



Chatting Online

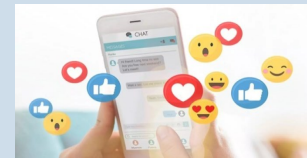


Following a recent report by the BBC detailing how a child was asked for inappropriate images when chatting online, we thought we would discuss the dangers your child might face when communicating with strangers online.

In addition to social media apps that include a chat facility, most online games also allow communication. Depending on the game, this may be via the in-game text chat, direct messages or talking through headphones. Some games do offer the ability to switch communication off or restrict bad language so make sure settings appropriate to your child are set up for each of the games they play. You need to be aware that there are people who may use these games to start chatting to your child and then encourage them to chat on alternative apps (which are more private, encrypted or have fewer safety options). Talk to your child about the dangers of doing this.

What risks are there with chatting online?

- Bullying
- Inappropriate chat - children may encounter explicit-inappropriate content.
- Contact from strangers - talk to your child about who is contacting them online.
- Sharing personal information - talk to your child about what information they share with others including images.
- Sextortion - this is a form of blackmail where somebody threatens to share a nude/sexual image of you.



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How can I mitigate the risks?

- Ensure your child is accessing age-appropriate apps/games and that appropriate parental controls are set up.
- Chat to your child about the risks above so they are aware of what can happen online.
- Depending on the age of your child, it may be more appropriate for devices to be used in family rooms so you can monitor what they are doing and if they are chatting to others.

Reporting other users

It can be difficult to moderate online chat so ensure your child knows how to block and report others who make them feel uncomfortable and that they know to talk to you or a trusted adult if they have any concerns.

Further information— [Online contact and staying safe \(ceopeducation.co.uk\)](https://ceopeducation.co.uk)

The CBeebies Little Learners app has been created with BBC Bitesize and educational experts to provide your child with a fun learning experience. It includes activities based on the UK's Early Years Foundation Stage framework, for example sounds and letters and numbers and shapes. You can learn more here:

BITESIZE

[How the CBeebies Little Learners app makes screen time a good time for your child - BBC Bitesize](#)

Tips to promote positive body image

If your child is viewing content online, particularly on social media, then the images they are seeing may be edited or even fake. A child may not yet be able to distinguish between reality and what is not real/fake, which may impact their own body image.

Internet Matters provide advice on how to empower your child to develop a positive body image and what you can do to help.

Find out more here:

[Promoting positive body image with young people | Internet Matters](#)

LEGO Build and Talk



LEGO® have created Build and Talk to help you chat to your child about online safety. The activities have been created for children ages 6 to 9. Firstly, you pick an activity to do and then you read a story, which includes questions and conversation prompts, whilst you build LEGO® together. This is a fantastic way to start talking to your child about topics such as screentime and cyberbullying.

Find out more here:

[Build and talk - Sustainability - LEGO.com](#)

We've all got sweet bodies!



Online resources for parents

NSPCC—[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

ThinkUKnow—[CEOP Education \(thinkuknow.co.uk\)](#)

UK Safer Internet Centre—[Parents and Carers - UK Safer Internet Centre \(Saferinternet.org.uk\)](#)

NDCS—[Online safety deaf children | Keep deaf children safe on the internet \(ndcs.org.uk\)](#)