Issue 4

Digital parenting

Turning kids into coders

Top**10** apps for under 10s

How is the internet affecting your child's mental health?

Take a tech break
Why we all need to switch off from time to time

Vodafone
Power to you

Welcome

About Digital Parenting

The internet offers a host of thrilling new possibilities for learning, creativity and fun. Vodafone is proud to lead the field in helping young people and their families to get the most out of digital technologies, as well as in dealing with any challenges that it might bring.

Digital Parenting began life as a website in 2009. This is the fourth edition of the magazine, which has now reached millions of families in the UK for free. In this issue you will find articles about the latest developments in internet safety across a range of topics, as well as tips and practical advice to help you manage your digital life. We've brought together leading experts in their fields — academics, psychologists, charity leaders and parents — to provide the latest news and digital trends as well as up-to-date knowhow on keeping the young people in your life safe online.

For more parenting advice and inspiration, visit vodafone.com/parents

W elcome to the latest edition of *Digital Parenting*, a great resource that helps parents understand and talk to young people about the benefits and the challenges of our digital world.

Growing up has never been easy, but today the virtual world presents a whole set of new risks. Young people live in an always-on, social, digital and connected world, and it's the only world they've ever known. We marvel at technology, yet to them it is the norm.

While the internet brings amazing opportunities for young people to learn, create and socialise, it is our duty as adults to help them navigate this online world safely. Young people must recognise that every click, every post, every purchase and every photo we upload online leaves a digital footprint.

It is important to begin these conversations at an early age — to help set boundaries together and provide a clear understanding of when they are safe to explore and roam online freely.

We all need to work together to educate children about staying safe online. Our One Nation government is standing alongside parents to make that job a bit easier. We are taking action to prevent access to harmful content and raising awareness about online safety through the national curriculum.

I want to commend Vodafone and The Parent Zone for the good job they do with *Digital Parenting*, and I hope you find the information you need to help your children feel empowered and get the most out of the online world.

Baroness Joanna Shields,
UK Minister for Internet Safety and Security
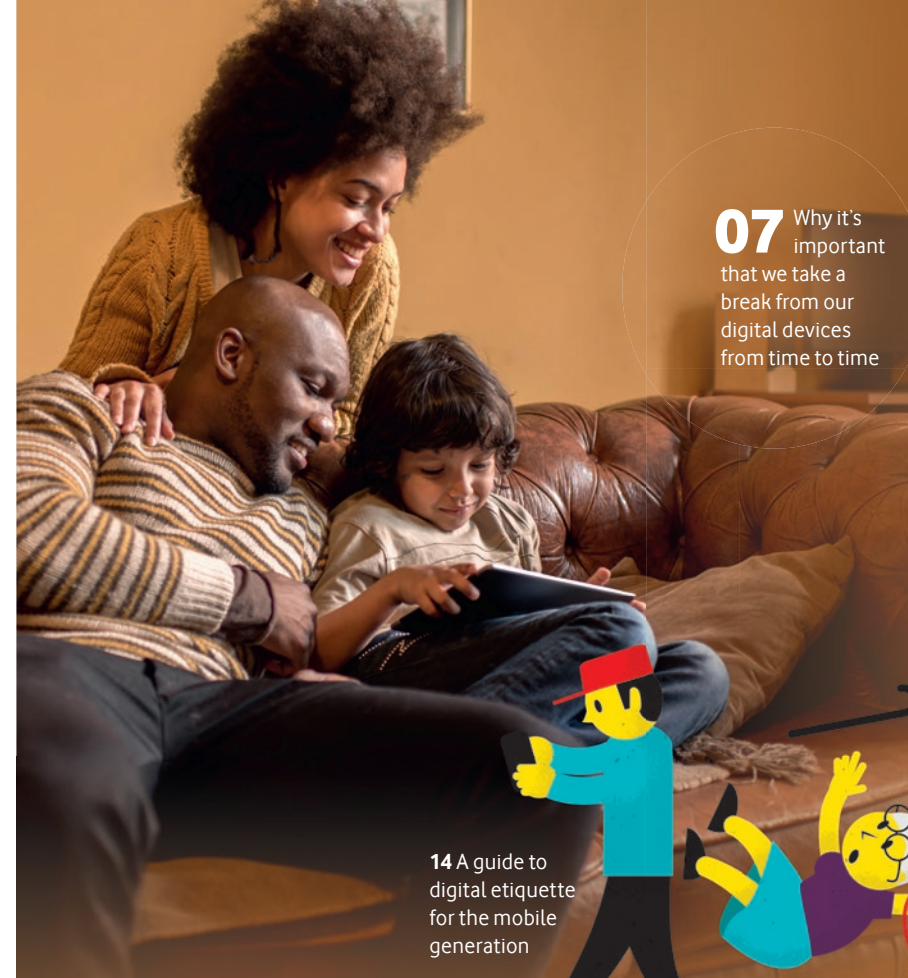
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Contributors

Linda Papadopoulos is a research scientist, practising psychologist and author specialising in psychodermatology, body image, counselling and medical psychology. She has also researched the effects of sexualisation, identity and objectification of young people. Her work has been published in leading academic journals and she maintains a high-profile international media career. **drlinda.co.uk**

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Sarah Brennan is Chief Executive of Young Minds, a charity that aims to improve the wellbeing and mental health of young people. As well as campaigning and conducting research, Young Minds runs a helpline and online resources for parents and children. **youngminds.org.uk**

What's all the fuss about bitcoin?

Bitcoin has been called the local currency of the internet. Created by the mysterious Satoshi Nakamoto (who may not be Japanese, may not be one person and has now disappeared), each bitcoin is a unique string of numbers and letters.

Digital currency couldn't develop before bitcoin because it could have been copied, pasted and spent several times over. But Nakamoto solved this problem by creating a record of transactions (the "keychain") that could be stored on the computers of many users.

Tech enthusiasts loved bitcoin when it was launched in 2008. But since then its value has been fluctuating dramatically.

Should you be concerned if your children are using it? Possibly: it's associated with buying drugs, pornography and weapons, as well as with gambling. Offline uses are limited so far. A handful of mainstream websites have started using it but young people would struggle to use bitcoin to pay for food, clothes and most of the other things they want to buy.
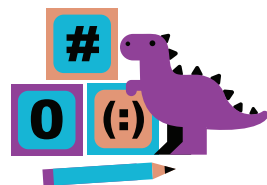
Some people worry that it's all smoke and mirrors. Its admirers love it because it's detached from the banking system but that makes it too slippery for a lot of people to trust. Bitcoin has yet to prove that it's really reliable or that it has staying power — but one day we may take it for granted, rather like the internet itself.
Geraldine Bedell, Editor of *Digital Parenting* **and Parentinfo.org**

Brave new coding world

A new computing curriculum in England is preparing children for a digital future

There are some great videos online showing children's reactions to retro technology (cue puzzled looks when they see a floppy disk). Things move fast and, before we know it, the next generation will be equally unimpressed by the PS4 and iPhone 6. So how can we help young people keep up with technology and make sure they have a digital start on the career ladder?

Schools play a vital role, and in September 2014 those in England took a giant leap into the future by introducing a new computing curriculum. Gone are old-style ICT lessons. Instead, children now learn how computers and the internet work. Lessons in algorithms, programming and digital literacy help them to solve problems with logic and creativity.

This is a world-beating development, according to Simon Humphreys of Computing at School. "England is leading the way internationally by saying that every child aged five and over should be able to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science," he explains. "It's a big idea, and it's incredibly important, equipping children to understand their brave new world, whatever it might hold for them."
**Vicky Prior, Editor of Vodafone Digital Parenting website, vodafone.com/parents**

Five reasons to love the computing curriculum

1 Kids are more adaptable
Schools used to teach workplace ICT skills like spreadsheets and word processing. Now, computing lessons include programming (coding) and digital safety. In the same way that young people learn physics or history as a discipline, students get an insight into the underlying principles of computing and the digital world as well as hands-on experience. The idea is that even when the tech changes, they will understand enough to be able to adapt.
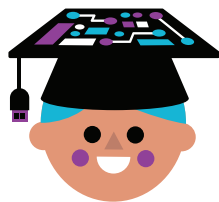
2 It's good for the economy
Even though the technology industry is flourishing in the UK, many people are concerned about a digital skills gap. The new computing curriculum means that school leavers and university graduates will be better prepared for the workplace.

3 Everyone can get involved
For the first time, children are studying a subject that their parents haven't. But they still need support. Computing is as important as any other subject on the curriculum, so parents can encourage hobbies like code clubs and film-making. You could even try learning to code yourself, with apps like *ScratchJr* and *Kodu*.

4 It improves employability
From fashion to journalism, finance to health, most jobs in the future will require digital skills. Whatever your child's ambitions, the chances are that understanding computing will be important in building a career. Employers will demand confident use of technology, whatever the field. So understanding computing will be as fundamental to your child's employability as maths and English.

5 It's part of a digital revolution
The computing curriculum is aligned with a new wave of online resources that are introducing coding to a wider audience. If you want to learn alongside your children, the following sites are a good place to start.

BBC Make it Digital
bit.ly/bbcmakeitdigital
Codecademy
bit.ly/code_cademy
Digital Skills
bit.ly/codingdigitalskills
Vodafone Decoding Code
bit.ly/decodingcode
Vodafone My Tech Family
bit.ly/mytechfamily

What makes children vulnerable online?

We are all vulnerable at times. Everyone can feel insecure, fragile and in need of approval during times of change and disappointment. The internet may exaggerate these feelings, turning minor insecurities into more serious issues for young people who aren't yet able to deal with them. Evidence suggests that offline and online resilience are linked, meaning that confident children, who are able to deal with risk offline, also tend to be less vulnerable to harm online.

Fortunately, the research tells us that one of the most important factors for online resilience is unconditional support from parents or carers. The best way to help your child avoid harm online is to do the same things you do offline: stay alert to what's going on and let them know you're always there and on their side if anything goes wrong.
Rachel Rosen, Health Editor of Parentinfo.org

Smartphone 101

If your child is asking for their first phone, bear these tips in mind before taking the plunge

They borrow your smartphone to play *Candy Crush* in the car. They're masters of *Minecraft* on the tablet. Now, they want their own phone. So what should you consider before giving them a new device?

Is my child ready for a smartphone?
There's no minimum age limit for mobile phones. It's a personal decision. Many children get mobiles around the age of 11, when they start secondary school, and 90% of British teenagers now have one. A lot of parents like being able to stay in touch – but it's worth making sure your child really needs a phone and that they are responsible enough to have one.

Which smartphone and tariff should I choose for my child?
Your child might well have a cool brand on their wish list but it's worth looking for devices that let you manage the features, such as Restrictions on the iPhone or Kids Mode on the Samsung Galaxy range. You should choose price plans designed with families in mind. Available on pay monthly contracts,

Vodafone's Red+ plan covers multiple SIM cards, so everyone in your family can have a device of their own and you can control each person's data allowance from one place.

How much will this cost?
You can choose to pay monthly (sometimes called contract) or pay as you go (also called PAYG or pre-pay). Pay as you go, which uses top-up vouchers or credits, is popular for young people as it gives them more control. With Vodafone Red+, your child can contact you in an emergency even with no credit on their phone. It may be worth setting limits for your child's smartphone use, such as how often and what they use it for. And remember that the cost of premium rate services (such as competition lines), apps and in-app purchases, as well as using the phone abroad, can quickly add up.
Vicky Prior, Editor of Vodafone Digital Parenting website, vodafone.com/parents

How can I help my child to stay safe and secure?

1. Explain to your child why they should look after their phone like they do their purse or wallet – it's valuable not only in terms of its cost but also because of the personal information stored on it.

2. Make the most of parental controls on the phone and/or download an app like *Vodafone Guardian* so you can set time limits and block access to inappropriate content (see p43).

