



24th May 2024

E-safety Newsletter Summer half term 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we go into the half term break, we would like to share with you some more of the useful guides and information that we share with our staff team to keep us all as up to date with our children and teenagers as we possibly can.

We have been strongly advised by our Local Safeguarding partners (Essex Safeguarding Children's board) to make all of our parents aware that they not only have a duty of care to supervise their children, to protect them from exposure to potentially harmful content online, but they should also be aware that they are responsible for any online activity that takes place within their home (parents will be held personally responsible, even if the activity is happening without their knowledge). This means that if your child is left unsupervised and accesses harmful content online and then shares that content, or becomes involved in harmful online activity, you would be held legally responsible for those actions.

Further current information and very useful advice:

Ofcom:

Ofcom have published the results of their latest [annual study](#) of children's relationship with the media and online worlds.

The study found that:

- about a quarter of 5–7-year-olds (24%) now own a smartphone, while about three-quarters use a tablet (76%)
- overall use of social media sites or apps among all 5-7s has increased year-on-year (30% to 38%), with WhatsApp (29% to 37%), TikTok (25% to 30%), Instagram (14% to 22%) and Discord (2% to 4%) seeing particular growth among this age group
- online gaming among 5–7-year-olds has also seen a significant annual increase: 41%, up from 34% – with more children of this age playing 'shooter' games than ever before (15%, up from 10%).

Social media access:

Several organisations provide guidance about the minimum age requirements that apply to apps such as TikTok, YouTube and WhatsApp, and information for parents/carers on how to apply privacy and safety settings, if their children are using social media, to help them stay safe online. These include:

- [Internet Matters](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [CEOP \(Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre\)](#)

WhatsApp:

We have been made aware of a WhatsApp group called 'Add Everyone You Know' or 'Add every 1 u know'. Children have been invited to join and to add all their contacts with the aim of attracting over 1000 members. Group posts have included the use of inappropriate language and requests to upload nude photos.

'Report Remove':

Report Remove is a partnership between Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation which helps children to confidentially report sexual images and videos of themselves and remove them from the internet. Children can select their age range on the Childline website and follow the instructions to make a report. Information about what nude images are and a video showing how the system works is also available: [Report Remove | Childline](#).

Our online safety guide for this half term offers advice about Live Streaming platforms and provides useful links for further information and reporting harmful content/activity (see attached).

I know that considering these risks can feel very worrying, but by staying informed and alert to the current trends and their possible dangers, we remain in the best possible position to support our children and keep them safe.

If you have missed any of our previous E-safety newsletters, you can find all our previous E-safety newsletters on our website.

As always, if you have any concerns that you would like to receive advice for, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

I hope that you and your children have a lovely Half term break with lots of sunshine.

Yours sincerely



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Live streaming platforms

Live streaming is when a video is broadcast in real time over the internet so the audience can watch it as it happens.

Some popular sites for live streaming are:

- **Twitch** and **Kick.com**: users can watch videos and live streams of other users (known as 'broadcasters' or 'streamers'), typically playing computer games. They can also live stream themselves. The minimum age for both sites is **13**
- **Bigo**: users can watch live streams and live stream themselves, as well as take part in 1-to-1 online video chat, including with randomly matched strangers. Bigo has an 18+ rating, so your child shouldn't be accessing the site's content. Because it's 18+, there are no parental controls
- **TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter) and YouTube Live**: users can live stream from and watch live streams on popular social media platforms. Some have requirements, such as needing 1,000 followers and being 18 or over to go live on TikTok (but any user can watch live streams). Instagram, Facebook, X and YouTube require users to be **13**

Although these sites have minimum ages, it's often easy to sign up if you're younger.

What's the problem?

- Live streaming makes it harder to censor what people share or what language they use, so your child could be exposed to bullying content, or content that's inappropriate for their age
 - The chat function means strangers can talk to your child. For example, Twitch is reported to be one of the main platforms used to 'groom' children (where an adult builds a relationship with a child to manipulate, exploit and abuse them)
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4 steps to help keep your child safe

1. Find out what your child is watching

Try watching together at first, or find out what channels they're watching and research them yourself. This will help you see whether what they're watching is age appropriate.

