

counselor Message #6: SAFEGUARDING OF online Learning

"The internet is primarily a place of positivity for young people. Whether being inspired to be the next campaigner, supporter or friend—it's a place for them to find their voice, explore their identities, and support each other," says Will Gardner OBE, Director of the UK Safer Internet Centre

As young people spend more time online there is also an increase in the chances they will see something online which isn't intended for them. Whether this is fake news, impersonation, or mean comments, there are lots of places you can go to for help and advice on how to report this behaviour. Together as a family you can also help prepare your children and build their critical thinking skills.

There has been a current movement of online learning activity as schools around the world find solutions to continue to support students in their teaching and learning while closure due to the outbreak of COVID-19. While this movement will support students' learning; schools face an additional challenge of how to protect students while they learn virtually. There are guidelines to ensure safety online learning is happening right and to protect both our students and staff.

SAFEGUARDING TIPS TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

1. Children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household. Just like you wouldn't show up to school with pajamas on, you should dress appropriately for a virtual meetings
2. Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and where possible be against a neutral background. If you cannot conduct your online meeting except from your bedroom; please turn off your camera.
3. Limit background noise: Just like there wouldn't be dogs barking or cats meowing in a regular classroom, you should keep your pets out of the room. Do your best to keep background noise to a minimum during an online meeting.
4. Learn how to mute your microphone : when you're not talking, it's best to mute your microphone. This is especially important if you're joining the call from somewhere with unavoidable background noise.
5. Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, use attentive body language and communication and focus on the topic of discussion during the meeting.
6. Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background



Family Ideas

Things parents can do to ensure safeguarding.

1. **Set up the screen time limit on all their devices.** This does not only save them from internet danger but also helps them to live a balanced life..
2. **Set up parental control modes.** Investigate the parental controls available for each app and system and then take the time to set them up. If you haven't already, set up Google's SafeSearch and Restricted Mode for controlling what pops up on Google searches. Form parental control passwords on netflix.

3. **Hold a family meeting on why exactly you are concerned.** Every family is different and the dangers of the Internet are varied. Potential grooming from online predators? Sexting? Everything? Chances are your child may not be aware of all the things from which you want to protect them. Using age appropriate language, explain the danger you see and why you want to protect them from it.
4. **Have a schedule filled with activities they have to do to gain time on the internet.** This will also help them achieve the balance you want your children to have in the quarantine time.
5. **For younger children:** set a rule that you are allowed to check their phones sometimes to make sure that they are safe. Make sure to explain that this procedure is for their safety not to learn their secrets. You can also specify the things you will be looking for that raises your concern
6. **Family tech rules** - Download our Family Agreement - an easy-to-use guide to having a family discussion on how you all agree to use the internet.
7. **Learn with Digiduck** - The Digiduck story collection has been created to help parents, carers and teachers educate children aged 3-7 about online safety. The collection includes ebooks, PDFs, a poster and an interactive app.
8. **Have an adventure** with Smartie the Penguin - Smartie the Penguin is an online safety story for use with 3-7 year olds.
9. **This is me!** - Read the poem created for Safer Internet Day 2020 and use it as a conversation to start talking with your child about what they like to do online and what they already know about staying safe.
After you read it through, encourage your child to write their own poem using the things they like to do and what they know about going online safely.
10. **An app a day** - Why not use this time together to find out more about what your child likes to do online? Ask your child to run daily tutorials on a different app or game they like for a week. At the end they could write a quiz to test the family's new-found knowledge.
11. **Online identity check-up** - Suggest your teenager uses this time as an opportunity to reflect on what their online identity currently looks like.
12. **Be a role model** - If you have more than one child at home, why not ask your eldest to reach out to their younger siblings to help check their account settings and chat with them about staying safe online?
13. **Family debate club** - Why not ask your teen to stage a debate with your family about different opinions about the online world. It's a great way to hear about the differing experiences and perspectives of all members of your family.
14. **Help your community** - Now more than ever, young people are turning to the internet to stay in touch. It's important they do – talking about their shared experiences with friends can be a great stress-buster.
15. **Fake news trap** - There are a lot of crazy stories and misinformation being shared online about COVID - 19. Set your teen the challenge to find the most outrageous, unbelievable story they can, and to share what they find with you. Discuss what they could do to help stop the spread of fake news.

RESOURCES & READINGS

List a couple good websites and/or apps with well vetted/checked resources which are culturally appropriate. Maybe also a link to a useful video.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19>

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/online-safety-activities-you-can-do-from-home/for-3-7-year-olds->

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/online-safety-activities-you-can-do-from-home/for-7-11-year-olds->

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/online-safety-activities-you-can-do-from-home/for-11-14-year-olds->

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/online-safety-activities-you-can-do-from-home/for-14-18-year-olds->

<https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>

<https://www.childnet.com/resources>

<https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-advice-for-schools/>

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/safe-remote-learning/>

<https://static.lgfl.net/LgflNet/downloads/digisafe/Parent-Top-Tips-Safe-Online-Corona.pdf>



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