Keeping your kids safe online

A guide to helping your kids confidently explore the online world.
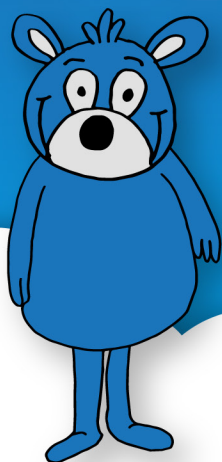
$E=mc^2$

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Childline Gibraltar

Gibtelecom

This handy guide for parents provides simple, straightforward help and advice on some of the risks children may face online, how you can help to keep them safe, and where you can find further help, support and guidance.

Contents

Introduction

Hello, we're here to help you and the children in your care safely navigate the online world - the good, the bad and the ugly!

Offline, you might have already introduced the idea to the children in your care that strangers can potentially be dangerous. It's important to translate this to their online activities too.

We've brought together the knowledge and expertise from Childline Gibraltar and Gibtelecom's technology awareness to create a short guide in what to look out for when kids are online, some of the risks and warning signs from what they might have been exposed to and some useful resources for adults and children alike.

> The internet is a great place to share information and enjoy ourselves, but we must take every precaution to keep our children safe from the very real dangers online.
> **Caroline Carter**,
> Chief Executive of Childline Gibraltar

> In today's connected world, it's great that children can learn, socialise, play and be entertained at any time or place whilst online. It is however important that we remain aware of the potential risks and dangers online for an unsupervised child. Our tips and advice, aimed at both parents and kids alike, will help you stay safe online.
> **Noel Burrows**,
> CEO, Gibtelecom

Hi kids! My name is Charlie.

Find me on the kids' pages as you go through this guide and discover lots of simple tips and tricks so you can use the internet safely and, most importantly, have fun!

To make sure you always have a good time and keep safe, there's a few important grown-up things you need to do – so follow me!

It's a new world!

Sometimes it can feel like the younger generation are leading the older generation into a new digital life.

Technology moves at an alarming rate so it's normal and expected for grown-ups to have concerns about what children are viewing and sharing with other people online.

Watch out for who your children are talking to and why. Children are especially at risk of being contacted by people they don't know.

Watch out for what your children look at online as it may be inappropriate content unsuitable for their age.

Watch what they're doing. Children may be encouraged to share personal information or photos which is not only dangerous but may affect them in later life.

DID YOU KNOW?

17% of tweens (age 8-12) received an online message with photos or words that made them feel uncomfortable, only 7% of parents were aware of this.
(https://safeatlast.co/child-security/kids-online-safety/)

The internet is a fun place for you to explore, discover and enjoy but there can also be a nasty side to the internet which can be confusing.
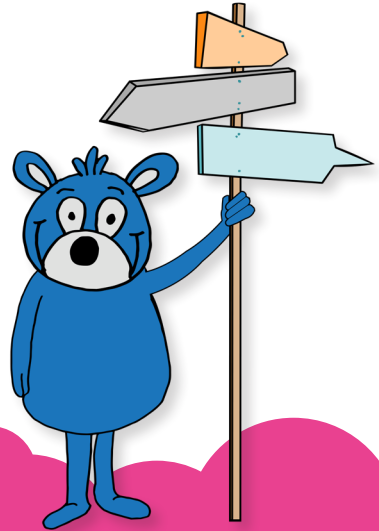
Remember:

- Don't talk to people you don't know. Online friends might not be real friends.

- If you see something that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell a grown-up.

- Keep personal information and pictures to yourself for example your name, phone number, address or where you go to school.

- Don't use personal information when making a username or password.

- Remember that once you put something online, it stays there forever.

Wise-up!

If the child in your care comes across something scary or upsetting online, it's important they know they are not alone and they have a grown-up they can talk to.

The child in your care needs to know they can come and **speak to you without fear of judgement**. If necessary, ask them to show you the online content and follow appropriate reporting procedures if you are concerned.

Talk to the child in your care regularly and openly to ensure they are staying as safe as possible online in their home, friend's homes or even at school.

Agree rules and boundaries with your children just like you would in day-to-day life.

DID YOU KNOW?

Only 25% of the children who've received a sexual solicitation told a parent.
https://safeatlast.co/child-security/kids-online-safety/#gref

Uh-oh!
You're having fun online and suddenly you're looking at something that you don't quite understand.