3. Think about whether you want to switch off Bluetooth and location services, including maps, and to install anti-virus software.

4. Get your child to set a passcode and auto-lock on their screen and to keep a note of their phone's IMEI serial number in case it gets stolen. You can find the IMEI number either by looking in Settings or by typing *#06# into the phone.

5. Establish some rules about when they can use their smartphone, which apps and websites they can access and how they should behave on their phone and online.

Why it's so important to take regular breaks from technology

by Cindy Rose, Customer Director, Vodafone

Technology is all around us. It's helping to change the way we do things, opening up new opportunities for us all. Used in the right way, it can have huge educational and social benefits, too. That's why I want my kids to be connected, creative and confident online. I want them to be learning and exploring and making the most of the wealth of global information they can carry around in their pockets. I want them to be in control.

But with messages coming at me from all directions, it's sometimes easy to spend a whole day multitasking and have no time to step back and think. That's why I need the chance to detox from my devices.

Many people are keeping themselves fresh by switching off technology from time to time. This is especially important if you're a parent. We've all had the experience of being at home with our kids, with everyone on their own devices. Home should also be a place for meaningful moments with the family, which is why switching off for a few hours can really help.

I also like time to talk through what my kids are sharing online. Being online 24-7 can be stressful for a teenager who's struggling with their identity. Helping them to decide what information they make available is important.

I myself benefit from turning off so I can focus. Research shows that multitasking is

great for short-term memory, but not for "going deep". Our brains can be excellent at juggling information, but having time to think is crucial for the big issues in life. We need quiet time to focus. I know the creative types in my team at Vodafone benefit from time to let their minds wander. It's often when they come up with the best ideas.

The other great benefit of switching off is that it enables us to develop the different communication skills we use when we meet people face to face. These are vital and we are helping our children by making sure they get plenty of practice using them. Social networking tends to draw together like-minded groups. Online, my kids talk mainly to people like them in age and background. Switching off can mean reconnecting with different generations and with people whose lives are different from ours.

Because I want my children to be well adjusted, good at all kinds of relationships, able to concentrate on different types of activities and independent, I help them to switch off for a few hours a week. The Scouts, with their history of unplugged activities, suggest walks, cycling, board games, listening to music together or cooking a meal as a family.

Technology can enrich our lives, but we need to make sure we don't have too much of a good thing. The best example we can set for children in the digital world is to show them that they can also have a lot of fun away from tech – and that when they go back to it, they'll also have a better perspective on what's happening online.

How The Scouts can help you switch off

One great place to start looking for new offline challenges is The Scouts. Injecting some Scouting adventure into your family life could involve passing on new skills, learning about new foods or exploring your local community. And if you feel like being a bit more adventurous, how about giving your kids responsibility for the family for a day? The point is to get young people and adults working together, learning about each other and the wider world. The Scouts use digital as part of the mix, but to facilitate everyday adventure rather than to replace it.
Samantha Marks, National Development Officer (Safeguarding) at The Scout Association

Be a **star** on **YouTube**

Clued-up vloggers can earn serious money turning their passions into video. Three Brits explain how they have struck gold online

by Lucy Doyle,
Writer at Parentinfo.org

HANNAH WITTON
Subscribers: around 130,000
Total views: more than 8 million

Hannah is a 20-something social media whizz and history graduate. She's taken YouTube by storm with her upfront and articulate videos about body image, sex and gender issues. In 2013 she was shortlisted for Young Person of the Year at the Sexual Health Awards in partnership with Brook and the Family Planning Association.

She started out three years ago and is doing well so far: she says she earns enough to survive in London – an impressive feat these days!

How did it feel when you realised you could make vlogging your full-time job?
Very exciting. I'm a strong believer in "choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life".

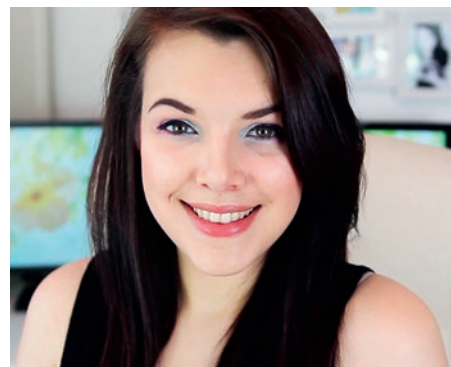**What are you doing today?**
I'm answering these interview questions. Doing a photo shoot and an interview for a feminist magazine. Filming a vlog about my trip to Japan and South Korea, editing that video, writing a blog post about the Peace Museum in Hiroshima, going to a screening of a film and then watching *Game of Thrones*. That's the plan, anyway!

What are your favourite comments from fans?
When people say my videos have helped them be more self-confident and love themselves after being ashamed of their bodies.

On your vlog you speak about sex openly. How do you deal with trolls?
The nature of my content does occasionally attract some mean people. Because of my general openness, a lot of people feel entitled to that information and often ask very invasive questions, but I ignore them and I never reveal personal information about my love life.

"I'm a strong believer in 'choose a job you love and you'll never have to work a day in your life'"

Hannah Witton

CHERRY WALLIS
Subscribers: more than 200,000
Total views: more than 10 million

Three years ago, after finishing a degree in art and design, Cherry started vlogging as a hobby. Now her channel has videos on beauty, comedy and even baking. She's now pretty handy on the production side, often using a green screen and spending hours editing reams of raw footage to create fun, engaging videos.

You can now earn a living from your videos. How did it feel when it became your day job?
I didn't start YouTubing to make money – I did it because I enjoyed it. It took a couple of years to make it my full-time job, and I worked in bars to pay my way before that. Earning a living from doing something I really love is wonderful.

What other opportunities have arisen through your vlogging?
I've travelled to America and Egypt, released a single ("Hero", which reached the iTunes Top 50 rock chart) and landed a lead role in a feature film, *Hungerford Ground Zero*. I've also worked for CBBC and appeared on *Blue Peter*. And YouTubing has also boosted my confidence.

What's the craziest thing you've received from fans?
An envelope full of glitter. I am always careful when opening things after that!

MARCUS BUTLER
**Subscribers: more than 5.5 million
(two channels)**
Total views: more than 325 million

Marcus Butler is one of Britain's biggest YouTube stars, with an online persona that his viewers (especially the teenage girls) can't get enough of. He is an Anti-Bullying Ambassador for the Diana Award and released his book *Hello Life* in July. Marcus is one of a group of British celebrity YouTubers, along with his girlfriend Niomi Smart, Zoella, Alfie Deyes, Joe Sugg, Tanya Burr and Jim Chapman, who are all close friends offline.

When did you realise that you could make a career out of vlogging?
I quit my job after going to Vidcon [a huge cultural event for online video], where I met lots of big YouTubers and got really fired up being around people who shared my passion.

How's fame treating you?
I get stopped fairly regularly by fans – it's really cool but a bit surreal. At the moment, the press isn't too interested in me and the general public doesn't know me – only my audience does, so I get the best of both worlds. I hope it stays that way.

Your fans send you dares to do. What's the weirdest dare you've done?
Having grapes taped to my face or my hair being covered in toothpaste are both definitely up there!

What opportunities have come from vlogging?
I've been able to travel all over the world with friends. I've also really grown in confidence. Before I started, I'd have never been able to speak in public or deliver a pitch as I can now.

Any advice for coping with trolls?
The beauty of online is that you can just block people who are upsetting you. My advice is to kick them out of your online life quickly!

"The beauty of online is that you can just block people who are upsetting you"

Marcus Butler

Why do parents stress about screen time?

by Sonia Livingstone, Professor of Media and Communications at London School of Economics

Most parents worry about screen time. And it's not surprising, when you consider how much they are bombarded by advice concerning the right amount of time for children to spend on digital media. We hear a lot about what's appropriate for different ages and about exposure to violence, sex and commercialism.

Despite their concerns, many parents continue to fill their homes with hi-tech devices. In the UK, most pre-school children have already used a smartphone, tablet or games console.

In my interviews with parents of children aged three to eight I am struck by how ambivalent they feel about their kids' use of digital media. On the one hand, they give children access to devices. On the other, they set rules about how much their children can use them. They also seem to value non-digital activities more highly. When I ask them about what a good day with the family looks like, they talk about playing football outside or board games indoors.

Parents often feel guilty about their children's use of digital media. This is partly because, as they admit, the rules about screen time tend to go out of the window when they're tired or busy. But children don't mind this. They tell me that they see these times as moments of freedom when they get to do what they want on digital media.

However, there is another reason why parents feel uncertain about their children's time on screens. There's a widespread sense that despite the extraordinary and exciting potential of digital media, there isn't much really fantastic content for younger children. Or, if there is, parents don't know where to find it. They frequently ask me if I know of imaginative sites that will stretch and stimulate their child.

There's no digital equivalent of the children's librarian. There are no prizes to promote innovative, high-quality content for young children. As a result, they visit a relatively narrow range of sites, many of which are either heavily commercialised or designed for older kids. So, while many parents believe instinctively that there could and should be such a thing as "good" screen time, they don't fully trust and love much of the available content. As a result, they often worry that the screen is more a form of babysitting than quality time.

What parents should really do about internet safety

You can't control everything your child sees online. So increasing their resilience by preparing them for an inevitable shock is the most valuable step parents can take

by Geraldine Bedell, Editor of *Digital Parenting* and Parentinfo.org

Every week there seems to be some new scare about the hazards children face online, whether it's from social media addiction, cyberbullying, pornography or sexting. Video gaming is destroying young men, claims one study; selfies are making girls miserable, says another.

It's easy to identify inappropriate content – nudity and violence are obvious examples. But it's harder to know how such content becomes harmful and for which children.

This means we have to try to stop children viewing it where we can – and we're good at this in the UK. The back of this magazine will help you set up broadband filters and set parental controls on devices such as smartphones, tablets and games consoles.

This is a great start, especially for younger children. But in the always-on, mobile world, your child is only as safe as the least protected child at school. Any smart young person who really wants to get around filters will find a way to do so.

Meanwhile, research shows that heavy restrictions and monitoring don't make children safer. A report from the Oxford Internet Institute and The Parent Zone suggests that teenagers who are limited in the time they are allowed to spend online or banned from particular digital activities are less resilient when it comes to dealing with online hazards. And conversely, children who are more creative and confident online are also better at dealing with risk.

In a way, it's not surprising. Children learn how to deal with risk by coming across it. And if they know how to make the most of the advantages, they are less likely to be distracted by the risks.

If we want to protect our children online, we have to encourage them to be confident and creative, and that means accepting that there will always be some degree of risk. The key is to stop that risk turning into harm – which you can do by letting kids know how to react when they come across something online that disturbs them.

Our research shows that parents of children who thrive online were neither too strict nor too lenient but somewhere in the middle.

So what works?
☑ Don't set loads of rules but instead show an interest in what your child is up to.
☑ Do show unconditional love and support for your child; don't make your approval depend on your child behaving in a particular way or achieving certain things.
☑ Do accept your child's individuality and show interest in how they're developing and exploring their identity.
☑ Don't be afraid to have your own opinions or disagree with your child – you're in charge – but listen and take what they say into account.

The problems of the internet are really social problems, whether we're talking about bullying, self-harm or meeting the wrong people. And, as ever with social problems, parents are the first line of defence. We help our children cope with risks and worries every day. So we don't have to be afraid that we lack the ability to manage the online world. It's just a question of adapting what we already know.

Talking about what your child does online – the www approach

Who do they connect with online?
Talk about how to choose supportive online friends and block or report users who are causing trouble.

Where do they go online?
Talk about sites to avoid and whether sites and apps promising anonymity are really as secure as they seem.

What do they do online?
Make sure they know where to go to get information that's suitable for them about subjects they may find difficult to discuss with you.

