Online Safety (Extremism) booklet

Did you know!?

According to a recent You Gov report, when parents were asked about online gaming...

➢ 50% of Parents said that they were worried about their child's internet use

➢ However, only 20% of parents engaged with their children in games online

But, what does this mean…?

…. let's get engaging! As parents, it's important to be present with what your children are doing online to keep up to date - the online world changes quickly!

The tips in this guidance will help in some ways to **safeguard your child** online.

Contents

Aims of the guidance

Increase your awareness of online safety in relation to extremism by:

- ➢ Highlighting some of the concerns to look out for

- ➢ Looking at new & emerging issues, including; social media, apps, games and messageboards

- ➢ Identifying ways to keep your child safe online

- ➢ Knowing where you can access information & support

Online Safety issues for children (NSPCC 2020-21)

- 1 in 3 young people have seen something worrying or nasty online (used to be 1 in 4)

- 1 in 3 children have been a victim of cyberbullying

- Almost 1 in 4 children have come across racist or hate messages online

- In 2020-21 there were over 2,500 Childline counselling sessions about online bullying

Cyber bullying is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets. This includes social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming sites and chat rooms such as Facebook, XBox Live, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat and other chat rooms.

Ofcom 2021 – Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report

- **Almost 100% of children use video-sharing platforms (VSPs) like YouTube,** most using VSPs more during (Covid-19) than before.

- **Just over 50% of 12-15s had some form of negative online experience.** Mostly, being contacted by someone they didn't know who wanted to be their friend, which happened to almost 1/3 of children this age.

- **50% of 12-15s said they had seen hate content** online in the past year.

- Most children know how to report, but **only a minority of 12-15s have ever reported** content.

Apps, Games and Social Media

Please find below, information about different apps and social media commonly used by young people.

Here are some key safety facts to think about regarding all social media and some popular apps / games:

- **Be aware that when users sign up to apps, it's possible to lie about your age without any checks being done.**

- **Extremist influencers are almost certainly using mainstream social media like those shown below.**

- **The attraction for influencers to use social media is that they can get a large following of young people as it's popular with them.**

- **Extremist influencers use popular topics like news, sports, beauty and gaming to attract young people to their information, this often then links to their extremist content.**

- **Children are choosing to get their information and news from social media / apps – safety and monitoring for these are key..**

WhatsApp

- To use WhatsApp, you must be at least 16 years old. www.whatsapp.com/legal

- Messages and online status (if somebody is currently using the app) can be hidden.

- Messages can be coded by users so that others can't see, however the police can do work to look at this.

- You can make face time video calls using the app.

- WhatsApp has become more popular recently – with Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram it's one of the top social media apps used by children.

Snapchat

- The legal age to use Snap Chat is 13. No one under 13 is allowed to create an account or use the Services. www.snap.com.

- When you download Snapchat, it asks for your date of birth. If you're under the age of 13, you're directed to 'SnapKidz'.

- Snapchat has short videos (10 seconds or less) that disappear. This can be an issue if you want to view them afterwards.

- Snapchat has an update which has raised concern. It lets people see other users (can be strangers) on a map and then click on their name and view their profile and videos.

Instagram

- The legal age to have an Instagram account is 13 years old.

- If a child is younger than 13 years old and has created an account, you can show them how to delete it.

- Instagram has been linked as 'troubling' for young people as users often only upload edited and filtered photos that don't show the real image.

- Instagram has a useful 'Tips for Parents' page.

    https://about.instagram.com/community/parentsr

YouTube

- https://support.google.com/youtube/?hl=en

- The legal minimum age to manage a YouTube account is 13.

- YouTube say more than 200 million users watched video-game-themed content on its platform every day.

- Problems occur with YouTube as people try to seek fame by sharing videos aiming for the most views and likes.

- YouTube remains a favourite for young people to watch rather than TV or TV apps.

- There have been issues as young people have searched for and watched videos for things that they have seen in the news or that interest them without proper guidance / discussion with a trusted adult.

- YouTube have a page that covers their policy on violent extremist content. For October – December 2018 there were 49,618 videos removed.

- The figure is now around 85,000 videos removed.

- https://transparencyreport.google.com/youtube-policy/featured-policies/violent-extremism?hl=en_GB&policy_removals=period:Y2019Q1&lu=policy_removals

Facebook

- Facebook requires everybody to be at least 13 years old before they can create an account.

