A STRAIGHTFORWARD PARENTS GUIDE

TO PROTECTING YOUR CHILDREN FROM ONLINE HATE, EXTREMISM AND HOW TO STAY SAFE ONLINE

P R E V E N T

CYBER SAFE WARWICKSHIRE

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SPENDING MORE TIME ONLINE THAN EVER

Young people need to learn about socialising online. Parents are juggling modern technology alongside working and navigating the risks children face. They are exposed to online hate, bullying and exploitation amongst many others. This interactive guide focuses on the risks that online hate, extremism, bullying and exploitation pose and how parents and carers can minimise those risks to keep young people safe online.

THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU TO:

- Understand the risks and issues
- Know where to get help
- Find resources
- Develop practical strategies
- Start conversations
- Build your child's digital resilience

⚠ RISKS & TACTICS

Everyone knows young people spend a lot of time online. Groomers may use these opportunities to target and exploit them using a variety of tactics.

They do this by exploiting a young person's emotions, beliefs or values. They may also use someone's anxiety, fear or feelings of isolation that many young people are currently experiencing.

Some may take popular online materials such as videos, pictures or documents and use these out of context to coerce a young person into holding a different opinion or changing their behaviour.

Prominent public figures are often misquoted as a means of engaging a young person, too. Especially those who are popular amongst children and young people. Their aim is to draw children into conversations and encourage them to share misinformation and hate.

Extremists often pick a genuine local issue or concern and use it to spread lies, fear and hate about the group they are targeting.

🔔 SPOTTING THE SIGNS

Groomers will often find a particular vulnerability in someone, gain their trust and seek to build and maintain control. If a young person is being groomed online, it is important to be able to spot the signs early.

These could be physical, emotional or verbal changes including:

- ⚠ Unexplained expensive gifts
- ⚠ Changes in mood
- ⚠ Language change (to more of an 'us' vs 'them' style)
- ⚠ Increased social media usage
- ⚠ Changing from their normal self to extremely introverted or extremely extroverted
- ⚠ Tattoos

This is not an exhaustive list and seeing one of these in your child may not mean they are being exploited. Often it is a series of changes in their appearance, emotions and communication that may indicate there is a problem.

WHERE TO START?

The most important thing parents and carers can do is talk to their child about what they enjoy doing online.

Talk about what they think isn't so good about being online and how to make it better. Keep talking as your child grows up and becomes more independent online.

For some families it might be useful to have a 'Family Agreement' whereby you talk through how they use the internet and how to behave positively online.

There is also an 'Online Safety Agreement' option to cater for non-family settings e.g. foster carers and youth group.

The more a stranger knows about your child, the easier it is for them to gain their trust.

🤝 SUPPORT, IDEAS AND RESOURCES

Click on the topics headings below to learn more about how to keep your child safe and support their wellbeing online. Learn how to talk to children about hate speech and spot the signs they could be groomed by extremists or other online groomers.

LEARN HOW TO START A CONVERSATION

Learn how to talk and start a conversation with children about hate speech and how to spot the signs they could be groomed by extremists or other online groomers.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Conspiracy theories have grown significantly in the past year they have been fuelled by the confusing and unsettling nature of the pandemic and have resulted in people being drawn into extremists' groups, committing violent and criminal acts. They can also be deeply disturbing and unsettling for children and young people who come across them accidentally online.

EDUCATE AGAINST HATE

Messages of hate can take many forms. Extremist groups use them to recruit young people. Parents can find answers to common questions and resources to help protect their child from being groomed by extremists as well as ideas about how to talk to children about hate and extremism and where to seek help.

COMMON SENSE MEDIA

This website has the latest research, tips, and tools on what really keeps children safe online. Which privacy settings should you use?
What are the ins and outs of parental controls?
Get tips on everything from the basics, such as smart usernames, to the big stuff, such as appropriate sharing. Plus, lots of resources and strategies to look after your child's wellbeing online.
What are the pros and cons of Roblox, TikTok, Instagram or how to talk to teens about online groomers?

🔒 ONLINE SAFETY

Internet Matters provides information on parental controls and offers clear and concise step-by-step guides for how to set these up on apps/devices and even as far as blocking certain websites from being accessed in the home.
National Online Safety have a series of factsheets on social media sites and games designed to help parents stay in the know on the latest trends and learn how they can keep their children safe while on these. They also have guides on topics ranging from 'online pressures' to 'mental health'. These are all free, though you do need an account to download them. There is also a page on Internet Matters with advice for parents & carers to learn about helping your child understand the difference between friends and those who may seek to do them harm to ensure they have a safer online experience on social media.

CYBER SAFE WARWICKSHIRE	SAFE IN WARWICKSHIRE (PREVENT)	FAMILY AND ONLINE SAFETY AGREEMENT
ONLINE RADICALISATION	ACT EARLY	HATE CRIME

TRAINING FOR ONLINE SAFETY AND PREVENT

If you want to find out more information about keeping safe online and the risks of radicalisation you can take part in one of our FREE training courses. We provide training in the following topics:

PREVENT ONLINE GROOMING
This session provides practical advice on how to keep children and young people safe online – explaining some of the risks linked to the most popular apps and games and the steps you can take to help them use these safely.

PREVENT AWARENESS
This course discusses why and how some people become radicalised to support violent extremist causes. It explores how to look for behaviours and signs of radicalisation as well as how to act on your concerns to help safeguard vulnerable individuals.

If you want to find out more about booking onto these courses, or arrange them for your school or group, then email **community safety@warwickshire.gov.uk**

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Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire

Warwickshire County Council