Go on, I dare you

How not to get hurt by internet pranks and crazes

A heady mix of hormones, new emotions and the desire to impress peers means teenagers will always want to take risks. Most of the time, online pranks and dares are harmless. Some, like the ice bucket challenge, even raise money for good causes. But others can be harmful.

Websites like makeadare.com allow members to "earn street cred by completing dares and impressing friends and fans". The incentive to gain points can cause children to take bigger risks than they would normally.

Unlike in real life, dares on these sites don't just come from friends, who probably care about your child, but from anyone who happens to be online. Many of these sites exist and there are thousands of silly dares doing the rounds other than the famous ones that go viral.

It's difficult to stop your child getting involved in pranks and dares online, so it's really important to make them aware of the boundary between a fun, harmless risk and a more inappropriate or dangerous one.
Vicki Shotbolt, CEO of The Parent Zone

Top tips

1. Talk to your child about pranks and dares. Ask them what they think about them and whether they've ever been tempted to get involved.

2. Remind them that they are in control – they don't have to do anything they don't want to, even if peers tease them for not doing it.

3. Suggest they take a step back before agreeing to a dare and to ask themselves if the risk they're taking is sensible.

4. Encourage them not to pass on dares and explain why doing so can lead to vulnerable young people taking unwise risks.

Me, my selfie and I

What happens to children's identities when they share details about their lives incessantly on social media?

by psychologist and author Dr Linda Papadopoulos

Social media has become as much about defining who we are as it is about connecting with friends and family. The need to establish a presence — an identity that people take note of — contributes to how we see and value ourselves.

Our likes, re-tweets and posts act as a barometer not only of how others perceive us, but perhaps more worryingly of how we perceive ourselves. Of course, concern about how others see us is nothing new. Other people's opinions have always affected us. But we now have the ability to ask for these opinions as never before. This may explain why we feel it necessary to share detail about our lives incessantly: I post therefore I am.

When the line between the "self" and the "selfie" — our private and public selves — becomes blurred, identity stops being a reflection of individuality. Instead it becomes a means of approval and status. As we tweak and edit who we are so that we can appeal to others, there is a danger of coming to believe that we're not yet worthy of being "liked". Many young people trying to establish an identity are also running a campaign to promote themselves, and the danger is that they may begin to feel that they can't really live up to the "self" they've created.

The more information we have on other people's views about ourselves, the more likely we are to see our identity as being dependent on traits that we would like to have or we assume others want to see in us — rather than being an expression of our beliefs and values. We start to view ourselves in the third person.

We effectively step outside ourselves and become observers of our own lives, constantly wondering how we measure up in the eyes of others, ready to edit who we are in order to conform or please.

The need to know oneself makes way for the more pressing need to manage what others think — basically, to self-promote. And there is an increasing body of research that suggests this is making us feel, well, not so "liked".

Constructing identity out of others' expectations can leave us uncertain who we really are. Seeking validation and acceptance is normal, but this needs to happen offline as well as online. Young people need mirrors to reflect their developing attributes back at them, rather than scripts to follow.

Don't get me wrong: I don't think that social networking is bad. But I do think that it's time to acknowledge how profoundly our online identities can affect us. As online and offline become more intertwined, it is important to learn how to disconnect from our "constructed" identities to remember who we really are. Once we lose the ability to engage with our identity internally, it becomes something outside us and so it is more easily manipulated.

Philosophers and behavioural scientists point out that a desire for authenticity is central to our sense of wellbeing, a cornerstone of mental health. Being true to who we are is correlated with self-esteem, vitality and self-determination. Young people need a chance to rewrite their scripts on their own terms, looking inwards for what feels right and ignoring those would-be editors who don't really know who they are.

Creating kinder online communities

Technology has the power to strengthen friendships, but it also can facilitate mean behaviour. According to the UK Safer Internet Centre's research paper *Friendship in a Digital Age*, 63% of young people believe they are closer to their friends because of the internet. However, the study of more than 1,000 children aged 11 to 16 also shows that 30% of them had been on the receiving end of mean online behaviour in the previous year.

It's very easy for children to make mistakes online, because without face-to-face interaction their intentions can often be misinterpreted and feelings misunderstood. We need to help children understand the need to think before they post and to consider the potential impact of content they share.

So what can parents do to help encourage children to be kinder to one another online?

You can start talking to your child about being a good friend online as soon as they show an interest in the internet. Engage with their online use: help them learn how to be good friends online — just like you would offline — and to understand the consequences of mean behaviour online. Ensure they know what to do when things go wrong. Last, but definitely not least, it's important to be a good role model, just as you would in the rest of your life.

Childnet's online book *Digiduck's Big Decision* sensitively portrays this message for three- to eight-year-olds, helping parents and carers start these conversations early.
Will Gardner, CEO at Childnet

Digiduck's Big Decision
bit.ly/digiducksdecision

A guide to digital etiquette

11 rules for the mobile generation.
Great for children — and adults, too

by Geraldine Bedell, Editor of *Digital Parenting*
and Parentinfo.org

Think before you attack on social media, especially if joining in with a lot of other people. Are you responding negatively because it's necessary or because it's making you feel better?

Don't say anything online that you wouldn't say to a person's face

Don't send messages via your phone in the cinema. Or even read them. We can all see those little lights. And don't imagine that a vibrating, buzzing phone is in any way silent

Don't walk down the street texting or browsing — you'll bump into someone

Don't force other people to listen to your music

BEFORE YOU POST, THINK ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE (YOUR GRAN? YOUR HEAD TEACHER?) **WOULD THINK IF THEY READ IT**

On the whole, it's a good idea to pay more attention to the people you are with than to your devices — so don't text while paying in a shop, or be so busy updating your status you don't talk to your family

DON'T OVERSHARE
For adults: remember your children are entitled to private lives
For young people: don't post pictures of your friends looking ridiculous without getting their permission first

It's sometimes better not to speak online. You don't have to retort. There is nothing wrong with keeping quiet now and then

Don't wear headphones when people are trying to talk to you (and taking out one side is not good enough)

You don't need to take a picture to prove to yourself that you've done something. It is perfectly OK to go to a museum or for a walk and just look at things

Unhappiness, depression and anxiety are on the rise among young people. Is the internet to blame?

by Sarah Brennan, Chief Executive, YoungMinds @YoungMindsCEO

Parents have always had to respond to the world changing around them, and today their worries are often about issues relating to digital technology. Cyberbullying, sexting and online child sexual exploitation all create anxiety about children's happiness and mental health.

As a whole, young people's lives seem to be improving. The rate of teen pregnancies is dropping and there's a decline in drug and alcohol use. But there are also reports of a rise in unhappiness, depression and anxiety, and the behaviours this leads to such as self-harm and eating disorders. It's difficult to know whether it's simply that more young people are coming forward, but it does seem that young people are suffering more than ever from mental health problems.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the internet is contributing. For example, a number of viral hashtags have emerged that promote self-harming, such as #cutforzayn which appeared when Zayn Malik left One Direction. There are also a number of photo-sharing sites where young people who are self-harming post images encouraging others to do the same. And a recent poll of 2,000 young people aged 11-21 conducted for Self-Harm Awareness Day revealed that 37% had seen an image online showing someone self-harming. The majority of those said that they found this upsetting.

Many of us have read stories about the organised trolling and bullying of young people by their peers through social media, sometimes with sad consequences. MPs have expressed their alarm at the dangers posed by so-called pro-ana (pro-anorexia) and pro-mia (pro-bulimia) websites, as well as about cyberbullying and sites that promote self-harm.

> "A recent poll of 2,000 young people revealed that 37% had seen an image online showing someone self-harming"

Counterbalance

And yet, for all the negativity, the internet and social media can also play a positive role in a young person's life. Keeping in touch with friends or relatives all over the world provides an opportunity to socialise and de-stress. There's a wealth of information and resources for young people online, providing access to information about sex, drugs, relationships, mental health and wellbeing.

The best of these are created partly by their users, with language and content that doesn't feel too stuffy and patronising. Good examples include TalktoFrank and Headmeds. The latter has proved hugely popular, featuring no-nonsense information about mental health medication commonly prescribed to adolescents and children, and real-life case studies of young people who have used the medication.

In the past few years, we've also seen how social media can act as a catalyst for social change, raising young people's awareness of particular issues and promoting positive action. Based in the US, the It Gets Better Project,

for example, has given young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people all over the world the knowledge to resist harassment and the inspiration to be themselves.

Providing support

Engaging children in the positive aspects of the internet and guiding them towards its helpful and inspiring resources can go a long way towards guarding against the hazards. At the same time it's critical to try to limit a child's exposure to websites that promote dangerous behaviour and compromise their mental health.

There is always a temptation to reduce young people's freedom and increase monitoring "for their own good" — which often means to allay parents' own fears. However, banning or dramatically limiting a child's online time can actually make them more at risk of harm. Ultimately, the key to helping your children have a positive experience of the internet and social media is building their online resilience.
talktofrank.com
headmeds.org.uk

How to build your child's online resilience

1. Remind them that not everything on the internet is true — some content may need to be checked and evaluated with a trusted adult for validity. Encourage them to question and not to take everything at face value.

2. Reassure them that life is not measured by how many likes or re-tweets they get.

3. Discuss how social media makes them feel and reassure them that if they are being bullied they can confide in you. You can also talk to your child's school for support with cyberbullying.

4. Let them know that if they see something online that bothers them, they should tell a trusted adult and show them the site.

5. Reassure them that you love them and are proud of them.

6. Remember that worrying behaviour can be short-lived. All children go through changes and difficult times, and most will come through with support from their family, friends and (perhaps) online communities.

7. If older children don't want to talk at first, let them know you are concerned about them. Sending a text message as a starting point may work better.

Challenging black and white views of the world

Parents can help tackle online radicalisation by encouraging their children to appreciate the variety of identities and beliefs in the world today

by Jonathan Russell, Political Liaison Officer at the Quilliam Foundation

The Quilliam Foundation

Quilliam is the world's first counter-extremism think tank set up to address the unique challenges of citizenship, identity and belonging in a globalised world. Quilliam stands for religious freedom, equality, human rights and democracy.
quilliamfoundation.org

Stories of young people leaving Britain to join jihadist terrorist organisations fighting in Syria and Iraq keep on hitting the headlines: more than 1,000 Britons have now left this country to fight abroad. Many of them have been radicalised, at least partly, online. The government stops many jihadists travelling, but it would be better to prevent them wanting to go in the first place. That's where parents come in.

Parents are best placed to notice if young people's online habits suddenly change — for example, if they are spending more time in their rooms and refusing to discuss what they are doing in the digital space.

Preventing radicalisation involves:
☑ Understanding the ideas underlying extremism, which are based on a black and white view of the world.
☑ Appreciating why young people are sometimes drawn to these ideas.
☑ Communicating what life with the reality of these ideas is actually like.
☑ Persuading young people that our own values of equality and freedom are worthwhile.
☑ Convincing young people that they don't have to choose to be one thing or the other, for example, either a devout Muslim or a Londoner.

Young people spend a lot of time developing their identities online, and this is perfectly normal. Radicalisation happens when they build their identities around drastically simplified ideas. In reality, everyone's identity is multifaceted, but jihadist ideologies promote the idea that there is only one truth. Parents can help to combat radicalisation by encouraging the view that it's perfectly OK for their child to be many things: a Muslim, of Pakistani origin, a computer nerd, a rapper, a son, gay and a Manchester United fan, for example.

Radicalisation takes place over a period of time, and for much of that time the changes may not be visible. Parents are often best placed to spot the subtle signs that teenagers may be being groomed into radicalisation online.

The Quilliam Foundation's top tips for tackling extremism

1. The single most important thing you can do to prevent extremism is to explain to your child why equality matters and why it's important to support people's right to practise their own religion and to speak freely. Explain the significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that people are entitled to equality before the law and freedom from discrimination, regardless of race, gender or sexuality.