- Creating an account with false info goes against their terms. This includes accounts registered on the behalf of someone under 13.

- You can setup your page and posts to select whether your posts are private, to friends or the public.

- There have been issues with Facebook. Including live videos of attacks (Christchurch, New Zealand) and Facebook have been accused of not removing individuals/groups expressing somewhat extreme views.

Roblox

- Problems of grooming and online child abuse have been linked to Roblox as players are made up from users of all ages.
- There has been awareness of a case study where a 10-year-old had been groomed online into joining an extremist hate chat group and then committing a violent extremist attack (child groomed by an adult pretending to be a young person).
- Players aged 12 and younger have their posts and chats filtered for unsuitable content and to stop personal information from being posted.
- To agree to Roblox's terms you need to be 18 or have parent's/guardian's permission to agree to them. However, you can be any age to have an account.
- Account holders can stop who can chats with them and chat can be disabled.
- Roblox have a useful 'frequently asked questions' page for parents. https://corp.roblox.com/parents/
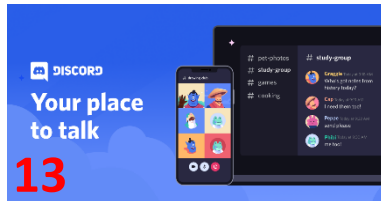
Fortnite

- PEGI rating of 12 due to frequent scenes of mild violence.

- It is not suitable for players under 12 years old.

- Fortnite is a Zombie style shooting game which has an in-game 'voice chat' feature.

- There has been awareness of instances where younger siblings have overheard their older sibling playing the game and the younger sibling thinking that it was real life and that an attack was going to happen.

- Gaming chat features (like those on Fortnite) have been linked to issues for grooming and into gang related issues (and radicalisation) in some cases.

TikTok

- TikTok is short 15 seconds of music /dance video sharing.

- To sign up for TikTok, you first must pass an age gate. If a user is under 13, they'll be placed onto a TikTok for Younger Users experience.

- TikTok is one of the newest and most popular apps, especially during COVID-19 with young people making home videos for the above.

- Recent concerns reported with a video circulating, apparently showing a very graphic image of a person taking their own life.

- There are issues with TikTok like with other apps, with users trying to gain fame and becoming a target for online groomers.

- Any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public.

- As TikTok is a newer app, influential extremists and groups have moved their activity to the app after being banned from other apps.

- A recent BBC Panorama investigation found that TikTok failed to ban a 'child predator' after the BBC had made a fake account to report this.

Gaming and PGEI* ratings

Discord – a discussion app which has chats for different topics for anything from sports to Extremism. Concerns for the app listed as allowing for abusive language and extreme/extremist content to be discussed. It is a free and easy to download 'mainstream' app. We have seen issues with the app in Sandwell relating to young people with extremist references made and external people joining lessons/chats.

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Grand Theft Auto (similar to Call of Duty) particularly and worryingly glorifies crime, violence against women, and shows very graphic violent street attacks.
It has been said that a person filling their head with violence (e.g. violent games) can sometimes 'normalise' violence which causes significant concern.

Reddit is a place where people write posts covering many different topics which others can comment on. The more popular a post is, the higher up it appears on the website. Users can post with an image, video or text and input links and polls. Reddit has over 100,000 different sub-groups known as sub-reddits. There are issues where news can be changed/only looked at from one view point. Because of the sub-groups, it's based on personal opinions and a blog style. If someone wanted to create an echo chamber where only one side of the story is shared or an 'us and them' narrative, they could. We've seen issues in Sandwell where sub-Reddit's have led to led to young people reading extremist material and 'memes' shared with extremist references.

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similar to Roblox. The picture shows a user-built Nazi camp on Minecraft. Most gaming chat platforms record chat, and it was for this reason that when a child some years ago threatened to carry out a mass shooting in a US school on a Minecraft chat, the services were alerted. Extremists/those wishing to spread propaganda and harm will use mainstream social media to get a large following, then move their content/discussion to less checked chat platforms / encrypted message boards such as 8 chan, 4 chan, Telegram, BitChute, Gab ect

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*PEGI (Pan-European Game Information) was established to help parents in Europe make informed decisions on buying computer games.

Messageboards & Extremism

What is 4chan?

