



Internet Safety

Why is it important to stay safe online?

Most of us are 'connected' via our laptops, mobile phones, tablets or personal computer. The potential for the internet to be a valuable and a fun resource for entertainment, making friends, keeping in touch and learning are huge. But if you use the internet, you could be at risk of illegal activity or abuse - be it bullying, fraud or something more serious. Unlike seeing someone face to face, on the net, people aren't always what they first seem.

In the same way you learn about safety when you leave the house, it is important to learn how to stay safe online. These are skills that will stay with you for life.

When online think SMART

Safe – Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information, especially when talking to people online. Don't give out personal detail, numbers, or send photos out to others – This could lead to identity theft.

Meeting – Meeting someone you have only ever been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so if someone knows where you are!

Accepting – Accepting emails, opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems -These may contain viruses.

Reliable – Information you find on the internet may not be true, people on the internet may not be who they say!

Tell – Tell someone if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried online. If you are being bullied or know someone that is tell someone.

Blogging

Be careful what you post online! Posting on social media, and blogs may get you in to trouble so please be aware of what you are posting. Work colleagues may see these posts too!

Privacy Settings. On the various social media sites that you may use check the privacy settings such as restricting those who can see the post.

Posts can be saved. Even if you may block someone from seeing a post these can be saved/screenshot and passed to others, so still be aware of what you are posting. This is important for your future for example progressing within your career.

Never agree to meet an on-line "Friend" alone, get someone to go with you or inform others of your whereabouts.

If you do have any issues please report to our safeguarding officers Helen Wilson and John Whitby.

Helen@stegta.co.uk

John@stegta.co.uk

07919 597841

07919 597846

Grooming

Online grooming

The internet is a highly interactive tool which can allow people to communicate with each other very easily, through internet chat programs and social networking sites and even mobile apps and games.

Paedophiles have been known to use this method to contact young people by disguising themselves as another young person. This can lead to gaining the trust of an individual and their friends. These false relationships based on lies can often pave way for exposure to upsetting images and online content and in some cases arranging a meeting in person.

Online grooming is the term used to describe inappropriate behaviour towards a young person, putting them at risk to a sexual offence.

Even if nothing dangerous does happen, knowing you may have had contact with somebody like this can be extremely upsetting – Please talk to someone if you do have any issues.

Making 'friends'

We all know it's not healthy to spend hours and hours in front of a computer screen. But another problem with social networking is the pressure you can feel to make sure you have lots of 'friends'. But here are some things to remember:

- Friendships made online are made by clicking a button rather than talking to people and sharing experiences.
- Being online 'friends' with someone is much less meaningful than face to face friendship.
- You can easily fall out with an online 'friend' because of a misunderstood comment.
- It is far easier, and healthier, to sort out arguments and problems when you can talk to someone face to face

So although you might know someone who likes to boast about how many 'friends' they've got on their social networking site, remember that real friendships aren't made by computers.

Tips so you stay safe on social networking sites

- Maybe use a made up name or nickname on your profile.
- Never give out personal information.
- Do not make friends you don't already know personally.
- Maybe use an email address that does not include your name.
- Always use a 'strong' password. That is, don't use any names or words that someone might guess, like the name of your dog or your favourite singer. Use random letters or numbers and change your password regularly.
- Use the strongest privacy setting when you set up your profile. This means that only your friends will be able to view your information.
- Pictures and videos can be shared very easily across the internet, so make sure you are very careful when uploading - even if you only share it with friends, it can easily be spread much further than that.
- Be very careful about sharing content online - especially if it isn't yours to share. Illegal downloads are definitely best avoided.
- Never meet up with anyone you have met online.
- Make sure you know about the safety features on any networking site. Some, for example, have a 'panic button' which you can press if you see something that shouldn't be there.
- If anything happens online that you don't like, tell someone.