

Appendix O: Parents (FAQ) - What children Do Online?

How do your children use the internet? Here's what you should know about six common activities children do online.

As the first generation of Internet parents, we're at the bottom of a learning curve that seems to grow steeper with each new application and digital device. We can help our children take advantage of the best the Internet has to offer by showing them how to make smart decisions both online and off. The best way is to step into our children's online world. **Here are six key ways children use the Internet and what you should know about each one.**

1. Learning Online

The Internet is often the first (and only) stop for pupils who have a project to research or a question they want answered.

Advice for you: Use [child-safe search engines](#), focus on results from trusted resources, such as the websites of established organisations and well-known newspapers and magazines.



2. Visiting Virtual Worlds



Children of all ages are drawn to virtual worlds where they can customize and control their own characters (called "avatars"), play games, interact with other players.

Advice for you: Ask your child for a tour of her favourite virtual worlds. Check out the privacy features and parental controls.

3. Social Networking

Social networking sites are the online equivalent of hanging out with friends. They allow users to stay in touch through instant messaging, posting public messages to one another's profiles, sharing photos and videos, playing online games, sending virtual gifts, and much more. Privacy settings allow users to restrict who can view their profiles.



Advice for you: join Facebook or similar and go through the privacy controls with your child, get them to guide you through it. Make friends with them online, then you can keep an eye on them. Also A good rule of thumb is that only people your child has met in person should have access to their social networking profile.

4. Staying in Touch With Friends

Once children reach their preteen and teenage years, texting and instant messaging and sending pictures/videos through computers, mobile phones, and other mobile devices.



Advice for you: Ask your child to think about whether he would like any of the texts or pictures he meant for only one friend to appear on the mobile phones and computer screens of all his classmates.....

5. Posting and Viewing Videos

Video-sharing sites are incredibly popular with children. The video-sharing site YouTube has a policy against sexually explicit content and hate speech, but it relies on users to flag content as objectionable. Sit down with your child when she logs onto video-sharing sites so you can guide her choices. Tell her that if you're not with her and she sees something upsetting, she should get you. It's important that you know what she sees so you can figure out together what to do about it.



6. Playing Games

Games such as Xbox Live, allow players to interact online through text messaging or voice chat using a



St Mary of the Angels E-Safety Policy

headset. If your child plays online games, set a rule that he play only with people he knows in person. As your child grows and digital technology evolves, keep the lines of communication open. Show that you're interested in his online life. *But don't worry if you're always a few steps behind.* Because as a parent your job isn't to hold your child's hand every step of the way. It's to prepare her to one day go out into the world without you. **Both online and off.**

My 8 year old has a Facebook account, that can't be dangerous ...can it?

Your 8 year old is in fact breaking the law. The legal minimum age is 13, and the person would have to confirm their minimum age when signing up to Facebook or similar. There are many alternatives to Facebook, a list and links can be found on the Wiki.

Social Networking is very exciting and fun, however, there are some real dangers.

- Make sure you 'join up' together.
- Make sure that you go through the privacy settings carefully with your child.
- Make sure that the password is known to both of you so you can monitor your child.
- Even better, join yourself and become a 'friend'

Your child may not be too enamoured with this as a route to Social networking, however, to ensure a smoother, safer and more enjoyable journey through Social Networking, be firm, it is this or nothing. (as a parent, remember that their friends will be writing on the wall, so 'be cool' and try not to mortify your child by sending 'parent styled messages' (this is the voice of experience) .

We want our children to be safe on and offline. We never expected them to cross the road or learn to swim without our guidance and protection, the online Super-highway can be as dangerous when children do not understand the risks, we need to be the people to guide them through this.

You may not be techno savvy, but you know who or what your child should be doing that's appropriate for their age. To some extent, technology expertise is irrelevant, if you as a parent are uncomfortable with what your child is exposed to; explain to them why, ask them to describe what they are doing, and then **make your decision.**

Parent/Carer? Internet....Worried?
Let's hope we can answer a few questions..

I know my children do ICT in school ...surely that explains everything about the Internet...?

Your child's ICT curriculum should be available online, although many schools now have an integrated approach to ICT. The ICT curriculum is around the application of tools and systems, and how we can use them to solve problems. Your Child's ICT lessons will talk about e-safety, as in other lessons, however, Children can only be safely monitored whilst in the school, at home, it is down to the family to decide on the best way to keep safe online.

