

The Facts

- You will only ever hear the “dark side” of e-safety in the media.
- **Billions of successful and positive uses of the internet happen every minute of every day.**
- Children need to understand why something is not safe...it is no good just blocking it... they **will** find a way!
- Children are naturally curious. They will use Google to search for things, even though they may not know what it is they are searching for.
- Your child's school teaches e-safety to all its users. There is a taught scheme of work for e-safety.
- You can make the e-safety talks fun.
- Involve them. Ask them to show you their online world.
- Understand that as they grow, their needs will grow too. The only constant is your expectation that they should **behave responsibly online.**
- **Together, we can make everyone in East Sussex E-Safe.**

Many teenagers do not want to have this discussion.

They will probably talk about their “privacy”. This is important, however, so is your love for them and your duty of care.

You should not allow any e-safety topic to be off the table.

Use the news!

Whenever an e-safety issue presents in the media, it is great for starting a conversation. “How did it happen?” “Why did it happen?” “What could have been done to avoid it?”

While your teenager may be resistant, press ahead anyway – they will think about what you have said.

E-Safety at home

Having an e-Safety discussion at home

Why talk about e-safety at home?

Children live and work in an increasingly online world. It is easy to think that if you have good anti-virus, firewall and anti-malware software, that “e-safety” is sorted. While these products undoubtedly help, e-safety is not a technological thing, it is a behavioural one. What we actually do online is what puts us at risk.

Is it ALL bad out there?

NO! Far from it. In the UK alone, there are 44 million internet users. Just think about how many successful and positive internet uses happen every minute of every day. **The only thing that parents and carers will ever hear about in the media is when things go wrong.** It is easy to be scared by it.

“I don’t understand what my child does online. I am not very “E”

One of the best ways of learning about the highly beneficial world of the internet is by asking the experts to show you... your own child!. Get them to show you their favourite websites. (Pay attention to where they **don’t** click, as well as where they do!)

Talk, Talk , Talk-

FACT:- People who might abuse the internet or other users on it rely on the fact that talking about e-safety is uncomfortable. They would far rather we didn’t discuss it, because talking about it brings it into the light of day which is the last place these people want it to be.

So.....

- 1) **Talk about e-safety**, particularly when there has been some bad press about it.
- 2) Make it **“OK To Tell”**. This is harder than you might think. Imagine you are, say, a 12 year old child and you have accidentally seen something online of a sexual nature. How easy would it be to talk to your mum or dad about it? Letting your child know that they can tell you anything **without overreacting** is a key message from children. “We don’t tell, because parents and teachers go over the top.”
- 3) **Acceptable Use Rules at Home?** Yes, why not? We have them in school & the workplace for all users. They exist in industry too. What you allow and what you don’t is up to you, and it will need to develop over time. E-safety is never something that you can tick the box and say “Done”.
- 4) **Talk to your school.** Your child’s school has not only gone through this process, but they are going through it regularly. You can use their experiences. You can adapt their Acceptable Use Policy for your home if you want to. The important thing is to take your child with you on the journey. They may have a lot of questions, mainly beginning with “Why...”

- 5) **Social Networking? Children want Facebook.** And they want it from a surprisingly young age. Facebook has an age restriction of 13 for good reasons. While Social Networking has its value, peer pressure is forcing more and more children to want this particular product. They need to understand why it isn’t a good idea. If you do allow them to have a Facebook or any other social networking account, it is a good idea to insist that **YOU** are in their friends list. That way you can keep an eye on how many “friends” they are building up. There is some evidence to suggest that children are in competition with each other to have the most friends on their sites. Some parents have taken the view that the only friends allowed on SN sites are those that they know in the real world.
- 6) **And the big one...What To do if Something Happens.** The short answer is that you need to assess the situation, and to involve your child in the response. If you consider it necessary to report it to the authorities, your child needs to know why this is important and that they will be supported. **It is, thankfully, unlikely you will ever find yourself in this position.** It is **vital** that you remain calm if your child tells you something has happened.