2. Make sure that when you talk to your child, you don't confuse the religion of Islam with the political extremism of Islamism. Then, when we challenge extremists, we won't fuel prejudice and damage anyone's freedom to practise their religion.

3. Don't ignore extremism if you see it. It's vital to challenge it, in the same way it's vital to challenge bullying, homophobia and racism. If you don't, young people may assume adults think it's acceptable.

4. Be aware that you have a really important role to play. Stopping extremism is not just a job for the police and security services; it's a job for all of us. Talk to your child about who they follow online and the kinds of issues they are discussing.

5. Reassure young people who are struggling with their identity that it's normal to be made up of many parts.

6. Be sensitive. Young people may be drawn to extremism by personal circumstances, religion, politics or a combination of all three — but they are unquestionably vulnerable when it is happening. Be considerate of what they feel is going wrong with their lives.

7. Encourage young people to understand how others might try to manipulate them with half-truths, so they can see propaganda for what it is. Engage them in conversations about how people may use the internet to spread untruths.

8. Get support. If you notice a significant change in attitudes towards extremism or online behaviour that concerns you, get help. This could take the form of personal mentoring, new networks or programmes to lead young people away from radicalisation. Quilliam can provide more information.

What kind of content is right for your child?

How children engage with digital media at different times in their lives

by Vicki Shotbolt, CEO of The Parent Zone

Top tips

☑ Try googling your child's name, putting it in quotation marks to get the most accurate results.

☑ Ask your child if they're surprised by the results, and whether they're happy with the story they tell.

☑ Take the opportunity to delete any old accounts, de-tag pictures they don't like and review their privacy settings. It's probably worth repeating this exercise every three months or so.

☑ Encourage your child to think of their digital footprint as something they control: an opportunity to build a fantastic online presence that records their achievements and creativity.

Bridging the gap

Technology is part of family life, but with everyone on their own devices, enjoying different activities, it's not always easy to get involved in each other's digital worlds. An in-school project funded by the Vodafone Foundation, My Tech Family is all about helping families to share their online experiences and bridge that gap. **bit.ly/mytechfamily**

0-3 YEARS

The first steps

There are many milestones in the first years of a child's life, from learning to recognise your face to learning to walk, from holding a spoon to learning to draw. Alongside these physical developments, young children are also learning to interact with other people. Sharing, trusting and understanding simple rules are all learned in these early years. Very young children are able to swipe iPads and play with phones – but remember, they lack the basic skills needed to process the online information they are seeing. A digital device is just a plaything at this age, so expect them to press every button and swipe every screen. Make sure you have set your devices up so they don't do anything they shouldn't.

4-6 YEARS

Independent learning

During these years, children are developing a sense of right and wrong. They are becoming much more independent and enjoying playing in small groups. As their trust for other people grows they become less fearful, but they can still be scared of the dark, of loud noises and of things they don't understand. Content that may seem pretty harmless to you can still be frightening, even if they only see it from a distance. It's important to encourage older children to think about their younger siblings when they're playing video games or watching online content. As children in this age range learn to read and write, their whole experience of using technology changes. As their offline literacy develops, so does their online literacy; now is the time to teach them safe searching skills.

7-12 YEARS

Increasing privacy

Children think in concrete terms. Hero worship starts and privacy becomes important. They become curious about how things work, which means they might start to explore online in places you don't necessarily expect. As they approach their teenage years, they may slip between childlike behaviour and teen behaviour in the blink of an eye and their technical skills are likely to outpace their judgement. You need to explain to them how to stay safe online, what to share and what not to, and how to make sense of the images and messages they see. Their desire for privacy might lead them to try things without telling you, so conversations are vital. They are likely to see content with some degree of violence. The important thing is that they see the conflict resolved and that they understand they are still safe when frightening things happen.

13-16 YEARS

Further exploration

Peer groups become more important than family and they are keen to test out different identities, becoming more self-conscious and starting to take an interest in relationships and sex. Online, that means they are likely to want to seek out information about topics for which you may not think they are ready. Exploring extreme views and taking risks is a natural phase; unfortunately, the part of the brain that is responsible for controlling impulsive behaviour doesn't fully mature until the age of 25. This means that you need to help them to assess risk. Talk about consequences and try to agree ground rules. Being online can dampen their natural sense of right and wrong, so you need to help them to make good decisions about online behaviour.

My house, my rules

There are all kinds of reasons why you might have part-time responsibility for a child's online activities. Three experts share their wisdom on keeping everyone happy

FOSTER PARENTS
Jon Trew

Set realistic expectations early on
Newly fostered children often arrive with mobile devices they've brought from their previous home. They may have been allowed to view unsuitable material or to stay up late online, resulting in sleep deprivation.

It can be a challenge to change such habits, but it's not impossible. It's best to establish ground rules regarding online time immediately, just as you would with any other house rules.

It's also important to be realistic: telling a child that they can use the computer only where you can see them isn't going to work in the mobile age.

Don't jump to conclusions
Do a bit of research first and find out what it is that they like about a particular game or website. Check it out yourself and don't rely on sensationalist newspaper stories.

Be clued up
Technology moves so quickly that it can be difficult to keep track. But it's essential to be aware of what different devices can do. One family were happily allowing their child to play on a games console, without realising that it was connected to the wifi and that the child was using it to contact his birth parent.

Be positive and communicate
Engage in their digital lives and show an interest in what your foster child does online. Share your favourite websites and talk to them about theirs. If you're already talking about the fun and easy stuff, they'll be much more likely to tell you if something scary does happen.

Jon Trew trains foster carers in child protection and safety online.

GRANDPARENTS
Cari Rosen

Talk to their parents about online rules
It's easier to enforce rules if you and the parents are on the same page. Rules regarding screen time can be a thorny issue for grandparents. As one Gransnet user says, "I remember my mother telling me I'd get square eyes if I saw *Watch with Mother* more than twice a week. Heaven knows what will happen to my grandchildren who seem to spend half their lives in front of the screen!"

If there are differing opinions, many people go for the "my house, my rules" approach (easier to get away with if you're doing the parents a favour by looking after the children). Children are often more receptive to their grandparents monitoring them than their parents – the generation gap can be a useful thing.

Do things together online
It's a great way to spend quality time together and it's also much easier to have a conversation about the pitfalls (and benefits, of course) when you're both engaged in a relevant activity than when you're having a heavy one-to-one. We know grandparents who've learned to play *Minecraft* with their grandchildren.

Apply the same rules you use offline
One grandparent offers some perceptive advice: "There's a lot of hysteria about what children can access. Of course there's some vile stuff out there, but I spend quite a lot of time online and I never see any of it.

"The key thing – which was always the key thing before digital, too – is to give children a sense of self-preservation, be watchful, set boundaries and to have values they can respect."

Cari Rosen is editor of Gransnet and author of three books including *The New Granny's Survival Guide.*

SEPARATED PARENTS
Jane Smith

Encourage everything in moderation
I keep track of how long they've been on the computer and suggest they take a break, perhaps to help me – usually a sure-fire way to get them to find something else to do! When they're at their dad's, the rules are more relaxed about this. So when they're with me, I make sure they have a healthy balance.

No devices in bedrooms before bed
I keep their phone and other device chargers downstairs. That way, when they go to bed they aren't tempted to stay up late playing on their phones, which would mean grumpy kids.

Communicate with them
I'm always chatting with them about what they're doing online and they regularly show me a new vlog or app. Keeping all lines of communication open, both online and offline, has always been a top priority for me as a parent.
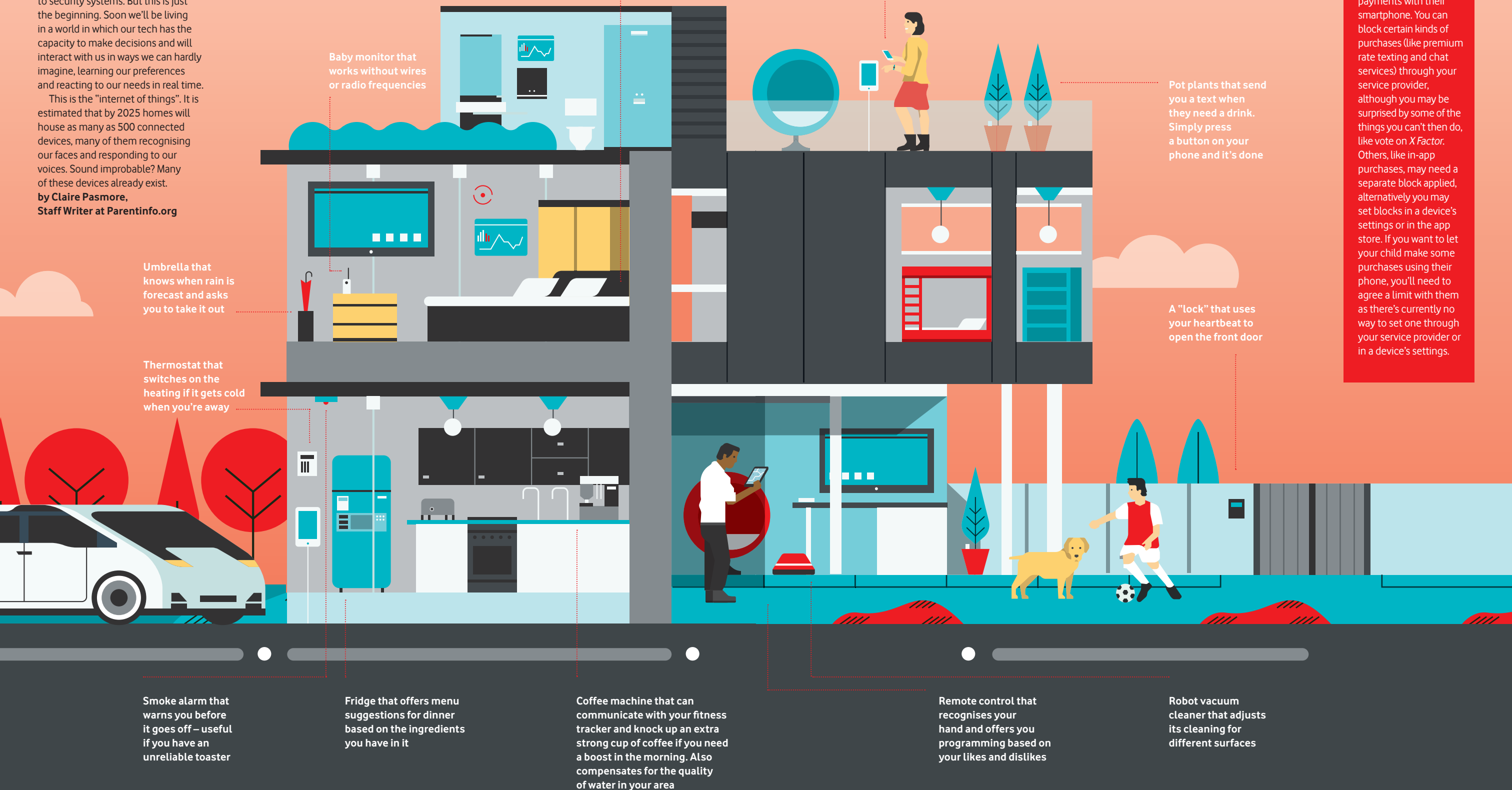
Jane, mother of Eleanor, 15, and Heather, 13, works in marketing and PR. The girls live with their mum during termtime and their dad during the school holidays and some weekends.

Tomorrow's world

Already 4.9 billion "things" are connected to the internet, from phones to laptops, cars to buildings, health monitors to security systems. But this is just the beginning. Soon we'll be living in a world in which our tech has the capacity to make decisions and will interact with us in ways we can hardly imagine, learning our preferences and reacting to our needs in real time.