2. Encourage your child to only talk to people they know

Anyone could pretend to be a child or teenager online, so encourage your child not to talk privately to people they don't know in real life. If they do talk to people they don't know, for example in group chats while gaming, tell them not to give out information that could identify them, such as their full name, school name or the name of the street you live on.

3. Enable protective filters and restrictions where you can

For guidance on how to enable these features, follow the 'Links for parents/carers' in the section at the end of this factsheet.

Twitch

- When watching a stream, you can restrict content in chat to make it less likely that your child will see inappropriate content, though no filter is perfect
- You can also block private messages from strangers (known as ‘whispers’)

Kick.com

- If your child hosts a live stream, they can add moderators to report messages and block users from watching. However, your child will need to moderate it themselves or find someone else to

YouTube Live and social media platforms

- YouTube live streamers can moderate their live chat and limit who can leave comments. You can’t restrict the chat of a stream you aren’t hosting
- TikTok and Instagram have their own parental control features, some of which relate to live streaming. You can turn off live video broadcast settings on X
- All social media platforms have privacy features to stop your child from connecting with people they don’t know

4. Make sure your child knows how to report and block people

These websites all have community guidelines which ban behaviour such as threats of violence, hateful conduct and harassment, gambling and sexual content. Knowing how to report or block people breaking these rules will help your child and others stay safe.

On most websites, you can report a live stream and report/block a user by selecting the **3-dot icon** on a stream, username or profile, and selecting ‘Report’ or ‘Block’. Find out how to do this on each website in our **‘Links for parents/carers’** section at the end.

What else can I do?

- Encourage your child to talk to you if someone says something upsetting or hurtful to them, or if they see something they find upsetting
 - Look for signs that they may be being bullied, such as being afraid or reluctant to go to school, a change in their performance at school, feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, losing sleep or a change in their eating habits
 - Tell our school about **any** bullying your child experiences
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Links for parents/carers

Twitch	➤ Manage harassment in chat: https://help.twitch.tv/s/article/how-to-manage-harassment-in-chat
Kick.com	➤ Submit a report: https://help.kick.com/en/articles/8539253-submitting-a-report ➤ Moderate your chat: https://help.kick.com/en/articles/7109164-how-to-moderate-your-kick-chat
YouTube	➤ Report inappropriate content: https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802027 ➤ Parental controls: https://support.google.com/families/answer/10495678

Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report a live video: https://en-gb.facebook.com/help/462017383994422 ➤ Block a user: https://www.facebook.com/help/1000976436606344 ➤ Parental controls: https://www.facebook.com/help/1079477105456277
Instagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report a live video: https://help.instagram.com/163366675115842 ➤ Block a user: https://help.instagram.com/426700567389543 ➤ Parental controls: https://help.instagram.com/309877544512275
TikTok	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report a live video: https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/report-a-problem/report-a-live-video ➤ Block a user: https://support.tiktok.com/en/using-tiktok/followers-and-following/blocking-the-users ➤ Parental controls: https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/account-and-user-safety/user-safety
X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report a broadcast: https://help.twitter.com/en/using-x/report-content ➤ Block a user: https://help.twitter.com/en/using-x/blocking-and-unblocking-accounts

Sources

- [Livestreaming and online video apps, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/livestreaming-online-video-apps/)
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/livestreaming-online-video-apps/
- [NSPCC: 200,000 secondary school kids 'may have been groomed online', Huffington Post](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/child-grooming-nspcc_uk_5d3f091de4b01d8c977effa8)
https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/child-grooming-nspcc_uk_5d3f091de4b01d8c977effa8
- We also used the help centres of the websites referenced in this factsheet. These are linked in the '**Links for parents/carers**' section.

This factsheet was produced by [The Key Safeguarding](https://www.thekey.org.uk/): [thekeysupport.com/safeguarding](https://www.thekey.org.uk/)