

On Tuesday, 9 February 2021, we will celebrate the 18th edition of Safer Internet Day with actions taking place right across the globe.

To support this day, Dorset Police has created these short information slides to offer you advice and information to help stay safe online.



COVID-19 has changed things for us all, especially you. Lockdown has meant that many of you can't go to school, you can't see your friends and family and have to keep in touch with people and your school work online.

Using online programmes, it is important to protect yourself from the different risks that you can face.

If you are worried about something, or see or experience something online that concerns you, speak to someone you trust as soon as possible.

**Don't keep it to yourself.**

There are lots of information and advice available on our website for you.

[More information](#)

Children are gaining access to, and owning, their own devices from a younger age. Devices can be great for learning and development, however parents should be aware of the content available and the chance of your child seeing something they shouldn't when online.

It is important to have regular conversations about staying safe online and to encourage young people to speak to you if they come across something worrying.

These resources provide guidance and support for parents and carers on how to talk to your child about a range of online safety issues, as well as set up home filtering and age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices:



Provides resources for parents/carers and children of all ages to help keep children safe online



Childnet has developed guidance for parents and carers to begin a conversation about online safety, as well as guidance on keeping under-fives safe online.



National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has guidance for parents and carers to help keep children safe online



UK Safer Internet Centre provides tips and advice for parents and carers to keep children safe online - you can also report any harmful content found online through the UK Safer Internet Centre

# Talk to your children.

## REMEMBER – knowledge is power!

### Online Gaming safety tips

Online games like Fortnite, Minecraft and Roblox can let young people play with their friends, family and strangers from around the world. But playing with people online can be risky. Before young people start playing games online there are a few things to consider.

You can find more help, advice and information online.

[More information](#)

## Their username.

**Choose a safe username. This seems simple, but it can give away so much.**

Make sure you:

- Don't use their real name
- Don't use their school name
- Don't use anything relating to your address
- Don't use their birthday

If they're able to use a profile picture, try using an avatar that doesn't show their face. If you do use a picture, think about whether it shows anything that could be used to identify them, like their school logo, street name or something in the background.

# What is safe to talk about online?

Games are a great way to make friends online. But it's important to talk to your young people about how much they're sharing about themselves.

Do they know they should never give their:

- Address
- Age
- phone number
- where they go to school
- their full name
- passwords

**People are clever – they can keep track of all the small things they have heard over time to create a big picture.**

## Who are they playing with?

Most online games are open to everyone, that means they could be playing with people much younger or older than them. It is important young people understand that if they are playing with people online:

- They can always report and mute anyone who's nasty
- People might not always be telling the truth about who they are
- Don't accept gifts or offers from people online – this could be a trick
- Always be nice to the people you're playing with – treat them how you would like to be treated
- Talk to your parents/guardians or an adult you trust if you are worried about anything you see, hear or are asked to do

## Check your privacy settings

Changing privacy settings will protect your children.

Privacy settings can affect:

- who can see when they are online
- who they can play with
- whether people can see what games they're playing
- who can see their location

Every game and console is different, so make sure you always check the settings to see what your options are. Click below for more help and advice.

[More information](#)



## Loot boxes and in-app purchases

Lots of games are free-to-play, so you can download and start them without paying anything. Games like this make money by making you want to buy things, like new skins, loot boxes, items or lives.

These in-app purchases are tempting and easy to purchase. Devices can be set up so that a password is required before an online purchase can be made. If you do not want your child to purchase anything, then make sure that your card details are not saved to a device or to things like the Cloud. Also make sure your children know:

- things they buy in the game WILL cost real world money
- always ask the person who'll be paying for their permission
- keep track of what they're spending, even if they're buying cheaper things they can end up costing a lot
- don't buy items from websites outside of the game itself
- take a break from the game before deciding to buy something

**Think before you click!**

### What is cyber bullying?

Unfortunately, with the majority of learning now being online, bullying can follow people wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and messaging.

### When should I report bullying to the police?

Many incidents of bullying are not actually crimes and can be dealt with by school. It's important to speak to a trusted adult if you think you, or someone you know is being bullied so they can give support and help.

Police may become involved in incidents of bullying where there is any:

- Violence
- Theft
- Harassment and intimidation over a period of time
- Hate crimes or hate incidents

If bullying is happening online, then the other person can be blocked, reported to the site/app and screenshots can be taken to show school.

**Remember: always be kind.**

**Never say hurtful things to others. Words can really hurt**



Further advice and support about bullying and cyber bullying.

The logo for internet matters.org consists of the words 'internet' and 'matters.org' stacked vertically in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a solid green rectangular background.

Information and advice about cyberbullying.

We know it's hard to understand what's going on at the moment. Everything that you are used to doing has changed. School is now online, you can't meet up with your friends, you can't go to parties, it's tough, and you are allowed to feel upset and angry about it.

If you are struggling with your feelings, feeling worried about the virus, upset about school or not seeing your family, it is so important you talk to your parents, teachers or someone you trust. You can even contact Childline on 0800 1111.

**Don't keep it to yourself.  
Talk to someone.  
They can help you feel better.**

## What do I need to do to help stop the virus?

We all have to do what we can to stop the virus. You can help by:

- Always washing your hands – if you can't wash your hands make sure you use hand gel
- Stay at home as much as possible – we know its hard but it is important to stop the spread
- Remember to stay 2 metres away from people who don't live with you or who aren't in your support bubble – 2 metres is the same as two big steps

[Click here to listen to the 2 metre song](#)

[Click here to watch some top tips from Juliette and Bravo](#)

**Stay safe  
and  
keep talking**