

E-Safety 5 Minute Briefing for Parents

Creating Digital Confidence

The internet is a remarkable resource if used responsibly. The impact on how well children use technology comes from parents, our actions, and words.

Below are 5 hints and tips that will help parents to create digital confidence with their children.

1. Be a good role model:

Parental controls do not remove the need for parenting. From an early age, children mirror their parents in their actions and choice of words. If parents are using technology in their bedrooms or playing online games and scrolling through numerous social media apps all the time, then naturally children will behave in the same manner. If we want our children to use technology differently then we need to first look at how we use technology.

2. Play together:

Make time to take an interest in your children's online activity. Be there as a parent/friend take an interest in what they do. If they are interested in video games, then play a video game with them. Gaming is a great way to create digital confidence with children. Parents who play and get involved in technology with their children tend to have children who are more comfortable talking about their technology use - this is essential if something horrible or even unusual was to ever happen online.

3. Be curious:

Often, as parents we don't understand and therefore just assume that every child that is using a smart phone is doing something bad. Instead, if we were curious about the amount of time our children spend on Snapchat for instance, we can ask them why they like this app? We can ask them to teach us how Snapchat works. By doing this, we are building a rapport with our children. Try not to make the chats about e-safety but instead let the conversation flow and mention where appropriate and get them to think critically. Using this approach will help us to learn not only about how our children use technology but also about their likes, dislikes, hopes and also their insecurities.

4. Talk about it:

Regular conversations promoting critical thinking with children will equip children with the appropriate tools to keep themselves safe but will also encourage children to speak to parents if anything is worrying them both in the online and real world. It's important that our children feel that if anything goes wrong, no matter how bad, they can come and talk to us.

5. Be supportive and understanding:

Parental controls are important to help keep our children safe online but even if we're using parental controls, we want our attitude as parents to be supportive and understanding. It's important to remember that this isn't a battle between us and our children. It's us all together. There is no parental control app that can replace the parents. Our children need our support and understanding to enable them to stay safe from online dangers.