This is the "internet of things". It is estimated that by 2025 homes will house as many as 500 connected devices, many of them recognising our faces and responding to our voices. Sound improbable? Many of these devices already exist.

**by Claire Pasmore,
Staff Writer at Parentinfo.org**

Sheet that monitors your quality of sleep and heart rate and can also check your locks and adjust your heating and lighting as you're waking up

Bracelet or watch that monitors your exercise and tells you when you've spent long enough working at a screen and need to get up and walk around

Baby monitor that works without wires or radio frequencies

Pot plants that send you a text when they need a drink. Simply press a button on your phone and it's done

Umbrella that knows when rain is forecast and asks you to take it out

A "lock" that uses your heartbeat to open the front door

Thermostat that switches on the heating if it gets cold when you're away

Smoke alarm that warns you before it goes off – useful if you have an unreliable toaster

Fridge that offers menu suggestions for dinner based on the ingredients you have in it

Coffee machine that can communicate with your fitness tracker and knock up an extra strong cup of coffee if you need a boost in the morning. Also compensates for the quality of water in your area

Remote control that recognises your hand and offers you programming based on your likes and dislikes

Robot vacuum cleaner that adjusts its cleaning for different surfaces

? DID YOU KNOW ?

There are a number of ways you can prevent your child from making payments with their smartphone. You can block certain kinds of purchases (like premium rate texting and chat services) through your service provider, although you may be surprised by some of the things you can't then do, like vote on *X Factor*. Others, like in-app purchases, may need a separate block applied, alternatively you may set blocks in a device's settings or in the app store. If you want to let your child make some purchases using their phone, you'll need to agree a limit with them as there's currently no way to set one through your service provider or in a device's settings.

Are online games damaging your child?

How long should children spend playing games?

The *Pediatrics* study suggests that parents should use the Goldilocks rule – not too much, not too little, but somewhere in between – to work out how much gaming is right for their children. About an hour of gaming a day seems to benefit children's social development. Playing for more than three hours a day seems to have negative impacts. That said, the effects of gaming on children's wellbeing are very small, around 2%.

by Dr Andrew K. Przybylski and Dr Netta Weinstein, research psychologists specialising in the social impacts of digital technology

Minecraft is almost certainly the most popular video game in history. There are now more than 42 million *Minecraft* videos online, and according to YouTube it's the second most frequently searched topic. The game allows players to create new worlds out of building blocks and resources discovered on the site, and this virtual Lego has made its creators a fortune. The company behind it, Mojang, was recently bought by Microsoft for $2.5 billion.

Minecraft can take up a huge amount of time and many parents worry whether that could have a long-term impact. And it's not just *Minecraft* – there are thousands of games of every imaginable kind. What effect are they having on young people's social attitudes, their emotional development and their mental health?

"Young people who played about an hour of games a day appeared to be better adjusted than those who didn't play any games at all"

There has been a fair amount of research into the impact of games. Some individual studies have shown that gaming might actually help with cognitive abilities and visual skills. Others have suggested that gaming may be linked to bad behaviour or aggressive thoughts and feelings.

The best overviews, like Dr Tanya Byron's, conclude that the risks associated with gaming are probably less obvious things – like the lack of physical activity – than aggressive behaviour. However, even the wide-ranging overviews are based on studies carried out mostly on university students, so they may not apply to younger children.

So how do different "doses" of gaming affect young people?

A study of nearly 5,000 British 10- to 15-year-olds published in the journal *Pediatrics* found that young people who played about an hour of games a day (36% of the sample) appeared better adjusted than those who didn't play games at all (14%). They were more helpful to others,

felt more satisfied with life, had fewer emotional or social problems and were less unhappy about friendships.

We also found that a minority who played for more than three hours a day (roughly 9%) seemed to be worse off. These young people said they were more likely to be hyperactive and emotionally volatile compared to those who played for less time or not at all. Those who played between one and three hours a day (41% of the sample) appeared no different to those who said they never played games.

The influence of gaming compared to other things that affect children's wellbeing is small. About 2% of peer problems, hyperactivity and antisocial behaviour – as well as life satisfaction – could be related to gaming. Parenting, schooling, housing conditions, age and gender have a much bigger impact.

Until there's more research, about an hour a day seems to be the best recommendation. The good news for kids who love *Minecraft* is that it appears to have a positive effect.
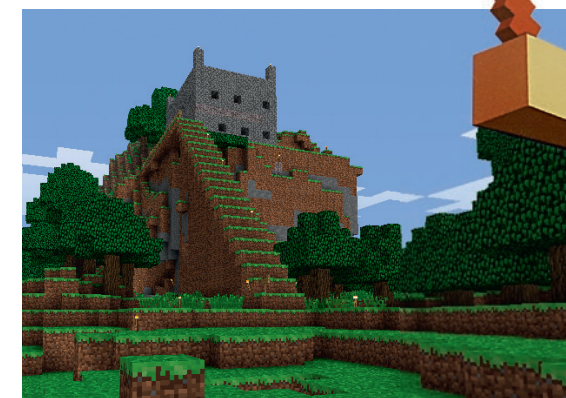
Cyberbullying: Fact vs Fiction

With so many scare stories about cyberbullying, it's not surprising that parents can feel overwhelmed. Our Q&A helps to shed some light...

by Alex Holmes, head of the Diana Award's Anti-Bullying Campaign

Is there more bullying today than there used to be?
The research doesn't show that there is any more bullying than there used to be, although technology has shifted some of it online.

What is cyberbullying?
Cyberbullying is when a person uses technology to abuse, harass or humiliate someone repeatedly over the internet. This could involve sending messages by mobile phone or over social media, or sharing images or personal information.

What difference does online make?
Because we can be connected to the internet 24 hours a day, cyberbullying can follow someone into their home – even into their bedroom – and can be hard to escape. As online platforms allow for content to be viewed and shared by others, it can spread more quickly and be seen by a much larger audience than it would offline.

Why is anonymity significant?
Some platforms allow a bully to hide their identity behind a fake or anonymous profile. That said, everyone's digital footprint is traceable. It's also important to report and block abuse, and to think about who has access to a victim's profile and whether they want to restrict who can make contact.

What is the difference between normal adolescent online "drama" and bullying?
Parents and adults may not be the best judges of what constitutes bullying. There may be in-jokes or everyday "drama" that we don't understand. The key is always how a young person feels about it. Something that began as a joke online may become hurtful: humour can be lost with no face-to-face interaction.

There are bound to be times when adolescents feel excluded; online games or social media platforms can exacerbate this sense of being left out. The key, again, is to take your lead from your child. But harassing someone or sharing their personal data without permission is definitely not OK.

What should I do if I think my child is being bullied online?
Believe and listen to them, praise them for speaking out and remember you are not the only family going through this. Tell them not to retaliate – that's exactly what the bullies want. Instead, take the power back: block them and hopefully the bullying will stop. Every site has a way of blocking and reporting. It's also a good idea to save any evidence of bullying, which can be vital if it escalates. The Malicious Communications Act protects users online, so don't be afraid to approach your local police if the abuse is particularly threatening or serious. It might also be a good idea to sit down and look at your child's friends list and work out together who their real friends are.

What if I think my child is bullying someone online?
We all say things that we don't mean, and on the internet it's easy to get brave and say things that you would never say to someone's face. It's important that your child understands when their actions have become bullying and that at such a point they need to stop.

First, remain calm. We all make mistakes; the important thing is to learn from them. Listen to your child, don't jump in and blame them. Find out the facts. There's likely to be a reason they are acting this way – but don't accept excuses. Help them to understand the impact of their words both online and offline and don't be afraid to use your support network: think about friends, family and even school staff that you could be speaking to about what is going on.

Is it true that some children bully themselves?
A survey by the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Centre found that 9% of the 617 students interviewed had bullied themselves online anonymously. Other studies are scarce, but it is important that we look deeper into the lives of such people and understand why they are doing it.

How can I increase my child's awareness of cyberbullying?
A good way to broach the subject is to ask your child what they would do if they ever saw someone being bullied online or offline, talking to them about not being a bystander and being kind to others.

You can let them know that you will always be there to listen and help if they ever have a problem, worry or concern, and encourage them to think about their support network inside and outside school as well. The best thing you can do as a parent is to keep talking to your child so that they know they can always come to you when they need support or advice.

The Diana Award

The Diana Award is a charity that was founded as a legacy to Diana, Princess of Wales, who believed that young people have the power to change the world for the better. It runs the Anti-Bullying Campaign, which empowers young people, schools and parents to tackle bullying online and offline. **antibullyingpro.org.uk**

? DID YOU KNOW?

You should keep your phone as safe as your bank card. Now that you can make so many payments using your mobile, handing a contracted phone over to someone else – including your child – is a bit like giving them your bank card and PIN. Make sure you set up appropriate controls on your child's handset and be careful about sharing devices. **bit.ly/VF_controls**

10 apps for the under 10s

by Stuart Dredge, freelance journalist for *The Guardian*, Music Ally and Apps Playground

Apple's App Store and GooglePlay are full of creative, educational and playful apps for children. If you're getting started and want to find suitable software for your kids, let us guide you to some of the best available for younger ones. Note that "freemium" means an app is free to download but has in-app purchases
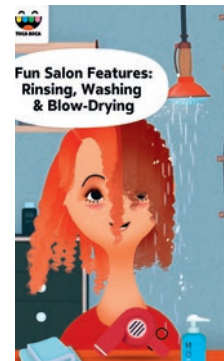
1 Toca Hair Salon 2 (£2.29)
iOS / Android
Developer Toca Boca has become one of the most trusted children's app brands, and *Toca Hair Salon 2* is a creative treat. It gets children to play hairdresser for six colourful characters who are happy to have their barnets trimmed, dyed, crimped and back-combed however your child likes. The more they play, the more ideas they'll have – although be warned, they may want to practise on you in the real world!
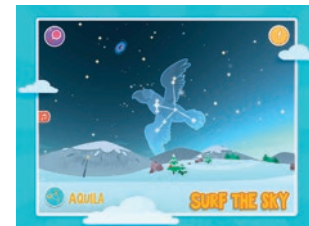
2 Star Walk Kids (£2.29)
iOS / Android
If you're searching for an app that gets your children out into the fresh air looking at the world around them, *Star Walk Kids* is a great option. It's an astronomy app designed for children: they can hold up their device to the stars and learn about the solar system, constellations and everything else they'll see in the night skies. Serious science, presented in a fun, accessible way.

3 Doctor Who: the Doctor and the Dalek (Free)
iOS / Android
Not all children are comfortable watching *Doctor Who* from the sofa (or even behind it), but this engaging spin-off game certainly isn't scary. It has Doctor Who rebuilding a broken Dalek in order to battle against a host of aliens across a series of action-packed levels. And there's also an educational angle. Upgrading the Dalek involves completing puzzles based on simple computer-programming tasks, which gives kids a good taste of coding.
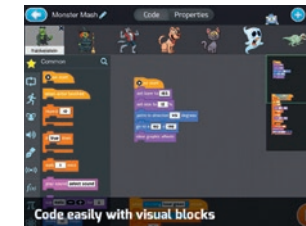
4 Tynker (Freemium)
iOS / Android
There's more coding in *Tynker*, which concentrates on giving children a taste of programming. They start by working their way through hundreds of programming puzzles, which use a simple system of visual coding blocks. The packs of puzzles are bought as in-app purchases, and once kids feel confident, they can use the app's Workshop section to design their own games to play and share.

5 Frozen: Story Theater (£3.99)
iOS / Android
Children's mania for all things *Frozen* shows no sign of abating, and this official app is a way for kids to get creative with their favourite characters from Disney's film. The app gets children to choose a character from Elsa, Anna, Olaf and friends, put them in a location and add props, before recording their own voice telling a completely new story. It's like a virtual puppet theatre and is delightful to play.

