

# COVID-19 PARENTING

## Keeping Children Safe Online

Children and teens are now spending a lot more time online. Being connected helps them reduce the impact of COVID-19 and encourages them to continue with their lives...but it also presents risks and dangers.

### Online Risks

Adults targeting children for sexual purposes on social media, gaming, and messaging platforms

Harmful content – violence, misogyny, xenophobia, inciting suicide and self-harm, misinformation, etc.

Teens sharing personal information and sexual photos or videos of themselves

Cyberbullying from peers and strangers

### Tech fixes to protect your children online

Set up **parental controls**

Turn on **SafeSearch** on your browser

Set up strict **privacy settings** on online apps and games

Cover webcams when not in use

### Create healthy and safe online habits

Involve your **child or teen** in creating family tech agreements about healthy device use

Create device-free spaces and times in your house (eating, playing, schoolwork, and sleeping)

Help your child learn how to keep personal information private, especially from strangers – some people are not who they say they are!

Remind your children that what goes online stays online (messages, photos, and videos)

### Spend time with your child or teen online

Explore websites, social media, games, and apps together

Talk to your teen on how to report inappropriate content (see below)

**Common Sense Media** has great advice for apps, games and entertainment for different ages

### Keep your child safe with open communication

Tell your children that if they experience something online that makes them feel upset, uncomfortable, or scared, they can talk to you and you will not get mad or punish them

Be alert to signs of distress. Notice if your child is being withdrawn, upset, secretive, or obsessed with online activities

Create trusting relationships and open communication through positive support and encouragement

Note that every child is unique and may use different ways to communicate. Take time to adjust your message for your child's needs. For example, children with learning disabilities, may require information in simple format

**Share with colleagues, friends and family | Spread the word | Keep children safe online**

Report online violence against children:

CHILD HELPLINE

INHOPE HOTLINES

IWF PORTALS

Other resources:

SAFETY BOOKLET

UNICEF

OTHER LANGUAGES

EVIDENCE-BASE