



E-Safety factsheet

What does the term 'E-safety' mean?

'E-safety' or electronic safety is defined as the safe and responsible use of technology. This includes the use of the internet and other means of communication using electronic media (e.g. text messages, gaming devices, email etc).

It is mainly concerned with the safeguarding of children and young people in the digital world and educating them so they feel safe when accessing e-technologies.

Online risks - the '4 C's'

While there are many benefits of children and young people going online, e.g. learning new things, getting help with homework or connecting with friends and family, they also face many risks. These risks fall into four categories commonly known as the '4 C's':

1. **Content** - the child/young person is exposed to harmful material, e.g. aggressive material, sexualised material, or websites which advocate unhealthy or dangerous behaviour.
2. **Contact** - the child/young person participates in adult initiated online activity, e.g. accepting friends who may not be who they say they are or the child/young person experiencing grooming, sexual abuse or exploitation by an adult.
3. **Conduct** - the child/young person is a perpetrator or victim in peer-to-peer exchange, e.g. bullying or harassment from one young person to another, sexting, or providing misleading information or advice to peers.
4. **Commercial** - the child/young person is exposed to inappropriate advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs, e.g. financial scams or online gambling.



Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using e-technology. This includes bullying through social media sites, chat, text messages, emails, websites and gaming platforms. It involves sending, posting or sharing (or threatening to share) hurtful, embarrassing or threatening material.

Children and young people can be bullied anywhere they are connected, e.g. at home, in the bus, or in the car. This means for many victims that the bullying can be there 24 hours a day.

Types of cyberbullying:

Flaming- sending angry, abusive online messages to intentionally provoke someone into starting an argument.

Outing- publicly sharing personal, private or embarrassing information, photos or videos about someone online.

Masquerading- creating a fake identity or impersonating someone else to harass an individual online.

Sexting- sending/receiving an explicit text, image or video on mobile phone, computer or tablet. It may be illegal depending on what the image/chat is and who it has been sent between.

Indicators of cyberbullying:

- Seeming nervous when using their electronic devices.
- Becoming obsessive about constantly being online.
- Stopping using their electronic devices unexpectedly.
- Avoiding discussion about what they are doing online or who they are talking to.
- Changes in behaviour, especially after going online, e.g. becoming sad, withdrawn or angry.
- Unexplained physical symptoms, e.g. headaches, stomach upsets.
- Having trouble sleeping at night.
- Reluctance to go to school or take part in usual social activities.

Tips for children and young people:

- Do not reply.
- Save messages.
- Use the 'report abuse' button.
- Block the sender.
- Tell someone you trust.



Organisations working with children and young people should:

- Educate children, young people, parents and carers about keeping children safe online. Organisations can use age appropriate training resources for this, e.g. information leaflets or video clips.
- Encourage children and young people to act responsibly online and encourage positive communication online.
- Address cyberbullying within their current policy, e.g. code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- Have clear reporting procedures within their safeguarding children and young people policy.
- Signpost young people, parents and carers to organisations that can provide further information and support.
- Provide relevant contact numbers, e.g. local Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team and PSNI.

Kidsmart 'Be SMART' rules for children and young people:

- **Safe** - be careful not to give out personal information such as your email address, password or phone number.
- **Meeting** - meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Tell your parents if someone has asked you to meet them.
- **Accepting** - accepting emails, texts, messages or videos from someone you don't know or trust can lead to problems, e.g. viruses or nasty messages.
- **Reliable** - Someone online might lie about who they are. It's best just to chat online with real world family and friends. Information on the internet might not be true. Check it out with other websites, books or someone who knows.
- **Tell** - tell you parent, carer or another adult you trust if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried.

Useful websites and resources:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.psni.police.uk ('Sexting and the Law')

www.beatthecyberbully.ie/