6 Marble Math Junior (£2.29)
iOS / Android
Developed in the US – you may have guessed that from the title – this is one of the most accessible maths apps for children. It gets them to roll a marble around various levels and solve maths problems while they do it – rolling over numbers in order from the largest to smallest, for example. Parents can customise the app to make the puzzles easier or more difficult.

7 Night Zookeeper (Free)
iOS / Android
This blends creativity, gaming and education in the form of a zoo full of magical animals. Children have to complete drawing missions based on the story, creating digital books and playing a simple strategy game to defend the zoo from attackers. A wonderful way to get children excited about scribbling and stories. If you play this on Android devices, via your browser, make sure you set up suitable parental controls to keep your child safe online (see p37).
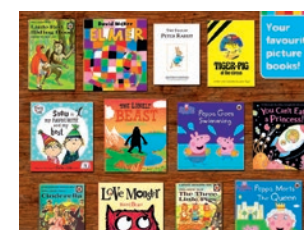
8 Me Books (Freemium)
iOS / Android
This is the app equivalent of a bookshop, featuring stories and comics with familiar names – from Peppa Pig and Elmer to Angry Birds and Ladybird – as well as new writers and illustrators. You choose which ones you want to buy from the in-app store, then your children can read the stories and record their own narration. It's a neat feature that encourages them to practise reading out loud.

9 Endless Reader (Freemium)
iOS / Android
This is one of the most playful early-reading apps available, with a colourful troupe of monsters acting out words in animated skits. Children are required to drag letters into place to spell them out. The app comes with six words free and the option for parents to pay for extra word packs as in-app purchases. They're well worth the money, too.

10 Snow White by Nosy Crow (£3.99)
iOS
Alongside Toca Boca, Nosy Crow has become one of the best-loved app brands for both children and parents, thanks to its carefully crafted fairy-tale apps. *Snow White* is the latest and best: it retells the story with beautiful animation, voice narration from children and interactive tasks that underpin children's reading, rather than distract them from it. You and they will want to read it again and again.

? DID YOU KNOW ?

Many free apps have advertisements for paid services. Clicking on them can activate in-app purchases, paid-for competition entries, subscriptions and other charges. Make sure your child knows to be careful where they click, and consider disabling in-app purchases on young children's phones (see p42).
bit.ly/VFmob_apps

Share the fun with My Tech Family

It's easy to become absorbed in personal devices, enjoying content or playing games on your own. My Tech Family helps families start sharing technology by helping them find fun things to do together. It's a great way to get involved in your child's digital life and find out what they love so much about their devices.

Get started by taking the digital learning style quiz together to find out what sort of digital learner your child is. Then experiment with the New Things to Try list to help them discover different ways to enjoy technology and broaden their online repertoire. Understanding what they enjoy about the technology will help you to guide them to appropriate apps and online services and help you find out what they do online.
digitalstylequiz.co.uk

Abuse and control in teenage relationships

Heartbreak is a normal, albeit painful, part of adolescence, but abuse is never acceptable. Here are some thoughts on how to help your child avoid abusive relationships — and how to respond if they become involved in one

by Dr Elly Hanson, clinical psychologist and consultant to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

Abuse can involve one-off serious acts but is more often a pattern in which one or both people hurt, humiliate and control the other physically, emotionally, sexually and/or through technology. It's most worrying when it is more one-sided, with one party exercising their power over the other. Victims of abuse can suffer low self-confidence, poor concentration, sleeping problems and general anxiety, any one of which can lead to them missing out on opportunities.

A study of teenagers in relationships shows that 22% of 14- to 17-year-old girls and 12% of boys report some form of physical violence from a partner, with 41% of girls and 14% of boys suffering sexual violence. Most young people who experience abuse don't tell their parents, even when it's causing difficulties. Some situations increase the risk of abuse, like girls going out with much older boys or men, or peer groups that link popularity with aggression or being sexually pushy. Physical and emotional violence at home can also contribute.

A place to begin

Abuse can happen to anyone, but you can help to lower the chances your child will experience abuse or, indeed, behave abusively.

First, whether or not your child has a boyfriend or girlfriend, chat with them about what good relationships involve and what kinds of behaviour are never OK, like trying to control or pressurise someone. Discussing TV programmes and media stories can be a good way in. It can also be helpful to talk about imaginary scenarios, for example what they would do if they noticed a friend being abused. Be open and curious about their views.

Once you've covered the basics, help your child to consider how they might deal with common strains on teenage relationships, like jealousy and trying to impress others, again using fiction and real-life examples. Encourage them to come up with their own ideas.

Living out positive ideals in your own relationships, while admitting your own flaws in this respect, will help your child to develop an awareness of what to aim for. Above all, spend time together, check in with them regularly about how they're doing and help them to build a strong sense of self-esteem based around various parts of their life.

If your child is experiencing abuse

Discuss the situation with your child, listening carefully to how they feel. Draw out their hopes and values and highlight how accommodating abuse can conflict with these things. Be aware that it can be difficult to withdraw from a relationship immediately — feelings of love and longing towards a partner can persist, even if they're treating us badly. So try to empathise with your child while discussing the consequences of giving in to strong feelings and exploring the other options they have available.

Parents can end up feeling frustrated and even blaming their child if they don't seem to be trying to protect themselves from further abuse. In such situations, try to process your feelings by talking to other people and avoid expressing them to your child — they need to feel your support and availability.

Beyond conversation, make an effort to spend time with them and support their relationships with other friends and family.

Find ways to boost their self-confidence, which can help to counteract the messages of abuse. And last, talk to people involved in your child's education and care, sharing information and ideas, and explore resources such as those listed, left.

If your child is behaving abusively

There are several things you can do to intervene. First, look at what might be contributing — it could be alcohol, stress or pressure from a peer group that glamorises negative behaviour — and think of ways to tackle those things. If peers are involved, challenge their attitudes where possible and help your child understand how their own values and empathy are incompatible with what is happening; it's also worth asking their school (or sports club etc) for help.

When you talk to your child, draw attention to positive role models and emphasise the strength involved in resisting attitudes and practices that put people down. Highlight the ways in which nastiness and disrespect lead to everyone missing out in life. It might also be useful for your child to get further help in developing a positive identity or in managing conflict and difficult emotions; mentoring is often a good option.

Lastly, in both scenarios, contacting the police or social services can feel like a big step, but it is important if crimes are being committed or a child is at risk.

What makes a good relationship

✓ **Equality**
Relationships work best and are happiest when both people see themselves as equally important and treat each other in line with that.

✓ **Empathy**
They also work best when partners think and care about one another's feelings and look out for one another.

✓ **Space**
Spending time apart and with other friends and family is important for getting the most out of life and even the relationship.

✓ **Communication**
Talking about difficult feelings arising in the relationship is key and usually most useful when feelings aren't at their most intense, for example, after talking to someone else first.

Resources

For parents
Family Lives
bit.ly/FL_abuse

For young people
This is Abuse
bit.ly/this_is_abuse
The Hide Out
bit.ly/hideouthome

For people
behaving abusively
Respect UK
respect.uk.net

For online abuse
ThinkuKnow
thinkuknow.co.uk

Let's talk about sexting

Latest research has found that adults are more likely to send naked selfies than young people. But sexting is also on the increase among teens

by Kate Burls, Education Team Coordinator at the National Crime Agency, CEOP Command

The selfie has become a global phenomenon, and it's not just young people who are at it. Popstars, politicians and even the Pope now regularly share images of themselves on social media. You might even have posted a few yourself.

But along with the rise of the selfie has come growing concern about young people sharing photos or videos of themselves without their clothes on, also known as sexting. This is not just a youth issue: over-18s are far more likely to sext than young people. But it is especially risky for young people.

Research led by our partners at the University of Edinburgh shows that many young people initially send pictures to someone they trust, like a boyfriend or girlfriend – often as a way of flirting or experimenting before they become sexually active. Sometimes sharing a revealing selfie makes them feel good about themselves. Sometimes it's just a bit of a laugh.

Whatever the reason, it's important for them to understand that once they've hit the Send button they've lost control of that picture. Often it goes no further, but in some cases it can have severe consequences, including anxiety, low self-esteem, bullying and an increased risk of being approached by adults seeking sexual contact online.

How can I keep my child safe?

Get the knowledge you need

☑ Make time to learn from your child about the apps, games and websites they use.

☑ Watch CEOP's series of short films *Nude Selfies: What Parents Need to Know*

Don't wait for something to happen before you talk to your child

☑ As soon they're old enough (some children have shared risky selfies while still in primary school) talk to your child about the risks of sharing revealing selfies, and explain that they should never be forced into doing so. Make this part of a positive ongoing conversation about relationships, sex and growing up.

☑ Remind your child that when they meet people online, they can't be sure who they really are, so it's not safe to share personal pictures or information with them.

☑ Make sure your children know that they can always come to you if they're worried about anything, that you will understand and that you will not be angry or blame them.

If you find out your child has sent or shared a revealing selfie...

Stay calm and talk to your child. Try to see the situation from their point of view. Make sure they know that you're not angry and don't blame them; they're probably feeling very anxious about what you'll think or say.

☑ Contact CEOP if you have any concerns about grooming, sexual abuse or exploitation.

☑ Contact your child's school. They can support your child and discuss the issue with students who have seen or shared the image.

☑ Report the image to social networks it appears on, so that they will take it down.

☑ Report the image to the Internet Watch Foundation if you need their help removing it from a site without a Report function.

Nude Selfies: What Parents Need to Know
bit.ly/think_u_know
National Crime Agency, CEOP Command
ceop.police.uk
Internet Watch Foundation
iwf.org.uk

What goes online stays online

Our guide to making sure that what your child posts today isn't going to cause regret in 10 years' time

by Lucy Doyle, Writer at Parentinfo.org

A digital footprint is a record of the information you put online – which might include images, comments on forums, tweets, Facebook updates and vlog or blog posts. What goes online stays online, so everyone needs to understand that they're creating an impression of themselves that is as important as their reputation in the real world.

Encourage your child to think about what content they upload – and where

Images and videos

Suggest to your child that they may want to think twice about posting content they wouldn't want just anyone – like grandparents or a future employer – to see. At the very least, they may want to adjust their privacy settings. Some young people are very good at managing different kinds of content for different audiences. Help younger children understand that everything online has the potential to become public. Talk to them about the different things they tell friends and adults and what information they are happy for others to see. Parents: before uploading pictures of your child, consider how they might feel, now and in the future.

Words

Venting on social media when you're angry or upset is usually a bad idea. Posting negative comments on other people's pages can be hurtful and doesn't show the poster in a particularly good light.

Remind your child that if they're quarrelling with a friend, it's always best to speak to them in person and never to have an argument over social media. Even if a message is kept private, it's easy to misinterpret it on a screen.

Build a positive digital legacy

The best way of having a digital footprint you're happy with is to be productive and creative online. Even if compromising content is out there, it can be buried by the positive stuff. Encourage children to get creative. If they like writing, they could start a blog. Or if they're into photography, they could post their pictures online. When they reach their teens, photos or videos of them doing positive things, like performing or playing sports, can help to create a lively online presence.

Don't assume they know what they're doing

"Using digital technologies in pre-school doesn't always translate into high levels of digital skill in your teens"

By Victoria Nash, Deputy Director of the Oxford Internet Institute

Watching a tiny three- or four-year-old confidently swipe a finger over an iPad, you could be forgiven for thinking that using digital technology comes naturally to those under 20. The current generation of kids have been using the internet since they were barely out of the cradle, so you might assume they'd be better at it than those of us old enough to remember when loading a webpage was a special occasion.

The idea of digital natives has taken hold, along with a belief that older people are digital immigrants, which I suppose as a parent over 40 means me. But are my children necessarily digital natives? Is it helpful to think of them in this way? And are we parents inherently more incompetent internet users? The answer on all counts is no.

