Online Safety is about Behaving Appropriately

Top Ten Tips for Parents / Carers

Top Ten Tips' Explained'

1.Get Involved with your Children

Always get involved and download the 'new' app or game used by your child. This will allow parents / carers to experience and understand the possible dangers and subsequent exploitation. Once experienced, adults can advise accordingly, whether to allow and use or to dent and wait.

2. Always stick to Age Restrictions

Stick to age restriction (if and where possible). All apps and online games will have a recommended age, this directly relates to the age appropriateness of the content heard and seen. It may be that peer pressure will make heavy demands on your child to 'have' and for you to 'allow, despite being underage. So, allowances may be made but then more emphasis must be on joint participation & understanding.

3. Keep Checking on your Childs Contacts

Games and Apps are about online participation and online competition. However most online gamers will be 'online strangers' to your child or young adult. Children understand what 'strangers' are, they just don't see the link with Online Gamers, who they need to add to their list to allow for competition and game enjoyment. Always check Contacts & Notifications & Requests.

4. Be Part of Closed Groups

Whats App – We Chat – Discord - Fortnite – Tik Tok – Fifa – Clash Royale etc, all allow for the creation of 'Closed Groups', which are, by definition, exclusive, this allows for bullying, trolling and grooming. Children will find it hard to disclose so adults must be part of these groups to prevent exploitation.

5. Cover up the Web Cam

We Cam compromising is now very common and is as a result of Spyware infecting phones, tablets, IPads or computers. Most infections will last between 3 weeks and 3 months but unfortunately there will be no obvious sign that the web cam has been compromised so covering with tape, blu tac can prevent filming.

6. Do Not use File Sharing systems

If a child searches for a film in Google and finds a site to stream the movie from, or uses, Putlocker, 123 movies or Solar Movie then the film will be streamed from someones computer not a company like 'Netflix' or 'You Tube'. This is how hackers send viruses to devices and if the virus is 'Spyware' then this will compromise & activate the Web Cam resulting in unintentional inappropriate filming.

7. Use Apples Family Sharing or Google Family Link

Family Sharing is accessed via the IPhone or IPad settings & apple ID page, this allows for the syncing of devices to 1 Apple account, meaning other users devices cannot install Apps without permission. Google Family Link syncs the same way but is an App from the Play Store

8. Switch off GPS & Location Services

Posting on Social Media (eg Instagram) whilst the device GPS is on, allows for free software to be used that can track all posts, this in turn allows for an individual search of one user which can highlight the most common place the users post from (ie Home). Gmail (which is on most devices) also tracks the device to the minute, highlighting exactly where the user is or had been and again highlights the most common place (ie Home). Switch GPS Off.

9. Use Internet Provider to Restrict Access

Nearly all Internet providers allow for the restriction of device internet connectivity. By accessing your internet provider account and then the modem settings will allow for inspection of devices that are currently using the modem. These can be isolated and specific limits created to limit internet access – Day & Time & Period, a great way of controlling screen time.

10. At 14+ use Social Media Positively

Nearly all Social & Gaming is used for showing off and being mean, so young users and young adults need to start using social media positively. Parents & Carers can guide them by introducing 'Blogging' to highlight their interests, using Twitter & LinkedIn appropriately by following the representatives / leaders of the universities and/or industry they wish to be part of in the future.

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