Using this resource

The resource has been created to help an adult and a child have a conversation together about life online.

We strongly advise that any parent, carer, or other adult using this resource reads this guide in full before starting, to ensure they are fully prepared.

Tips to help the conversation run smoothly

Give your child plenty of advance notice so they don't feel ambushed. Try to choose a slot that fits into both of your routines.

Sit together in a quiet space without distractions, for example away from other people and without too much background noise.

Make sure you both feel comfortable and consider sitting side-by-side so you can look at the resource together.

Allow your child plenty of time to lead the conversation and focus on the positives at the start. Let them know that you want to work together.

Give them time to think, ask questions and share their thoughts without interruption or blame and listen carefully to any confusion or concerns.

Step-by-Step Guide

Box 1 and 2: Start with the positives

Once you are both settled, explain the purpose of this resource to your child. Together make a list of the devices they have access to. Ask your child what they like doing on these devices. Give them plenty of time to lead this part and let them guide what you make a note of in the boxes.

Box 3 and 4: Recognising online worries

Next, ask your child to share if they have any worries about the online world. Remember that your child's concerns may not be the same as your own. Give them plenty of time to share without interrupting and try to remain calm, even if they share something upsetting.

When you are sure they are finished, move on to speaking about your own worries about your child's life online. It may be helpful to think about these in advance and prioritise the most important ones, so the conversation is not too overwhelming.

Box 5 and 6: Strategies to keep your child safe

Next, ask your child what they already know about staying safe and happy online. This might include rules you've discussed in the past, things they've learnt from school or friends, or safety tools like reporting or blocking. For each 'strategy', discuss how useful and realistic it is.

Ask them to be honest about whether it's something they will do. You may like to suggest some ideas but give your child a chance to assess these in the same way. Afterwards, move the conversation on to things you can do to help your child, like offering emotional support or helping with safety settings.

Box 7 and 8: Wrapping up and agreeing expectations

Finish by summing up your conversation. Recap and agree any rules or expectations you have for staying safe online. Don't forget the positives – explain what your child can do online and the support you and others can offer.

Remind your child that if anything online worries or upsets them, they should tell you or another trusted adult. Add a note of this, and any named adults they might go to, in the final box.
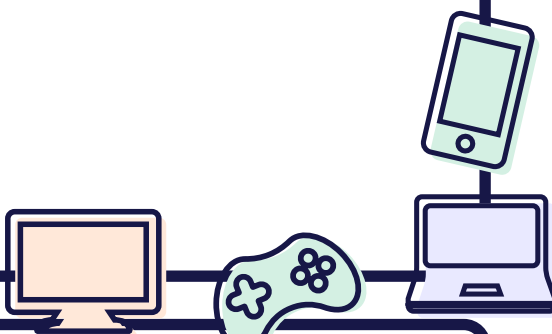
For some children, regular reminders of key expectations may be helpful. Keep the notes you've made to look back on or add to if needed.

Useful questions to help prompt ideas

What should we think about before sharing something online? • What settings can we use to help stay safe? • How can we tell if something is trustworthy online? • What are the age ratings of the games and apps we use? • Who do we talk to online? • How can we stay safe when chatting with people we only know online? • How can we manage the amount of time we spend online? • How can we make sure you only see the content online that you want to see?

For further help and resources visit:
childnet.com/parents-and-carers and **childnet.com/thrive**

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Thrive Online

My Life Online

A conversation between _____ **and** _____

1 These are all the devices I use...

2 The things I like to do online...

3 The worries I have about life online...

4 The worries my grown-up has about my life online...

5 I can do these things to keep myself safe and happy online...

6 My grown-up can do these things to keep me safe and happy online...

7 These are the rules we will use to stay safe online...

8 If something online worries or upsets me, I should...

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