Consider, for example, the question of skill. Certainly, there's an advantage in learning skills at an early age. But just as my school tennis lessons never made up for my lack of hand-eye coordination, so using digital technologies in pre-school doesn't always translate into high levels of digital skill in your teens. Studies by the Oxford Internet Institute and LSE have found that differences in levels of digital skills or ability to use the internet aren't primarily about which generation you belong to.

It's true that children and young people are more likely to go online regularly. But younger generations show significantly different levels of skills and ways of using the internet. Rather depressingly, these differences often relate to age-old factors such as gender and socio-economic status. Important new dividing lines have also emerged, such as whether or not children have easy home internet access or only go online in a monitored way at school. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most sophisticated young internet users are those who have high quality internet access at home and use it regularly.

Does it matter? Can the term digital native do any real harm? Well, it just might.

First, using the term means ignoring the injustice of the fact that once again socio-economic inequalities limit the opportunities we want all children to enjoy. Second, there's a real danger that we organise things to suit the needs of digital natives, only to leave behind those who fail to fit the mould.

The concept of the digital native first arose in education. But do we want our schools assuming that all children can already use the internet confidently? Or the government assuming that all young people can and will access benefits and training online?

Last, but not least, it matters because it does a disservice to all parents, who deserve to have more confidence in our abilities to engage with our children online — whether that's in trying to keep them safe or seeing them soar.

Our guide to parental controls and tools to help keep children safe online

by Vicky Prior, Editor of Vodafone Digital Parenting website, vodafone.com/parents

Operating systems — Browsers — Search engines — Video websites — Social media — Devices — ISPs — Reporting concerns

Protecting your child online might sometimes feel like a long and complicated journey. It's no longer just a case of setting parental controls on your family computer — you also need to think about their smartphone, tablet, games console and other devices, both at home and outside the house. While parental controls on your broadband connection will help to protect them at home, they will need protection if they use public wifi or log on from their phone or tablet at a friend's or relative's house.

In the next eight pages we'll guide you through various parental controls and other online tools available to help your family have a safer and more private online experience.

Although parental controls and other online tools are very useful you should bear in mind that they might not always be 100% effective. Furthermore, tech-savvy kids are increasingly adept at finding their way round them. So it's important that you also continue to have regular conversations with your child about what they do online and set your own family rules. Agreed boundaries go a long way in the digital world.

You can find more detailed guides for some of the tools mentioned in this section on the Vodafone Digital Parenting website. **bit.ly/VFdigitalparenting**

Parental controls on your computer's operating system

Both Windows and Mac OS X have built-in parental controls so that you can do things like restrict your child's web access, set time limits and block specific programs

WINDOWS

Using Microsoft Family on your device, you can manage when your child can log into their account and which programs are appropriate for them to use. The controls also filter web content and provide reports of your child's computer and web-browsing activity. To activate them on your device, follow the steps below and then use Microsoft's Family Safety website to manage the boundaries.

Windows 8.1, Windows RT 8.1
1. Make sure that your child has been set up with their own user account.
2. Select Is this a Child's Account?
3. Decide if you would like your child to have an email address and follow the instructions accordingly.
4. You'll then be able to manage their account from Microsoft's Family Safety website.
bit.ly/MicrosoftFamilySafety

Windows 10
1. Add a child to your family through the Accounts functionality.
2. Click Add a Family Member. Select Add a Child.

3. Assign the child an email address.
4. Manage the settings for your children on the Family Safety website.
bit.ly/windows_safety

MAC OS X

You can block specific apps, websites and messages, set time limits and deny access to the built-in camera on your family computer. To enable parental controls:
1. In System Preferences, click Parental Controls and then select the lock icon.
2. Enter your administrator name and password, select a user (you'll need to set your child up with their own user profile if they haven't already got one), then click Enable Parental Controls.
3. To set restrictions, follow the same process then click the relevant tabs along the top – Apps, Web, People, Time Limits and Other (eg use of the built-in camera).
bit.ly/OSX_controls

Safety controls on search engines

BING

1. Click the gear icon in the top right.
2. Go to Settings/General.
3. Choose either Strict, Moderate or Off for SafeSearch.
bing.com

GOOGLE

1. Click Settings in the bottom right, then Search Settings.
2. Tick the Turn on SafeSearch box on the next screen.
3. To lock SafeSearch, you'll need to sign in to your Google/Gmail account and follow the instructions.
google.com

YAHOO

1. Sign in to your Yahoo account.
2. Enter a search term in the search box then click Search.
3. From the search results, hover over the gear icon then click Preferences.
yahoo.co.uk

TOP TIP
You can access privacy and safety settings using the gear icon in many search engines and social media apps.

Parental controls in your web browser

INTERNET EXPLORER

Windows 7 and Vista
1. Click the gear icon in the top right of your browser window and select Internet options.
2. Select the Content tab, then click Enable in the Content Advisor section.
3. Next, choose from the list of categories you'd like to block (eg Language, Nudity, Violence) and adjust the slider to choose the level of restriction.
4. You can also go into the Approved Sites tab to allow specific websites.
5. Finally, select the General tab to set up an administrator password so no-one else can change the settings.
bit.ly/IEcontentadvisor

Windows 8 and above
The content advisor functionality is embedded in the Microsoft Family settings.
bit.ly/windows_safety

CHROME

A Supervised User account lets you block websites you don't want your child to use and to see the pages they've visited.
1. In the top right of your browser window, click the Chrome menu icon, then click Settings.
2. Under Users, click Add Person and choose a picture and name for the new user.
3. Tick Control to create a supervised account, then click Add. You'll receive an email which will help you set up restrictions and review the new user's browsing history.
bit.ly/chrome_controls

Third party parental controls

You might decide to turn to a dedicated parental control solution to help you block inappropriate content – some are free and others you'll need to pay for. If you already have a security suite on your computer, check whether it includes parental controls.
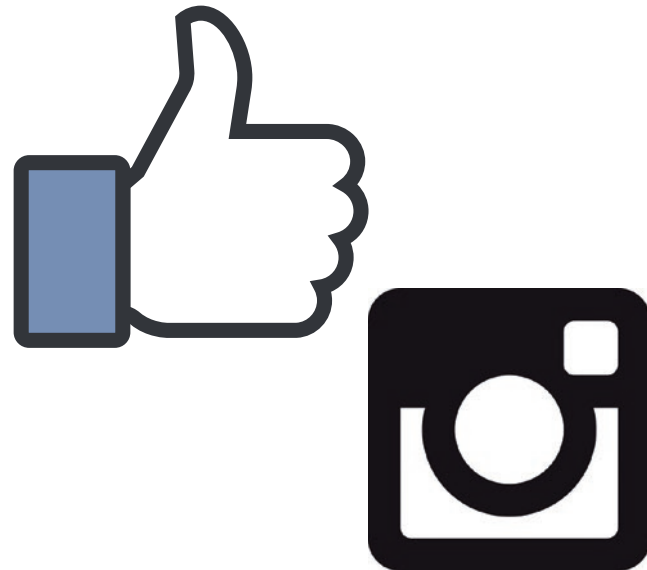
NET NANNY
bit.ly/NNcontrols

NORTON FAMILY
bit.ly/nortonfamily

MCAFEE FAMILY PROTECTION
bit.ly/mcafee_controls

Safety and privacy controls on social networks

The main social network providers offer lots of tools and resources to help younger users have a safer and more private online experience. Be aware that each of them stipulates that users should be at least 13 years old

FACEBOOK

Facebook's privacy settings let users control who sees their posts and timeline.
1. Click or tap Account at the top of any page and select Privacy Settings in the drop-down menu for further instructions.
2. To block another user, select the gear icon to the right of their timeline, then select Report/Block.
3. To report abusive or offensive content, click or tap Report near the post, timeline or page.
bit.ly/FB_security

INSTAGRAM

Users can set their posts to private.
1. Go to the user's profile by selecting the person icon.
2. Then choose the gear icon (iOS) or the three dots icon (Android) and turn on the Private Account setting.
3. You can also block and remove followers by tapping their user name, then the three dots icon and selecting Block User.
bit.ly/IG_tips4parents

TWITTER

Users can protect their tweets so they are only visible to the Twitter followers they have approved. How you do it depends on the device that you're using.
1. On a computer, go to Security and Privacy Settings and scroll down to the Tweet Privacy section. Tick the box next to Protect My Tweets and click the blue Save button.
2. On a smartphone, go to Me and select the gear icon (iOS) or the overflow icon (Android). Select Settings and choose the account you'd like to edit. For iOS devices, go to Protect My Tweets and tap On. For Android devices, go to Other and tick the Tweet privacy box.
bit.ly/TW_help

SNAPCHAT

Snapchat has two privacy settings: one for who can send your child Snaps and another for who can view their Stories.
1. To change these privacy settings, tap the gear icon in the top right of the Profile screen to access Settings.
2. To change Who Can Send Me Snaps within Settings, tap Send Me Snaps and choose either Everyone or My Friends.
3. To change Who Can View My Stories within Settings, tap View My Story and select either Everyone, My Friends or Custom.
4. Any changes will be saved when you press the back button.
bit.ly/SC_privacy

Safe mode on video websites

YOUTUBE

1. To set up YouTube's Restricted Mode on a computer, scroll to the bottom of any page, click the drop-down menu in the Safety section and select On. If you'd like Restricted Mode to be enabled for anyone using your browser, don't forget to lock it.
2. To set up Restricted Mode on a smartphone, expand the menu in the top left and tap the gear icon (iOS) or Menu, then Settings and General (Android). Next, select Restricted Mode Filtering and choose between Strict or Don't Filter (iOS) or under Restricted Mode, tick the box to enable it (Android).
bit.ly/YT_safety

Blocking unsuitable TV, film and radio content

How can you avoid your primary schooler watching an episode of *Breaking Bad* while you're out of the room? The main providers offer parental controls to block inappropriate programmes and films.

BBC iPLAYER

The Parental Guidance Lock lets you control which BBC content your child can access. If a programme has been flagged with parental guidance (for violence, sex or strong language), it will feature a clear label and a G symbol. On a computer, mobile and tablet device you'll see a red bar containing the G symbol on the programme page. When you press play on a G-rated programme on your mobile, tablet or computer, you will have the option to set up parental guidance.

On a computer
1. To set your PIN, hit the Play button and if you're over 16 select Confirm, then Continue.
2. When prompted, turn on Lock and enter a four digit PIN and press Play.

On a mobile or tablet
1. To set your PIN, hit the Play button and select the option Set Up Parental Guidance.
2. When prompted, confirm you are over 16, enter a four digit PIN, set a secret answer to aid password recovery and press Activate.
3. Each time you watch something that isn't suitable for kids, you'll be asked to enter your PIN again. If your family uses more than one device or web browser to watch BBC iPlayer, you'll need to set a PIN for each.
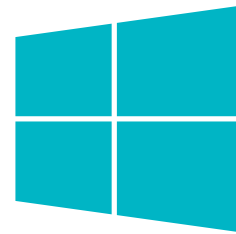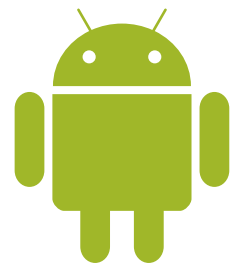**bit.ly/iplayer_lock**

NETFLIX

There are four maturity levels in Netflix parental controls: Little Kids, Older Kids, Teens and Adults. In each case parents can set up a dedicated profile in which only TV series and films that are suitable for the specified age range will appear.
1. To activate parental controls, log in to your Netflix account on a computer, go to Your Account then select Manage Profiles.
2. Set up a separate profile for your child, click Edit, then change the parental control setting in the drop-down menu.
3. It can take up to eight hours for changes to parental controls to take effect – if you sign out of your account and back in again, this may speed up the process.
4. Be aware that you can't lock these settings – your child can switch to another profile and use that.
bit.ly/NF_controls

TOP TIP
On many platforms you can access safety and privacy controls via the three dots icon.