4chan is a simple image-based bulletin board where anyone can post comments and share images. There is a variety of topics, from Japanese animation and culture to videogames, music, and photography. Users do no before participating in the community. Feel free to click on a board below that interests you and jump right in!

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the Rules before posting, and read the FAQ if you wish to learn more abo

Boards

Japanese Culture	Interests	Creative	Other
Anime & Manga	Comics & Cartoons	Oekaki	Business & Finance
Anime/Cute	Technology	Papercraft & Origami	Travel
Anime/Wallpapers	Television & Film	Photography	Fitnes
Mecha	Weapons	Food & Cooking	Paran
Cosplay & EGL	Auto	Artwork/Critique	Advic

Telegram

The Dark Web - TOR

Mainstream apps (pages 6-10) can be an entry in extremism, however, it is on messageboards where extremists can share content more easily as it can be encrypted (coded so it cannot be easily seen). If a child/young person joined a messageboard, they could easily find extreme racist or extremist propaganda which can be very graphic. There have been examples of signs and symbols of extremist groups and images showing weaponry and glorifying violence against certain ethnic groups because of their choice of relationship with someone another background for instance. If a person joins a messageboard, it does not mean they are extremist / radicalised, but the risk increases because of these reasons.

Ways to keep your child safe online

✓ Limit your child's time on the internet and stick to it - consistency is key!

✓ Take phone and all electronic devices away from children at night and when you are away for long periods.

✓ Children to seek permission from you before downloading any apps. Stick to the age limits and monitor.

✓ Regular monitoring – check search history, apps and talk history, every day or at least twice a week.

✓ Accounts are private, and location is turned off.

✓ Report any issues through the apps/websites.

✓ Set clear and consistent boundaries - work with your child.

✓ Turn on parental control settings on all devices.

✓ NSPCC/O2 call free helpline 0808 800 5002 - to set up parental controls, adjust privacy settings or get advice on social networks.

New and Developing issues

➢ New apps may not have the same ways to report issues and safeguard as those that are more established.

➢ Current online culture can lead to additional pressure on young people having to have the 'perfect image' or to be the best online (to be 'beautiful' on social media or high performing on games).

➢ Issues have been raised with these attracting the attention of online influencers, looking for those that can influence others.

➢ Social media is often used to reel in young people by giving an unrealistic and attractive impression of what other's lives are like.

➢ There has been a rise in V-logs (video diaries) as children are being drawn to online 'role models' in their area of interest.

➢ Videos or messages showing things that people find 'funny' or show issues / conflict tend to travel faster and get shared more often. This includes memes ('funny' images or very short videos that can be offensive and have been linked to racism and extremism).

➢ These videos can lead to fake news, cyber bullying or even criminal consequences on those sharing them.

➢ Memes, dark humour & language used on games gets the interest of a younger audience.

Fake news

Fake News *is false stories* that appear to be news, spread on the internet or using other media, usually created to influence political views or as a joke. People spreading fake news know that it will spread quicker because it is usually controversial.*

John Smith @jjsmith1245 · Feb 4
The 'North London MUSLIM Housing Association' is building homes for, well, Muslims. Supported by the Muslim Mayor of London, it looks like an entire little ghetto estate of brand new Muslim-only households is being created. Imagine, for a moment that

NORTH LONDON MUSLIM HOUSING ASSOCIATION
North London Muslim Housing Association are providing 20 homes to provide 1, 2 and 3 bedroom hom including 10 apartments for low cost home ownership. This high quality development will be ready in the spring of 2

nra
North River Alliance

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

Muslim only ghettos being built by London Mayor
I don't understand why this ghettoising is encouraged. How can it be good for our country, let alone our capital city? The 'North London ...
🔗 christopherengland.com

💬 305   🔁 1K   ♡ 1K   ⬆

Credit:Twitter.

The real story… *This news was presented as Muslim only houses being created. However, it was actually a Muslim Housing Association that were providing homes for any home buyers in the area.*

This image shows fake news to share a hate message which is untrue to what was happening in the image. *This is of concern as it can create confusion and tension between different groups of people.*

Click Bait

Click Bait *is something on a website that encourages people to click on a link. It sometimes comes up as a tab or* **highlighted** *text. Whilst links can be useful to lead people to more/detailed information… be aware that some links are used for click bait.*

- Click Bait is often used to lead people to click on a link which generates income for a website or gains popularity on pages for groups.

