

# Child Online Safety:

## A practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media



Social networking is hugely popular. Many children are sophisticated in the way they use social media apps and websites accessing them from a range of devices including smartphones, tablets, and games consoles. But social media, like all forms of public communication, comes with some risks. By helping your child understand what the risks are, you can play a big part in preventing them from turning into problems.



### Why children use social media

*Self-esteem*

*Entertainment*

*Belonging*



*Expression*

*Popularity*

*Confidence*

### Practical tips to help minimise the risks your child might face



Work through safety and privacy features on the apps that your child is using, or might use. Make sure they understand the point of these and how to use them. Don't be put off by believing your child knows more than you: the tools are actually quite easy to manage.

- **Ask them to show you** which social media apps they use and what they like about them. Talk about how they use them and what makes them so engaging.
- **Explain** how you can use privacy settings to make sure only approved friends can see posts & images.
- **Check if any of their apps have 'geo-location'** enabled, sharing their location unintentionally.
- **Show them how to report offensive comments** or block people who upset them.
- **Check 'tagging' settings** so that when others are posting or sharing photos online, your child's identity is not revealed. Also, get people's consent before sharing photos.
- **Encourage** your child to **come and talk to you** if they see anything that upsets them.

