

# Online Safety information for Parents/Carers from the Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Team

## Why has this come to you?

Young people, more than ever, are spending their time online, particularly on social media platforms. When online, young people are at risk of being targeted by individuals looking to sexually exploit them. These offenders may pressure or manipulate young people to send indecent images of themselves or other children. These requests may be accompanied by threats or even rewards.

These offences can also be committed by children themselves who do not appreciate the severity of their actions. They may send or share illegal images for many reasons such as; ignorance, revenge, humour or shock value.

Parents, Carers or any adult with children in their care at any time has a responsibility to be vigilant and to seek to safeguard children.

Here are some facts and simple ways that you can help keep young people safe online.

### It is illegal to:

Take, allow to be taken, make, own, keep, possess and distribute an indecent image of a child.

### What is an Indecent Image of a Child?

A sexualised photograph or video of a child.

Includes cartoons and any format of picture including negatives stored digitally or in paper copies.

### By law what is a child?

Any person under the age of 18

### What do we mean by take, make and distribute?

Take: The physical taking of a photo or video using any camera or any drawing.

Make: The saving/downloading/printing of images/videos from the internet.

Distribute: The sharing/sending of images/videos.



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## What you can do to keep young people safe online

**S Set clear online boundaries.** Agree and be comfortable with what your child is doing online and how much access they get to certain areas of the internet.

**T Talk with your child and be supportive.** Speak openly about what your child thinks 'normal' online use looks like and where they can go for support.

**E Educate everyone in the family.** Speak with other members in your family/close circle and work together to make sure everyone understands how to keep safe online and offer support to one another. This also includes your child.

**E Evolve with the internet.** The internet changes constantly and it is important to keep up to date with different technologies your child uses/has access to.

**R Research, review and regulate which websites/apps your child uses.** Doing this will allow you to make an informed decision about whether you wish your child to use the website/app in the first place and if so, how to keep them safe whilst they use it.

For more information below are some useful websites:



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