- The image shows a social media post by Britain First who posted the image and asks people to share if they agree.

- Most people would usually agree that this image is a nice image of Britain, however, Britain First is a Far-Right group and sharing this image would gain popularity for the Far-Right group.

THINK: How does British wildlife relate to Far-Right agenda?

Online Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and develop extremist thinking associated with terrorist groups.

A schoolboy has become the youngest person in the UK to be convicted of terror offences.

At Westminster Magistrates' Court, the 14-year-old, who cannot be named, admitted three counts of possessing information useful to a terrorist.

The boy, from Darlington, was arrested in July last year when he was 13 as part of an investigation into extreme right-wing terrorism.

He was bailed and will be sentenced on 1 April at Newton Aycliffe Youth Court.

The teenager, who had been active on racist online forums, was charged last week with possessing information useful to a terrorist - namely manuals for making explosives - with the offences relating to a period on or before July 2021, when he was 13 or younger.

The investigation was carried out by Counter Terrorism Policing North East.

Until now **the youngest British terror offender was a neo-Nazi from Cornwall** who downloaded one of several terrorist manuals when he was 13 but he was two years older when he was arrested.

Here is an article of a young person, the youngest person convicted of terrorism in the UK, online in racist forums and charged with having information useful to a terrorist.

Radicalisers prey on people that are vulnerable, including children, to try to influence them to the way that they think/their ideology.

Because of the internet's popularity, radicalisers are increasingly moving to the online space.

This image shows propaganda used by Daesh. _Propaganda_ is information that is _spread for the purpose of promoting some cause._

If a young person finds propaganda online, much of what they see will appeal to them. This is because it's likened to their views on some issues and makes children think they are supporting groups that are doing good or for the disadvantaged.

In short, even intelligent, compassionate and charitable young people can be vulnerable to extremist narratives. If a young person sees a post like this and they don't know how to think critically about the information or if they don't think that they can talk to a trusted adult about the views in the post, they can be easily led into thinking that such groups are good. This an example groups use to manipulate children/the vulnerable to thinking its associated to a worthy cause.

Online Radicalisation

Online recruiters are relentless – they use the same techniques as grooming…

It's **IMPORTANT** to check…

- ✓ Who your child is talking to and listening to
- ✓ What and who they are watching
- ✓ Where they are going – the sites they are visiting

Possible signs of online radicalisation

- ➢ Increased secretiveness - especially around internet use
- ➢ Isolating themselves from family/friends/religion/interests
- ➢ Denial / muted when challenged
- ➢ De-sensitised from difficult situations / conflict / war
- ➢ Talking as if from scripted speech

- ➢ Increased levels of anger and / or violence
- ➢ Becoming disrespectful or targeting specific groups
- ➢ Asking inappropriate questions about Extremism/Terrorism
- ➢ Having extremist/terrorist materials or attending events!
- ➢ Extreme changes in: behavior, their language or appearance

NOTE – these can also be normal teenage behaviour! You know your children and will know when their behavior is of concern.

How extremists influence online

What's concerning is extremists often use images, videos and music that young people and children will know or like in their posts online and then link this to their information. This often presents changed information to present it as their own cause.

Charity? The propaganda shots show jihadis handing out cash to members of the public at a dole office

Propaganda from Daesh: An example shown here is captioned, Charity? "Jihadi's handing out cash to members of the public at the dole office". Daesh's cause is in no way charitable and has led to many lives lost, including more Muslims than non-Muslims.

This shows how extremists use popular news to try and increasing their engagement and followers on social media/online platforms.

Here Britain First are using the Poppy Appeal to attract people to like their information. And asking people to share their information and linking it to British wildlife and a cute image of a squirrel. The Poppy Appeal and British Wildlife are not associated with Far-Right politics.

How do I talk to my child about being safe online?

Working as a TEAM to stay safe online

Sites like www.NSPCC.org.uk have some excellent information for online safety and promote exploring the internet together with your child as a **T.E.A.M**.

- ➢ **T**alk about staying safe online.

- ➢ **E**xplore their online world together.

- ➢ **A**gree rules about what is okay and what is not.

- ➢ **M**anage your family's settings and controls.

Talk

- ✓ Tell your child to <u>speak up</u> and that they should not keep secrets if something is worrying them.

- ✓ <u>Reassure them</u> that you're interested in all aspects of their life.

