

Online safety



Being online seems to be a necessity nowadays. We live in a time when most of our lives are connected to online platforms. Especially now, during Covid-19 times; children spend a lot of time online – to do their schoolwork, stay in touch with friends and family and this increases

the risks of online harm. What can we do to protect the children and support their online safety?



Children will spend more time online nowadays due to schoolwork and being in touch with family and friends. And it is not necessarily a bad thing if we look at the Covid-19 situation. Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat can be platforms of socialisation when children cannot go to school or go outside with friends. However, how can we make sure our children are safe?



Starting conversation about online safety

- **Reassure them you are interested in their lives**
 - Ask them to show you apps/games they like
 - *So, how does this work? What exactly can you do on Instagram?*
- **Understand they need to be online to do their homework as well as stay in touch with friends and family members**
- **Ask your children for their opinion to measure potential risks**
 - *What do you think I need to do if someone, who I do not know, wants to add me on Facebook? This person sent me quite a rude message, what should I do? What if someone is bothering me on Facebook, what could I do?*
- **Ask for their opinion so, the children feel involved in their decision-making**
- **Ask them about their friends**
 - *So, have you been in touch with Maria? How is she?*
- **Be honest and say, when you are worried about certain apps/websites or online platforms**
- **Be positive and say, when you like some apps/websites/online platforms**
- **Listen for reasons why children want to use certain websites**

Remember, we cannot ban children from being online. We need to accept that everything is being moved into online and electronic platforms. Nevertheless, we can work on promoting using internet safely.

If you are worried you can visit some of these websites:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>