



Aston Fields Middle School



A Parental Guide to

e-Safety

Does your Child use:

A mobile phone;
The Internet;
Social networking sites;
Social gaming sites?

If the answer is yes, then read
this guide to find out more.

Up to 70 per cent of
teenagers hide what
they are doing online
from their parents,
according to security
company MacAfee

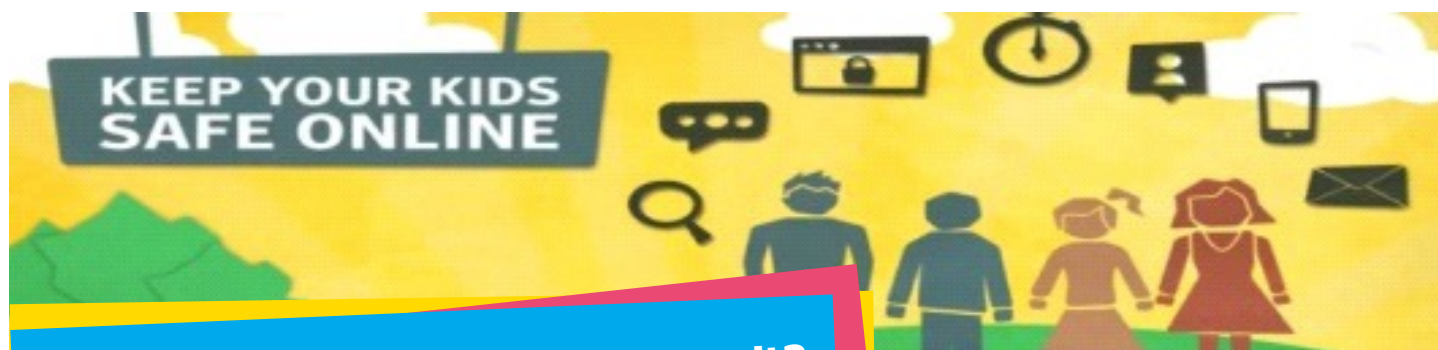
Introduction

The internet is such an integral part of children's lives these days. It opens up so many educational and social opportunities, giving them access to quite literally, a world of information and experiences.

Just as you would want to protect your child in the real world, you will want to make sure that they are safe whatever they are doing – on a social networking or gaming site; texting or using the internet on their mobile; using skype.

If your child understands **the risks** and can make sensible and informed choices online, they can get the most from the internet **AND STAY SAFE**, particularly from those people who might seek them out to harm them.

KEEP YOUR KIDS
SAFE Online



What is the school doing about it?

At the beginning of each year, all children at AFMS have E-Safety lessons in IT. These are aimed primarily at exploring the latest technology and software, but also the risks faced when using them. These dangers range from feeling uncomfortable about content, ensuring control of personal information is retained, being bullied online (or being a bully online), to making contact with unknown people online.

There are regular assemblies about E-Safety and children are repeatedly encouraged to 'tell an adult you trust' for all safeguarding matters.

Although every child is made aware of the dangers they may face when using technology, it is important that we are working together to ensure our children are safe.



What can I do to help?



Parents often say, 'My children know more about technology than I do.' It can seem frightening – but it is an opportunity to engage your children; ask for their help if you are struggling with technology and get them to explain what they use technology for and **HOW THEY ARE KEEPING THEMSELVES SAFE.**

Ask them to show you their **PRIVACY SETTINGS** for each device and explain to you why they should set **PRIVACY** limits. Aim to be parents as **MENTORS** who are interested, rather than policing internet use, expecting to have full knowledge of everything your child is doing.

Communication is the key.

Take Action

If your child is experiencing problems with **content** that is inappropriate, **conduct** that is causing them anxiety such as cyberbullying or **contact** with persons known or unknown that is making them suspicious or uncomfortable, encourage them to come and tell you or speak to a trusted adult – a relative, a teacher, an older sibling – someone who they know will listen.

Be sure your child knows **how to report abuse** or inappropriate behaviour to social networking sites. With facebook for example, you can now click the 'report' link through the 'settings' wheel on the far right of the top menu bar. However, we recommend that parents also use the Child Exploitation and Online Protection agency (CEOP) website THINKUKNOW.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

- ✓ *Have a go with some of the technologies your child enjoys – if you haven't already. Download some music, find out about 'Instagram' or play a game on X-Box or PSP*
- ✓ *Talk to friends and family about how they help their children manage their digital world – you might get some useful tips*
- ✓ *Don't be afraid to set boundaries and rules – especially for younger children – their online reputation will follow them forever, so it's never too young to start*
- ✓ *Make the most of built in tools such as Parental Controls, SafeSearch options and Privacy Controls*
- ✓ *Remind older siblings that certain websites and devices might not be appropriate for their younger brother or sister and ask them to look out for them*
- ✓ *Make digital issues part of everyday conversations don't shy away from talking to teenagers about difficult subjects like cyberbullying, sexting and copyright infringement, for example*

Keep communicating – show your child that you understand how important technology is to them to reassure them that they can come to you about anything that is worrying them in their digital world



Top Tips For Parents

1. Suggest that they use a nickname not their real name on websites and never give out their address or phone number on a public page.
2. Encourage your child to only share personal information with people they know and have met face to face.
3. Discuss the fact that not everyone on the internet is who they say they are.
4. Advise your child to get permission from friends and family before taking photos or videos of them and posting online. Check they are happy for images to be published and/or tagged.
5. Make sure your child uses a PIN lock on their mobile phone and teach them the risks of sharing passwords for phones or computers.
6. Make sure you have up to date anti-virus and anti-spyware software on your child's computer and make the most of built-in tools like pop-up blockers and spam filters.
7. Consider where your child uses technology - how you can keep an eye on what your child is looking at
8. Ask questions and keep communicating – talk about digital issues in everyday conversation, so that your child knows the boundaries and expectations for good behaviours online.

Further Information

www.ceop.police.uk

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre's website houses a range of information on how to stay safe online. It includes a unique facility that enables parents and of actual or attempted abuse online.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.childnet.com

The Childnet International website gives Internet safety advice and for young people, parents, teachers and other organisations.

www.digizen.org/socialnetworking

A 2008 report by Childnet providing teachers with a comprehensive guide to social networking services, which may be helpful to parents.

www.childline.org.uk

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of nineteen. You can contact a ChildLine counsellor about anything - no problem is too big or too small. Call free on 0800 1111, have a 1-2-1 chat online or send an email.

Also useful for advice and information:

www.vodafone.com/content/parents.html

www.Saferinternetday.org.uk

www.safeteens.com

www.safekids.com