- ✓ Say that you'd like to <u>talk about</u> stuff they've seen online, sites and apps they visit, and that <u>you'll share</u> the things you've seen too.

- ✓ <u>Recognise</u> that there will be positives to them being online, like using the internet to research homework, for example.

- ✓ Learn how to <u>keep safe online together</u>. This will help if online safety comes up as an issue later.
- ✓ **Talk often**. This will help you <u>keep up to date</u> with what they are doing online and who they are talking to regularly.

- ✓ Plan the time to talk into your family's week – this way you will <u>prioritise the time to talk</u> and you can share any worries or questions.

Ask your child if they know:

- Where reporting functions are
- How to block someone
- How to keep information private

Show them how to do these things….

- ✓ Use https://www.net-aware.org.uk/ to help
- ✓ Talk about online privacy, and being Share Aware

Explore

- ✓ Ask your child what sites or apps they like?
- ✓ **Write a list** - look at the apps together.
- ✓ Be positive about what you see and open up about the concerns you have: "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about the things I've seen here".
- ✓ Ask what they think is OK for children of different ages – they'll feel involved in the decision-making.

Be aware that your child might talk about friends who use apps or sites that you've decided aren't suitable.

Be ready to discuss your reasons but recognise that they may not agree with you.

Listen carefully for the reasons why?

Go through simple ways to protect their privacy. Avoid usernames like birth dates or locations that give away too much information.

Go through a final list of sites you both agree are ok and work out when you'll next discuss it.

Agree

- ✓ Agree how online behaviour – including sharing personal information, should be the <u>same as what you would do in person</u>.

- ✓ Agree to be <u>careful what you share</u> – sometimes people aren't who they say they are.

- ✓ Discuss images and photos, what might be suitable to share and what isn't.

- ✓ Discuss how photographs can give people a sense of you, and that sharing the wrong kind of image can give the wrong impression.

- ✓ Tell your child that if they're in any doubt <u>they should talk to you</u> first.When talking to your child - staying <u>calm and approachable</u> is the key.

Manage

- ✓ <u>Set controls</u> on all children's devices and yours if your children use them.
Call 0800 800 5002 and they'll talk you through it.

REPEAT ALL STEPS ON <u>AT LEAST A MONTHLY BASIS</u>

BE AS <u>HONEST AND OPEN</u> AS YOU CAN WITH YOUR CHILD

This will <u>build trust</u>. If your child is worried or come across worrying material online, they will be more likely to talk to you about this.

This is <u>important</u> because it will help you to see the risks and help you <u>reassure them</u> also.

If you are too strict they will not always turn to you when they are in need!

Information and Support

- NSPCC.org.uk

- Childline.org.uk/kids

- internetmatters.orgparentinfo.org

- educateagainsthate.com

- Let's Talk About It - www.ltai.info/

- Parentsafe.lgfl.net

- www.net-aware.org.uk/

- NSPCC/O2 - 0808 800 5002

- Vodafone Digital Parenting magazine - https://www.vodafone.co.uk/digital-parenting-order-form

- Inform the Police of a non-emergency on 101 or in an emergency call 999

- School Designated Safeguarding Lead

- If you need further information or if you have a query, email your local Sandwell Prevent inbox on
  Prevent_Inbox@sandwell.gov.uk

Prevent Training - Supporting information

For information, support or guidance on Prevent in Sandwell, you can email: Prevent_Inbox@sandwell.gov.uk

If you would like to talk to someone about any queries, concerns, or a referral do not hesitate to make contact via this email.

Prevent referrals
if you would like to submit a referral regarding an extremism concern go to:

http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200208/crime_prevention_and_emergencies/3608/tackling_extremism_and_terrorism_%E2%80%93_prevent

Report concerns anonymously

Anti-terrorist phoneline - 0800 789 321

The Department for Education helpline: 0207 340 7264 or email: counter_extremism@education.gov.uk

Additional Resources you can visit online:

Educate Against Hate: http://www.educateagainsthate.com

Run, Hide, Tell: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stay-safe-film

Action Counters Terrorism (ACT): https://act.campaign.gov.uk

The Counter Terrorism Policing ACT Awareness e-Learning is now available for the public to access & complete:
https://ct.highfieldelearning.com/

> "Don't give your kids a hard time. But it's important they are aware, that you are aware!"
>
> SANDWELL COUNCIL PREVENT TEAM