Internet Safety – Keeping your child and vulnerable family members safe on-line

Recently the DfE has supplied laptops to some children and young people via their schools. These laptops are intended for families where access to online learning is difficult (your school can tell you the criteria needed to access a DfE laptop)

Whilst there are huge benefits to being online many parents may feel concerned about the activities and content their children are accessing. We know that parents and carers have worries about their children accessing the internet. There are some simple steps and key resources available to parents and carers which will help keep children safe from different risks online.

The following information includes links to additional advice and guidance.

1. Do some research – the Internet is an amazing resource; however it can also pose a number of risks. The links below will help you understand the risks and how to reduce the chances of your child being exposed to risky online content. https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/

2. If you do become worried about something specific or want to know more about your child's 'online life', have a calm and open conversation in an honest and supportive way. Talk about what your child loves about using the Internet. It is important to have regular conversations about staying safe online and to encourage children to speak to you if they come across something worrying online. https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers

3. If you continue to have concerns, the following link gives guidance for parents and carers to keep children safe online. They will, amongst other things, support you to talk to your child about a range of online safety issues, set up home filtering in a child-friendly way and set up age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices. Check out https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers. https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

The Government website sets out specific harms which children can experience online https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online#keep-your-child-safe-online.

There are more resources to help you understand and protect your child from different harms online, including:

- child sexual abuse (a definition is provided as well as accessing immediate support by calling 999 or reporting online via the following link: https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/)
- exposure to radicalising content
- youth-produced sexual imagery ('sexting')
- cyberbullying
- exposure to age-inappropriate content, such as pornography
- exposure to harmful content, such as suicide content