

As schools are closed and children are expected to access a lot of learning online, it is important that they stay safe. As a parent, it is important you are monitoring the time your child spends online and what they are accessing.

Here are some top tips to keeping your child safe online:

1. Having a conversation – As a parent or carer, the best tool to support your child in leading a happy and safe life online is open conversation. This link takes you to a [parents' guide](#) with advice on how to begin these conversations and how to work together as a family to support your child online.

2. A [family agreement](#) is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family and, as you have everyone at home, it's a fantastic way to set boundaries and discuss how you are going to use technology during this time.

3. [Screen time boundaries](#) – The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) have provided guidance for screen time for under -18s. They have advised that, although there is no set time to adhere to, it is important that screen time does not impact on exercise or family time. Devices should be avoided an hour before bed to reduce impact on sleep.

4. [Parental controls](#) – These are designed to help prevent children from accessing inappropriate content online. They can also be used to set usage times and monitor activity.

5. – Cyberbullying - Being a victim of cyberbullying can be very distressing for a young person as messages can be sent anonymously and it is difficult to know who the bully is. Moreover, the bullying doesn't always end once the victim has left wherever the bully might be (eg. school) as it can continue 24/7. For tips to prevent cyberbullying [click here](#).

6 – [Young children staying safe](#) – Ofcom's latest research has shown that 86% of 3-4 year olds have access to a tablet at home so it is important to keep young children safe online.

7 – Staying connected – There are lots of different ways to stay connected whilst self-isolating at home. There are also lots of new apps being used such as Houseparty and Zoom. To find out about new apps and their risks, use the [NSPCC Net Aware website](#).

8 – E-Safety education – E-safety is a prominent part of the curriculum and while your child is not at school, it is important that they are still made aware of the risks. Visit this [website](#) for activities for different ages about online safety.

9 – Making a report – [reportharmfulcontent.com](#) is a website designed to help you report anything which you believe shouldn't be online. There's guidance about how to report different types of content, as well as help with the next steps you can take if your report isn't actioned by the site or service you have made it on.

10 – Speaking to someone – depending on the age of your child, there is a range of places they can go to for help. For younger children, they can call [Childline](#) for help and support and for older children, [The Mix](#) offer free and practical advice. For parents and carers, [The O2 and NSPCC helpline](#) can help with any questions or concerns you may have about keeping your child safe online.

There is lots of support out there for staying safe online. Here are some more useful websites: [Internet Matters](#), [London Grid for Learning](#), [Net Aware](#), [Parent Info](#), [Thinkuknow](#) and [UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

For further information visit <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19> where some of these tips are taken from.