

Parenting in a Digital World



**Easy
Read**



MindEd

e-learning to support young healthy minds

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My child spends a lot of time online



Online means that somebody is going on the internet. This could be on their phone, tablet or on a computer.

Many young people play computer games online with other people. This is called **gaming**.

How much time do children and young people spend online?



On average, children aged 3 to 4 spend:-

14 hours per week watching TV.

7 hours per week on the Internet.

6 hours per week gaming.



On average, children and young people aged 5 to 15 spend:-

15 hours per week watching TV.

14 hours per week on the Internet.

10 hours per week gaming.

My child spends a lot of time on their computer



Find out what they do when they are on their computer.



Have some times when everyone is off the computer. It is good to have no computers or phones at mealtimes.

The risks of using the internet



Young people should be wary if someone from the internet wants to meet them. It might be someone who wants to abuse them.



They should tell an adult if they are asked to meet someone face to face.



Talk to your child. Let them know that you will support no matter what's happening in their lives.



If you are concerned about any particular thing on the internet, you can report it to the **International Watch Foundation** who can get it removed.

Go to: www.iwf.org.uk/report

Pornography



Pornography is pictures and video of people taking part in sex acts.



Some of it can involve unpleasant and nasty things.



Younger children

Younger children can be very upset by things they see online.



Make time to talk about what they see. Be interested in anything that they may find sad, frightening or embarrassing. Listen to what they say and how they feel.



Use the **parental control settings** on your internet router and if possible on your child's computer too.



Set Google to 'safe search'. Go to support.google.com/websearch/answer/510?hl=en

Older children



Older children might want to know about sex.



Tell them there is a lot of pornography online that can be upsetting.



If you explain why you are worried they will listen to what you are saying.



Warn them that too much pornography can become **addictive**. If something is **addictive** it means that they can't stop watching it.



Tell them that people involved in pornography may have altered their bodies. A lot of pornography is fake.

Real sex is not like that.



Watching pornography may make it harder to have a real relationship with someone.

Sexting



Sexting is short for 'sex texting'. It is where someone sends a nude picture or video by text.

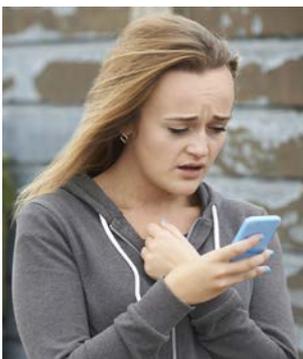


Why do young people 'sext' each other?

Young people send photographs to share what is happening in their lives.



This may be for fun, to shock, but also to show that they are taking a risk for someone they really like.



They may send a picture to someone who they later break-up with. Sometimes those images can be used to embarrass them. This is called **revenge porn**.

What advice should I give my children about 'sexting'?



Tell them you understand that they may want to send private pictures to someone they love today.



But ask them will that person use them in a bad way later?

Online grooming

What is grooming?



Grooming is where someone makes friends with a child online and then starts to ask them to do bad things.



They might end up being threatened, or asked to meet someone face to face.



They often use fake names and only pretend to be interested in what the child wants to talk about.

How can I tell if my child is being groomed?



You may notice some changes in your child's behaviour if they are being **groomed**.

They might become awkward or more secretive.



They might start saying strange things.



They might suddenly stop wanting to talk about what they are doing online.

How should I react?



Your child needs to be able to trust you.

Find out if anyone else knows and is worried.



Get them to talk to you. Tell them that they will not get into trouble.

Gaming addiction



Gaming is playing games online. It might be on a game station, a computer, phone or tablet.

Addiction is where you can't stop doing the same thing. It can have a bad effect on your health and your friends and family.

How can I tell if my child is addicted to gaming?



If they miss something important because they can't stop gaming.



They carry on gaming even when they know it is having a bad effect on their life.

They can't stop gaming - even when they try.

What should I do?



Tell your child that they need to eat meals, sleep and do their homework.

This will help them to feel better. It will help to take their minds off the internet.



Nagging and criticising probably won't help.



Help them to realise that they probably won't be able to get a job playing computer games.



Tell your child that you are worried and then set up some rules about how much gaming they can do.



If your child is showing signs of gaming addiction, you may need to get some help. Talk to your local doctor.

Social media



Social media is where people can speak to each other over the internet. It includes Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram.

Why do young people use social media?

There are a lot of good things about social media.



People can keep in touch with each other and share things that they are doing.

Which social media do I need to know about?



There are always new social media sites coming along. You need to talk with your child about what the latest one is.



Facebook has been around for a long time and is probably still used by many young people.

How can social media cause distress?



If you write something or put a picture up on social media - you want other people to like it.



If they don't young people can feel sad or upset.

It is good to comfort them and help them to feel good about themselves.

For more information

This resource is part of the MindEd online learning site. For more information:-



Web: www.minded.org.uk



Email: minded@rcpch.ac.uk



Twitter: @MindEdUK

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