



# Parents E-Safety Newsletter



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## Welcome to the Spring 2016 edition of the Parents E-safety newsletter...

This term we are looking at Cyberbullying, Safe apps for kids ask.fm, parents and young people's use of social media in relation to schools and YouTubers or Vloggers. A new parent resource is also available – see later in the issue.

### Cyberbullying

#### Definitions

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else, and it usually occurs over a long period of time.

Cyberbullying is bullying that is carried out via digital technology. It includes but is not limited to: sending threatening or abusive text messages; creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos; 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games; excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups; setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child; encouraging young people to self-harm; voting for or against someone in an abusive poll; creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name; sending explicit messages, also known as sexting; pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations (NSPCC).

#### Signs and symptoms

It can be very difficult to spot the signs that a child is being cyberbullied, and no individual sign will confirm that bullying is happening. Parents and professionals need to look out for signs such as changes in behaviour; becoming distressed or withdrawn; not wanting to go to school; sleeping or eating poorly; being secretive about use of their phone or tablet; or

having problems with friends. Cyberbullying, as with all bullying, can lead to mental health issues – if this seems to be the case, the young person should be seen by their GP.

#### How to help

Try to help young people by talking to them about cyberbullying and make sure they know who to go to if they have problems. If they do have a problem, talk to them about what choices they have in dealing with the cyberbullying. The issue should usually be raised with the school (or other organisation) involved in the bullying. All schools must have robust anti-bullying policies and procedures, which includes dealing with cyberbullying. The young person may need some technical assistance to block bullies online or to make their accounts private. In addition, evidence of the bullying may need to be saved, for example as screenshots, or logs made to provide evidence. Parents can also encourage the child to do activities they enjoy which can help build confidence, self-esteem and friendships.

Parents need to be aware of the further action that may be required if the school or organisation's response is not satisfactory. This will vary depending on whether the school is a maintained (local authority) school, academy or private/independent school.

## SSCT Parents E-safety Newsletter Spring 2016

Rarely, cyberbullying may be found to be against the law, particularly where it involves serious threats to harm or hate messages.

For further information:

<http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

The Anti-Bullying Alliance contains resources and advices for all forms of bullying, including bullying of those people with special educational needs and disabilities.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

The NSPCC has advice for young people, parents and professionals on how to deal with bullying, including detailed instructions on how to pursue a complaint if you are not happy with a school's response.

### *NSPCC Helplines*

Adults concerned about a child: 0808 8005000

Children and young people (ChildLine): 0800 1111

NSPCC E-safety Helpline: 0808 8005002

### **Safe sites for younger children to explore**

Generally young children need supervising when they are using websites and apps that connect across the internet. However, there are some sites that are relatively safe and do not have direct interactions.



CBeebies has lots of activities and games suitable for young children up to the age of 6.

YouTube have launched their Kids app on Android and Apple. It includes famous children's brands like Morph, Teletubbies, Wallace & Gromit and The Magic Roundabout. The app is free to download but does contain family friendly adverts.

For further ideas try the CommonSenseMedia website which rates and describes app – search for kids apps.

### Ask.fm



Ask.fm is an online question-and-answer site. Users can ask questions and respond to them, either by text or by posting videos, and they can do this anonymously.

Although, as part of its Terms of Service, the site asks that all users must be aged 13 or over, there is no age verification.

Ask.fm is similar to twitter in the sense that you can choose to follow someone. Unlike twitter, though, you can't find out who is following you - only the total number of your followers.

All profiles and posts on Ask.fm are open and can be searched via a search engine like Google or through the site's own search function.

The default setting is to allow anonymous questions but to avoid risk of online bullying, you can turn this off.

You can report a post or profile and you can block users from asking questions (but they can still follow you and the answers you post).

If you have signed up to Ask.fm through Facebook or are connected through the Ask.fm Facebook app, the questions and answers posted on your Ask.fm profile are posted to your Facebook profile.

Young people like ask.fm because of its anonymity and the ability to get peer help.

However, there have been a number of cases of people being bullied anonymously using ask.fm

For more information:

<http://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/askfm/>

<http://parentinfo.org/article/askfm-what-you-need-to-know>

## SSCT Parents E-safety Newsletter Spring 2016

### Parents and young people's use of social media in relation to schools

Research carried out by the NASUWT Teaching Union has shown that 60% of teachers have been the victims of online personal insults from both parents and pupils. This is an increase from 21% the year before. There have also been increases in videos taken without the teachers' consent (34%) and also in threats (15%).

It is essential that where parents or pupils have complaints that they follow the correct complaints procedure. This should be issued to parents and should be available on the website. The school acceptable use policies should also cover use of social media by staff, parents and pupils to ensure the expectations are clear.

Parents should attempt to provide good role models to young people.

### Parents and carers guide to social media

#### Child Online Safety: A practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media

Social networking is hugely popular. Many young people are sophisticated in the way they use social media apps and websites, tailoring their communication for different audiences, and accessing them from a range of devices including smartphones, tablets, and games consoles.

But social media, like all forms of public communication, comes with some risks. Not all of these risks turn into actual problems; and if children never face any risks, they never learn how to deal with them. By helping your child understand what the risks are, you can play a big part in preventing them from turning into



A new 2-page leaflet for parents is now available from the website below. It has been put together by the NSPCC, internetmatters.org, the UK Safer Internet Centre, Parentzone and UK Council for Child Internet Centre. It includes details of the risks, practical tips and further information.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/487974/Social\\_Media\\_Guidance\\_UKCCIS\\_Final\\_18122015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/487974/Social_Media_Guidance_UKCCIS_Final_18122015.pdf)

### NSPCC/O<sub>2</sub> Parents E-safety helpline

The new NSPCC (working in conjunction with O<sub>2</sub>) Parents E-safety helpline is now up and running. Parents can get advice on anything they're not sure about, including:

- setting up parental controls on computers or other devices
- help adjusting privacy settings
- understanding social networks
- concerns about online gaming

The helpline is a free number: 0808 8005002

More information can be found at

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>



### Which YouTubers do your children follow?

You may not know it but most young people will follow particular YouTubers or other online vloggers (video loggers). The most popular vloggers have millions of subscribers – Zoella has nearly 10 million for her lifestyle blog and regularly gets over a million views for her videos.



As well as Zoella, popular vloggers include her boyfriend Alfie Deyes, brother Joe Sugg or gaming vloggers Stampy Cat or The Diamond Minecart . The vloggers are mainly in their late teens or early twenties and are earning a living from the advertising revenue from YouTube and from merchandise or books. Many of these are appropriate for young people but you will need to check.

Popular topics for vlogs include Gaming, Fashion, beauty and shopping, Lifestyle and food, Health – mental or physical, and Funny dares and general silliness. For more information

<http://parentinfo.org/article/a-parents-guide-to-vlogging-what-you-need-to-know>