Remember, you can always:

- Stop what you're doing and turn off your screen/switch off your device.
- Pause, take a deep breath, and stay calm.
- Tell a grown-up about what you've seen and how it's made you feel.

Warning signs!

Children and grown-ups alike are exposed to dangerous things every day when surfing online and children especially might find it hard to express their emotions if they come across something they don't understand.

If the child in your care is having nightmares or is appearing stressed or anxious it's important to have an open conversation. **Explain** you're there to help and reassure them they're not in trouble.

Use a variety of methods to help your child explain such as using an emotions journal or creating art together.

If you're worried certain events have been escalated too much, contact **Childline** on **8008, Whatsapp 58008288, email 8008@childline.gi** or **LiveChat www.childline.gi**

DID YOU KNOW?

When it comes to 11–15-year-olds, 79% of mental health practitioners said children they work with have experienced cyberbullying. Some practitioners highlighted that cyberbullying had led to self-harm and suicide.

https://www.barnardos.org.uk/campaign-with-us/childrens-social-media-and-mental-healthhttps://safeatlast.co/child-security/kids-online-safety/#gref

Everyone struggles sometimes – even grown-ups have bad days! Take a moment to sit with a grown-up and think about if these sentences sound like you.
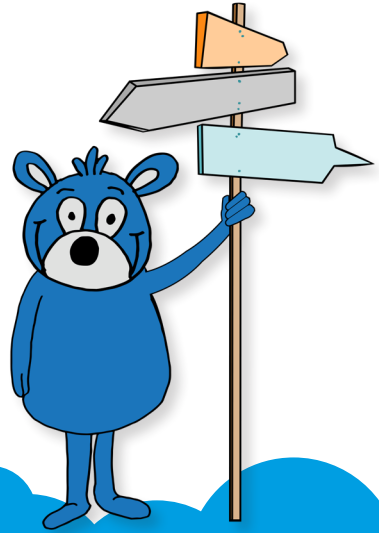
- You're finding it hard to concentrate at school
- You might be having nightmares
- You feel angry or tearful without knowing why
- You don't want to eat your favourite food anymore

If these sentences sound like you... talk to a responsible adult about what this could mean.

The Golden rules

Children and young people are still growing and learning. They may not be at a level of emotional maturity to be able to fully process the content they come across or even what they say or do themselves.

This great anagram is a useful tool to get the children in your care 'thinking' about their actions when sometimes a want of popularity and inclusion overtakes their logic.

Think before posting

T **Is it TRUE?**
Are you telling a fact or is it an opinion or feeling?

H **Is it HELPFUL?**
Does what you're saying help you, them, or the situation?

I **Is it INSPIRING?**
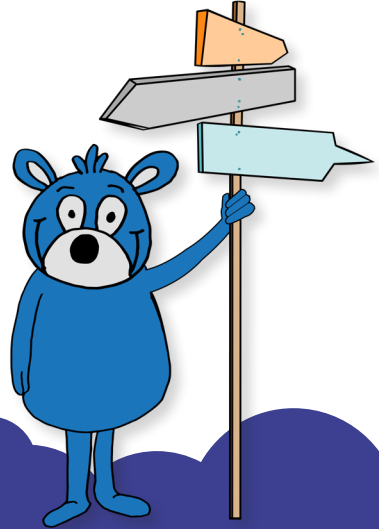Is what you say making a difference?

N **Is it NECESSARY?**
Does it really need to be said?

K **Is it KIND?**
Why are you saying what you are saying?

If you're struggling with the right way to act online, when in doubt – **rhyme it out!**

1. Choose a strong password or you'll lose all your classwork

2. Think before you send, as you might not mean to offend

3. Look for websites with a padlock, or you could be in for a shock

4. Report bullying and indecent photos - those aren't sent by heroes

5. Turn on your privacy so there's no more anxiety

Clued-up!

The information in this guide is not exhaustive and every child is different. There are lots of different ways for you to be able to speak to a Childline Listener and it's easy to reach out and get the help you need.

🕐 **Helpline open 5pm – 9pm**

📱 **Freephone 8008**

💬 **Live chat www.childline.gi**

💬 **Whatsapp Text 58008288**

✉️ **8008@childline.gi**

The Childline Gibraltar website also provides specific support for parents and lots of other useful toolkits and resources for children and adults alike to help facilitate expressing emotions and two-way communication.

Let's keep kids safe online