TOP TIP
Encourage your child to use strong passwords – a combination of upper case and lower case letters, symbols and numbers.

Parental controls on your child's devices

On a smartphone, tablet or games console, you can use parental controls to manage a range of functions, including access to websites, app stores and apps, as well as location services and in-app purchases

Smartphones and tablets

ANDROID™

1. To set up a restricted user account on an Android smartphone or tablet, go to Settings and select Users in the Device section.
2. Tap Add User or Profile, then select Restricted Profile and enter the passcode.
3. Tap the round icon next to New Profile to change the name of the profile, then tap OK.
4. Go through the list of features your child can access and, using the toggle buttons, choose whether you'd like them on or off.
android.com

iOS

1. To enable restrictions on your child's iPhone or iPad, tap Settings, General, Enable Restrictions and enter a passcode.
2. Decide which features you're happy for your child to access and, using the toggle buttons, turn the rest off.
bit.ly/iOS_support

WINDOWS PHONE

1. Go to the Windows Phone website and select My Family.
2. Sign in using your own Microsoft account (if you don't have an account, you can create one).
3. Click Get Started on the My Family set-up page, and then click Go to add your child's name.
4. Enter the Microsoft account your child uses to sign in on their phone.
5. To change the app download settings, click your child's name on the My Family homepage, click Change Settings and choose from the options provided.
bit.ly/WinPhone_support

TOP TIP
You can set up parental controls for app stores on your child's device to prevent them from purchasing or downloading apps inappropriate for their age.
bit.ly/GP_controls
bit.ly/App_store_controls
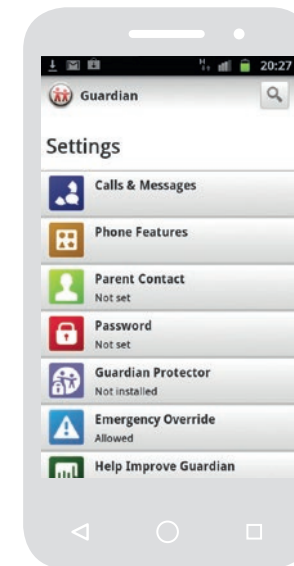
How can Vodafone help?

Vodafone Guardian helps to protect your child from inappropriate calls, messages and online content. Simply download the free app from Google Play and customise the various settings. You'll be asked to enter a parent contact number so that you receive a text if *Vodafone Guardian* is deactivated and when an emergency call is made.

Vodafone Content Control helps to prevent young people from accessing inappropriate content and services, such as violent games, adult content and gambling websites.

Go to the Vodafone website to log in to or register your online account and turn on Content Control. Please note, it works only on the Vodafone network and not on wifi.
vodafone.co.uk

Games consoles

Many children and teenagers enjoy playing on games consoles. As well as being fun, some experts say gaming helps to improve their reflexes and keep their brains active. But it also has its risks. Young people sometimes spend too long in front of the screen or access inappropriate content. And if they take part in multiplayer gaming they might be contacted by strangers.

If your child is a keen gamer, you'll be pleased to know that the main games consoles include parental controls to help you manage which games they play, how long they can play for and whether they can play against other people. For example, safety features on Xbox One let you restrict games, apps and films by age rating. And on PlayStation 4 (PS4) you can also disable video and voice chat.

For more information and step-by-step guides to setting up parental controls for gaming, go to your search engine and type in the name of your child's games console (eg "PlayStation", "Nintendo", "Wii" or "Xbox") + "parental controls UK".

TOP TIP
If you're worried that a stranger has contacted your child and acted inappropriately towards them, turn to page 45 for advice on how to report it to the police and other authorities.

TOP TIP
Not all public wifi (eg in cafes) has web filters so you'll need to make sure you protect your child's mobile devices when they leave the house. However, you can be sure that access is safe in locations that display the Friendly WiFi symbol.

Parental controls on your home internet

Did you know that many internet service providers in the UK offer free parental controls? If you're a BT, Sky, TalkTalk or Virgin Media customer, you can decide which kind of online content your family can access. As you have to choose to switch on these controls, here's a quick overview of each one and links to more information

BT

BT Parental Controls come free with any BT broadband package. There are three pre-set filters, plus the option to create your own and even set filters for certain times. As well as safeguarding any device connected to your BT Hub at home, BT Parental Controls work at BT wifi hotspots (eg in cafes).
bit.ly/BTParentalControls

Virgin media

Virgin Media's Web Safe works on any device that is connected to its home network. Provided free in broadband packages, it includes Child Safe, which helps to block websites unsuitable for younger users, and Virus Safe, which blocks websites that may have viruses and other security issues.
bit.ly/VM_security

sky

Sky Broadband Shield works on all devices connected to your Sky home broadband and comes at no extra cost. You can choose between three age categories (PG, 13 and 18) or customise the protection according to your needs. The Watershed feature lets you set tighter controls at specific times of the day, when your child might be online.
bit.ly/skybroadbandshield

Vodafone

Parental controls are available to anyone with a Vodafone Broadband service and protect all devices connected to your home network. Once you've opted in, the controls prevent access to inappropriate online content, such as violence and gambling, as well as to websites that could pose security threats.
bit.ly/VF_safety

TalkTalk

HomeSafe is free to all TalkTalk customers and lets you customise filtering preferences from nine different categories and block individual websites. The Homework Time tool restricts access to content that might distract children during core homework hours.
bit.ly/TTprotect_your_family

internet matters.org

INTERNET MATTERS
Launched in 2014, Internet Matters provides advice for parents about online safety and a range of other issues relating to digital technology.
internetmatters.org

the parent zone

THE PARENT ZONE
The Parent Zone can help with any parents' dilemmas and queries, including those about technology.
theparentzone.co.uk

Report online concerns

If something does go wrong online, you need to know what action you can take. As with any concerns you might have about your child, you'll have your own way of talking about it with them and dealing with it. For more serious digital issues, you might also feel that you need to report it.

Here we give you an overview of the main ways you can report inappropriate (eg bullying) and potentially illegal online content. While reporting content to an online service provider doesn't guarantee it will be removed, many of them take safety and security very seriously so they will investigate and take the appropriate action.

It's worth bearing in mind that making a formal report could help improve the experience for all users of that service and may also help to protect other young people from worry and harm. If you sense that your child or another child is in immediate danger, call 999 or contact your local police.

REPORT YOUR CONCERNS TO 10 OF THE MAIN ONLINE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Ask FM
If your child comes across inappropriate content on Ask.fm, click the flag next to the post and select the reason why it's inappropriate.
safety.ask.fm

Disney Club Penguin
To report a mean or inappropriate player, just click on their Penguin avatar and then the M icon. This action will alert the dedicated moderating team, who will then investiative and take action where necessary.
bit.ly/CPsafety

Facebook
Facebook has tools for reporting inappropriate behaviour, including suspected grooming, on every piece of content.
bit.ly/FB_report

Google
If you've set up Google Safe Search but your child is still able to access inappropriate content, you can report it to Google for investigation.
bit.ly/google_report

Instagram
To report a post, tap the three dots below it, then select Report Inappropriate and follow the instructions. There's more information at Instagram's Privacy and Safety Center, which you can access via its Help Center.
bit.ly/IGhelpcenter

Moshi Monsters
To report an inappropriate pinboard message and remove it from public view, click the X or M button on the message.
bit.ly/MM_help

PlayStation
You can report unwelcome messages via the XMB menu. Under Friends, select the message on PS3, or highlight the message you'd like to report on PS4. Press the Triangle button, and select Grief Report on PS3, or Submit Grief Report on PS4.
bit.ly/PS_Grief_Reporting

Twitter
To report an abusive post, click or tap the three dots next to the tweet, select Report and choose It's

Abusive or Harmful. To report a user's profile, click or tap the gear icon on their profile and follow the same process. In both cases, you'll be asked to provide more information.
bit.ly/TW_help

Vodafone
To report inappropriate content or conduct related to your child's Vodafone mobile, click on Contact Us at the bottom of the Vodafone website to see your options.
bit.ly/VFsupport

YouTube
If you think a video violates YouTube's Community Guidelines, you can flag it by clicking on the More button below the video player, then highlighting and clicking the Report button in the drop-down menu. You'll then need to click on the reason for flagging the video and provide further details.
bit.ly/YT_flagging

REPORT YOUR CONCERNS TO THE POLICE AND OTHER AUTHORITIES

National Crime Agency, CEOP Command
CEOP is the child protection section of the National Crime Agency. If someone has acted inappropriately towards your child or another young person online (eg engaged in sexual chat or insisted on meeting up), you should report them directly to CEOP.
bit.ly/CEOP_report

Internet Watch Foundation
If anyone in your family comes across online child sexual abuse or criminally obscene adult imagery, notify the Internet Watch Foundation. Reports are confidential and can be made anonymously. Click Report Criminal Content Here and follow the on-screen instructions.
iwf.org.uk

ParentPort
To report something you've seen on TV, online, in a film, in an advert, in a video game or in a magazine that is unsuitable for children, go to Make a Complaint. Select an option and follow the instructions.
parentport.org.uk

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Glossary

4G – a mobile communications standard (preceded by 3G) that allows quicker internet access from a smartphone or tablet.

app or application – a software program that can run on computers and mobile devices, allowing users to play games, read news, use social network sites and so on; not part of the operating system software.

broadband – a high-speed internet connection. Types of broadband include ADSL (which uses copper phone lines), cable (fibre-optic cables) and 3G or 4G (mobile broadband).

the cloud – a network of servers that allows you to access online services and store data remotely.

digital native – a term that is often used to suggest that young people understand computers better than older people (which may not be true!).

instant messaging – a system for exchanging typed messages in real time, using either a phone's text messaging system or a downloaded app, such as Snapchat (where messages disappear after a few seconds) or Whatsapp (where you can message groups).

the internet – a global network connecting millions of computing devices.

ISPs (internet service providers) – companies that supply broadband services.

router – a hardware device that sends data from a local area network to other connections, allowing only authorised machines access.

search engine – a tool, such as Google or Bing, that indexes millions of websites and searches them so that you can find information when you enter a word or phrase.

selfie – a picture of yourself, usually taken on a smartphone, that you might commonly post on social media.

sexting – the exchange of sexually explicit photos and/or messages via text, email or Bluetooth.

smartphone – a mobile phone that performs many of the functions of a computer. Smartphones typically have a touchscreen and the ability to connect to the internet as well as an operating system that is capable of running downloaded apps.

streaming – playing online multimedia files (audio or video) without downloading them first.

troll – a person who posts offensive, off-topic or inflammatory comments online (known as trolling).

vlog – short for "video blog" (and "blog" is short for "web log"). Those who post video blogs regularly online are known as vloggers.

wifi – radio waves that let you get online without wires. Most computing and mobile devices now have built-in wifi receivers that allow them to find and connect to wireless routers.

the world wide web (or web) – a system of servers hosting websites that can be accessed from a web browser; forms part of the internet

YouTube – a video sharing service that allows users to post and watch videos online.

"The Vodafone Foundation believes that communications technology can address some of the world's most pressing issues. In an increasingly digital world, we understand the importance of educating people to understand the latest technologies, how they can be used safely and ultimately harnessed for the benefit of society."

Andrew Dunnett
Director of The Vodafone Foundation

The Vodafone Foundation operates in 27 countries around the world. The network of Foundations and social investment programmes are focused on combining charitable giving with technology and the expertise of the company to make a difference in the communities in which Vodafone operates. This approach is known as Mobile for Good. Under Mobile for Good, the Vodafone Foundation supports educational projects such as *Digital Parenting* to provide parents with information that will help them to understand the latest technologies and better support and protect their children in an increasingly digital world.