**E Safety Guidance for Parents and Carers -.**

This document highlights main areas for parents to consider re safety, but also provides links to resources and how to access them.

Discuss online behaviour with young people as part of an ordinary conversation in the same way you may talk about their school day or what they did at the park. Suggested questions:

• Do you have many online friends? (Are these the same as your 'in real life' friends?)

• What do you like to do online? What are your favourite sites? What do you enjoy watching on youtube?

• Do you post pictures of yourself online? If so, who do you share these with?

• What are the main social media sites you enjoy? (Each have risk areas which young people may not be aware of) TikTok, Facebook, Insta, Twitter, Snapchat, Whatsapp, house party, teen dating etc.

• Do you know what you should and should not share? • Do you understand privacy settings and how/why these are used?

• Do you know what digital legacy/footprint means? (What we post now may come back to us negatively in the future).

**Stranger danger in an online setting, catfish, grooming etc**

In terms of the biggest areas of online risk, below is an overview of each. NB. This is a brief list and does not cover every area of concern – see links below for a better a better understanding of all areas.

• **Personal information sharing**. It is never a good idea to share 'too much' when online as this can be used against you. Young people may share information about themselves by accident; this could be a picture of them in school uniform, putting their mobile number and address online or creating videos that show where they live. Online offenders can use this information to find the school young people attend, their home location and where they spend their free time. Young people may leave bits of information across different places such as facebook, instagram and snapchat which when put together will tell a lot about the young person which could be used to exploit them. This video from CEOP shows how offenders use the **'jigsaw'** method and how it can be avoided.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nBxKFnnZLc&t=2s (You can click on all the blue links if you are on a phone, laptop or tablet or you can write the address into a google search bar.)

• **Picture/image creation and sharing**. Young people are often eager to share photos either to get ‘likes’, explore their identity, as part of a relationship, to attract a partner, to bully someone, or simply because 'everyone else is doing it'. This can result in attracting attention from individuals that could pose serious risk. In addition, sharing without consent or even taking a picture of oneself nude and publishing online can result in legal action from the police. Unfortunately, teenagers do sometimes share suggestive or sexual pictures of themselves. As parents and carers, this can be very scary and difficult for us to understand. It is important that we 'don't go mad' if we find that our child has done something like this. If we respond with anger they are less likely to seek out our help in the future when things may go wrong. We need to not panic and instead talk to the young person about what has happened. You might speak to school or a social worker for advice if you are unsure about what to do. CEOP have again created videos which look at both image sharing : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEMH5BIrrW4&t=19s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hk1NywSNas a n d a l s o ' n u d e s e l f i e s ' :

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjV0lKYpakk&t=4s (The 'Nude Selfie' resource is

made up of 4 parts, I have linked the first one and further parts will show in the side menu).

• **Strangers, Catfish, online grooming** and knowing who your friends are. By far one of the areas that parents and carers worry about the most is their child or young person speaking to strangers online. The majority of young people will have at least a few 'friends' on their social media which they do not know in real life. They need to understand the dangers of this, how these people may be 'Catfish' (pretending to be someone they are not) and how their intentions may not be how they appear. (If you fear your child is being groomed speak to your social worker, school, PCSO or other professional for advice. If you think your child is in **IMMEDIATE** danger phone 999) Online grooming can be difficult to recognise (in a similar way to child sexual exploitation) but some signs do seem to be common:

• Being very secretive about how they're spending their time, including when online

• Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend

• Having money or new things like clothes and mobile phones that they can't or won't explain

• Underage drinking or drug taking

• Spending more or less time online or on their devices

• Being upset, withdrawn or distressed

• Sexualised behaviour, language or understanding of sex that's not appropriate for their age

• Spending more time away from home or going missing for periods of time.

• **Live Streaming** is a relatively new area which comes with its own issues. The problem with live streaming is often the fact that once something is said or done it can not be removed. It has already happened (and could have been recorded by another person). Young people may use Facebook Live, Periscope, Youtube or similar apps to 'broadcast'. They may inadvertently share their location, reveal personal information, not know who is watching and film others without consent. CEOP have done a video on this particular area: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6S5cFxoTATs

• **Safe Browsing, Passwords and staying up to date.** Safe browsing is about not going to 'dodgy' areas of the internet. Ask young people what a particular site is for, who goes on it, what is the content etc. Young people should use a safe browser such Google Chrome, use difficult to guess passwords and should make sure that any software/apps on a device is kept up to date so as stop criminals accessing phones, tablets and computers. Simple things you can do within your home is agreeing time limits for when computers, tablets and laptops can be used. Agreeing where in the home they can be used - eg, if you say that devices can only be used in your front room or kitchen you are likely to have a better knowledge of what they are doing and be able to advise them on how they should act online. The most common place for young people to make mistakes online is in their bedroom and usually at night. They feel safe and may not think through the consequences of their actions. Young people hate it but handing in devices before bedtime is better for their health both physically and mentally and also reduces chances of them doing something they may later regret online. These are just a few areas. Many many more exist. By exploring the following links and information, you will gain a better understanding of the online risks at this time (they change all the time which is why we all need to stay up to date).

• https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/ This is the best resource available. It is a part of CEOP and seeks to protect young people, parents/carers and professionals through education. By clicking on 'Parent/Carer?' you can access lots of resources and information that will give you confidence and understanding to help your child.

• https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides This resource is fantastic for parents and covers all the main things that young people use and do online. The other resources below are a mixture of different information and it would be well worth spending time going through them.

• https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

• http://www.safetynetkids.org.uk/personal-safety/staying-safe-online/

• https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/

• https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

• https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobilesafety/

staying-safe-online/

• https://www.saferinternetday.org/

• https://www.barnardos.org.uk/online-safety

• https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c1824w39w4yt/internet-safety

Finally; the online world can be scary as we have not grown up with it. The best thing you can do is

get online and learn yourself. Ask questions about what your child is doing online, ask if they know

and understand the risks, google the websites and apps they use so you know which ones are

dangerous and which are ok and finally remember, sometimes the best thing to do is press the off

button. They may moan and complain but sometimes it's good to be in the real world!!