

Safer Internet Day 2023

This week is Safer Internet Day and every class will be focusing on this year's theme, 'Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online'.

These tips for parents are from the UK Safer Internet Centre :

* **Make space for regular conversations about life online**

Talk openly and frequently about what you are doing online and encourage your child to do the same. Talk about the positive experiences you can have online, share what you have done when you have come across content you did not want to, and how you dealt with the situation.

⇒ **Make space for enjoying and exploring the online world together!**

Play games, watch videos, and express an interest in your child's online life. Celebrate all the opportunities that technology has to offer, and show them what a great space the internet can be when used responsibly.

⇒ **Make space for working as a family to agree expectations for going online**

Talk to your family about the role technology plays in your lives. Establish rules and expectations that encourage meaningful use of technology, in the same way you set boundaries in other areas of your children's lives. It's important to review these regularly and adapt them for each member of your family.

⇒ **Make space for learning about the apps, games and websites your child is using**

There are lots of tools and guides to support you with keeping your child safe on whatever apps, games and websites they are using. Research age ratings, privacy settings, and safety features (like the block and report button) so that you are best placed to help your child should anything go wrong.

⇒ **Make space for supporting and reassuring your child if things go wrong**

Remind your child they can talk to you about anything. If something goes wrong, listen and respond with reassurance and kindness and stay calm. Work with your child to find solutions to the problem, perhaps by using the block and report tools or seeking advice from your child's teacher.

Screen time and behaviour

Recent research from the University of Michigan shows that using screens to calm children backfires in the long run because they never learn how to regulate their emotions.

The study found that those who were regularly given tablets or phones to play with displayed worse behaviour in the long run. The children were monitored for six months for signs of emotional dysregulation such as temper tantrums, hyperactivity, sudden changes in mood, or refusing to listen to their parents.

Those whose parents relied on smartphones and tablets to calm them down were more likely to have frequent emotional meltdowns, particularly if they were boys. Scientists said this was because children could become dependent on screens to distract from negative emotions and never learn to manage their own feelings or self-soothe.

Research on the impact of screen time on children's wellbeing from Trinity College Dublin highlights that the amount of time spent online as well as the type of content consumed has a significant effect. Research that focused on nine year olds found that 'extreme users' (those who spend at least three hours online on a school day) were much more likely to suffer negative effects. What the children were doing online had an effect as well, with passive media use — such as watching videos on YouTube or Netflix — found to be most harmful.

Spotify



There have been news reports claiming grooming has taken place on Spotify (source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/ukengland-manchester-64262918>).

Spotify is a music streaming service. You should be over 18 years of age to agree to the terms or, if older than 13, obtain parent or guardian consent.

There is a Spotify Kids version, but it is only available as part of a Premium (paid for) Family plan.

Spotify have produced this Parental Guide to assist you with further information but if your child does use Spotify then it may be beneficial to have a chat about what they are viewing. https://www.spotify.com/privacy/files/Parental_Guide.pdf

You can find out more about grooming and who to contact for support here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/grooming/>