How do I know they are safe?

There is a lot of software out there that will monitor the activity on your child's computer. However, the best way forward is in an atmosphere of trust.

Making sure the computer is a shared resource accessed by all the family, open to you and not locked by passwords.

In school your child will have agreed and signed a 'Responsible or Acceptable Use Policy (AUP/RUP). There is no reason why you shouldn't have the same set-up at home. I have designed a few examples of the sorts of statements you can include, or just use it as it stands at the Liverpool Wiki. (Address on side of page)

The media tells us there are threats around every corner and in every social networking site ...is this true?

No this isn't true. There are some very good, moderated, social networking sites suitable for 5-13 year olds, or older. E.g. Habbo, MoshiMonsters, Club Penguin.

As with any 'social circle' there is always bullying, unkind words and teasing. There is no reason that the rules should be different online from offline.

Unfortunately, children (and adults) find it easier to send nasty messages 'virtually' than they would face to face.

Your child should be involved in E-Safety training at school around Click Clever Click Safe or similar. Ask your school what Internet safety training your child will receive and how you can support this.

Reminding your child of the House Rules for online behaviour and the sanctions imposed if they don't do as agreed can be very powerful.

<https://liverpool-ict-team.wildspaces.com/Parents+and+Parental+engagement>



Social Networking is here to stay, as parents and carers of a digital generation, we have to try and get on board if we are to make sure our children are safe.

Banning/Blocking/Stopping children from accessing these resources, isn't an option if you are to make sure that they are fully equipped to take care of themselves.

Trying to get to know all the social networking sites is an impossible task ... there are more developed everyday, and its very easy for children to develop their own using online software such as 'Ning'

Being aware of how and where your child accesses Social Networking sites is also very important. All SN sites have mobile phone access, and many children as young as 6 are perfectly able to access the internet and become interactive.
To understand the phenomenon that is Social Networking, try this site:
<http://www.whatissocialnetworking.com/>



[https://liverpool-ict-team.wikispaces.com/Parents + and + Parental + engagement](https://liverpool-ict-team.wikispaces.com/Parents+-and+Parental+engagement)

Resources for Parents/Carers

- Click Clever Click Safe <http://clickcleverclicksafe.direct.gov.uk/index.html>
- Connect Safely <http://www.connectsafely.org/>
- Enough Is Enough <http://www.enough.org/>
- Family Online Safety Institute <http://www.fosi.org/oms/>
- GetNetWise <http://www.getnetwise.org/>
- GreatSchools http://www.greatschools.org/content/media/Choices_PageInternet
- Keep Safe Coalition <http://www.ikeepSAFE.org/iSAFE>
- KOL - <http://kids.aol.com/KOL/>
- LOOKBOTHWAYS - <http://lookbothways.com/>
- NetFamilyNews - <http://netfamilynews.org/>
- Privacy Gourmet - <http://www.privacygourmet.com/>
- WebWiseKids - <http://www.webwisekids.org/>
- WiredSafety - <http://www.wiredsafety.org/>

Privacy settings for Social Networking sites.

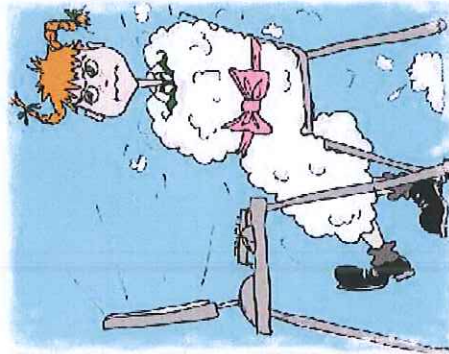
Many SN sites will provide guidance around privacy settings for your child's account. Here are some of the more popular:

Facebook

<http://www.allfacebook.com/2009/02/facebook-privacy/>
EXCELLENT guide to hiding yourself away from other FB users and your appearance on Google. It also shows how photographs can be un-tagged and remain private.

Twitter NO PRIVACY POLICY

Bebo <http://www.bebo.com/Privacy2.js>



So, just monitoring the family computer, or the child's own computer/laptop may not be enough, there is also their mobile phones.

When you put together your 'House Rules' make sure you include all technology that is used to access the internet.

Good luck and happy and SAFE surfing

B-MacKenzie