing what they are doing online.

During this period of social distancing we are grateful for the digital world allowing our children to stay connected to their friends and family and keep up-to-date with their learning. They of course want to reach out to their peers and sustain some 'normality' of communication but I also want to ensure their wellbeing and safety. We ask for your support in ensuring that they are getting a break from the absorbing and addictive digital world. We hope that each member of the household has some digital downtime, you can monitor this through the screen time notifications or enforce your own restrictions whereby the whole family adhere to some good 'old' fashioned family time.

The main risks associated with social networking and social media use are:

- Your child's naivety meaning they are not questioning others intent and over sharing.
- Your child befriending or talking with a stranger who may be stalking them
- Cyberbullying from either strangers or people they already know
- Being scammed by downloading or linking to hoax content
- Identity theft by revealing private information in profiles and posts.
- And though it may seem unthinkable, your child could be bullying or saying inappropriate things about somebody else, rather than being the target.

What can we do to reduce the risk:

- Teach your child to be very careful to befriend and communicate with only trusted people that they know.
- Tell them that revealing personal details such as their birth date, address, pet's name or teacher could give someone all the information they know to harm them.
- Teach them not to click on links or download from sites they have linked to.
- Teach them about safe use of passwords and other login details
- Above all, assure them that it's OK to come to you or another trusted adult if they feel threatened by or uncomfortable about something they have seen or done on a social networking site.

Useful sites for parent information:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/>
- [Children's mental health](#)
- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

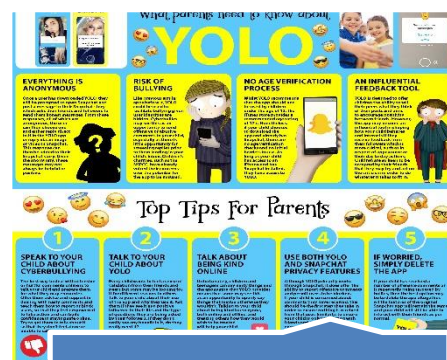
We know the pupils are always one step ahead of us with apps, but please find **attached** with this bulletin advice sheets on the following apps and e-safety:



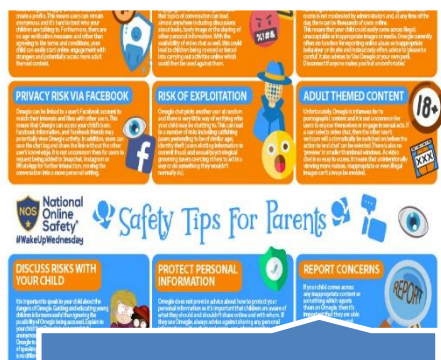
House Party



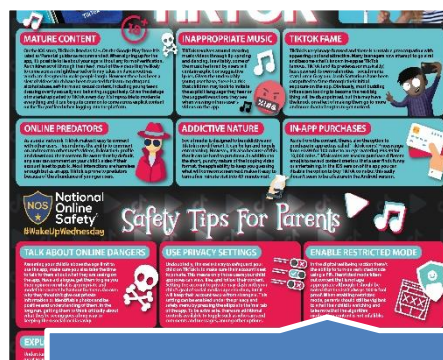
Mental Wellbeing



YOLO



Omegle



TikTok



Instagram

Safeguarding pupils

There are a number of trends that have risen alongside increased teen social media use:

- **'Sadfishing'** which is described as a behavioural trend where people make exaggerated claims about their emotional problems to generate sympathy and attention. This outpouring of emotion on-line in an attempt to get reactions from followers is seen as a growing trend on social media. The challenge with 'sadfishing' is that sometimes real problems can become overlooked or young people can even be bullied for having shared their problems online.
- **'Challenges'** In today's digitally connected world, children and adults are constantly presented with new ways to engage, react and contribute. Viral Challenges (as they're often known) draw on

these emotions and, as the name suggests, spread and gather pace very rapidly. New challenges are constantly emerging and evolving. They're often completely innocent, raising awareness of worthy causes or simply providing amusement. However, they can have much more sinister undertones, putting children at risk of physical harm or, in extreme cases, fatal injury. The most prominent at the minute is 'Skullbreaking' where one purposefully kicks the feet of another away to make them fall to the ground.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me:

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