

ONLINE GUIDE ETC.

Dear Parent/Carer

Many young people will have received the latest gadgets such as tablets, smart phones and games consoles this Christmas.

The internet and all it can offer, is a wonderful tool for keeping in touch with friends and family, however parents and carers need to be aware that it is possible for people who are unknown to children and young people to communicate with them via the internet.

Some parents, carers or relatives might not realise that even games consoles such as Xbox and PlayStation are connected to the internet and can be used for communicating as well as playing games.

While using these gadgets is second nature for many children and young people, they can seem quite daunting for parents or carers who may not be as technologically savvy.

The guides below provide simple step-by-step instructions on how to set the privacy settings on the most popular applications and games consoles used by children and young people.

If you have bought a child or young person a new gadget for Christmas, eg; mobile phone, games console or tablet (such as iPad) you can follow these instructions and enable these settings before you give your gift and therefore help protect your child or young person online.

There are separate instructions for each of the most popular applications and consoles.

[Ask FM](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Playstation](#)

[Snapchat](#)

[Twitter](#)

[WhatsApp](#)

[Wii](#)

[Xbox](#)

Follow these tips for keeping your children safe online:

- Talk to your children about what they are looking at and who they are talking to online.
- Remind them of the importance of not talking to or accepting friend requests from people they don't know in real life.
- Encourage them to keep all personal information such as passwords, phone numbers, friend, school address details private.

- Remind them that people might not be who they say they are online. It is very easy for people to set up accounts, with fake names, identities and photos, to make us all believe that they are someone they are not.
- Warn them that the things they write and the photos they post online might be accessed by people other than their friends, if they don't keep their accounts private.
- Set parental controls and privacy settings so that you can see and control what your child or young person is doing online via their device. We have produced instructions on how to do this. [LINK TO INSTRUCTIONS](#)
- Highlight the risks of meeting people in person that your child only knows online. Meeting people in real life, that children and young people only know from being online, can pose many risks and children and young people should be encouraged to be open and honest with you or a trusted adult, if someone is asking to meet up with them in real life.

(This can be very dangerous and children and young people should be encouraged to tell their parents or an adult they trust, if someone is asking to meet them.)

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Child Sexual Exploitation is where someone takes advantage of a child sexually for their own benefit.

Some people use technology to make contact with children and young people with the intention of "grooming" them. To groom someone is to prepare someone to do something sexual for the benefit of the person making contact.

Those who seek to groom children or young people might try to gain their trust by using a fake profile picture and fake personal details and by pretending to have similar interests as them.

People who try to groom children and young people want them to believe their lies so that they can get information about:

- their age
- where they live
- who else might use the computer that they use or
- who else has access to their mobile phone

Once the groomer has got lots of information from the child or young person about them, they often move conversations towards sexual experiences and interests, often asking the child or young person to send sexual photographs or videos of themselves.

Some people who seek to groom, might move towards wanting to meet up in real life, others might try to blackmail them by threatening to share any images/pictures or videos that the child or young person might have already sent them, with their friends and family, if the child or young person refuses to do what they are being asked to do.

Online grooming can take place via chat rooms, instant messaging (IM), social networking sites, online gaming and email and can involve a child or young person being asked to:

- chat about sex online
- do sexual things on webcam
- share naked or sexual pictures of themselves
- look at, or watch pictures or videos of others doing sexual things
- online pornography
- watch the person they are speaking with do sexual things, such as exposing themselves
- meet up face to face with the person they have been speaking to online.

Online grooming can happen to both boys and girls, of any age, and whatever their sexuality and no matter where they're from or what their cultural background is.

Know the Signs

Even something that seems like normal teenage behaviour could be a sign that a child is being exploited.

These can include:

- Increasing or secretive mobile phone or other device use
- Excessive amount of time online and being secretive about time online
- A significantly older 'boyfriend' or 'friend' or lots of new friends
- Change in behaviour – becoming secretive, argumentative, aggressive, disruptive, quiet, withdrawn
- Having unexplained gifts or new possessions such as clothes, jewellery, mobile phones or having money or access to other goods such as alcohol that can't be accounted for
- Regularly missing from home or school, for unexplained periods of time and or staying out late or all night.

If you have concerns about a child you know being at risk of being sexually exploited report it to West Yorkshire Police by calling **101**. Always call **999** in an emergency.

Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired people can use textphone **18001 101**. You can call Crimestoppers anonymously on **0800 555 111**.

Pace – (Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation) – offer support for parents - For help and advice: **0113 240 5226**

Read more online safety advice via the **UK Safer Internet Centre** : -

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/news/all-i-want-for-christmas-is-a-wii-u>