

## In this issue:

- Advice for parents
- Digital Resilience
- Whats App
- Childline Resources

*The Achieve and Learn Trust believes that nothing is more important than safeguarding the young people in our schools.*

With the current Government conversation around the use of mobile phones by young people, we thought it was a good time to revisit the appropriate use of social media and how parents can have supportive conversations to promote resilience in their children.

## Advice for parents of pre-teens and teens

- **Follow age requirements** - Many popular Apps, sites and games are 13+, it's important to check and follow these with pre-teens.
- **Speak to phone providers** - If your child owns their own smartphone then contact the service provider to make sure it is registered as a child's device. This means additional safety restrictions can be put in place.
- **Support your child with their settings** - Support your child to manage their safety and wellbeing settings across devices and accounts.
- **Focus on regular safety conversations** – It's important to keep conversations regular at this age. Check the NSPCC advice on [tackling challenging conversations](#) including tips for how to use technology to support you with this.
- **Share youth facing help and support** - Make sure your child knows about services that can help like Childline. You could start by sharing the [online safety advice content](#) and the [Report Remove tool](#) created by the IWF and Childline.
- **Revisit parental controls** – you will likely need to revisit your parental controls again at this age and adjust them. Keep checking these regularly to make sure they are in place.
- **Explore healthy habits together** – Healthy habits work best when all the family agrees to following them. This could be agreeing to charge devices away from beds to support sleep and not using devices during mealtimes to help take breaks.



## Digital Resilience—what is it and how do we build it?

This guide will help you to understand what digital resilience is and why it is important

**How does going online affect young people?**

Like all aspects of our lives, going online conjures up a huge range of emotions and responses that can impact our mood and well-being. A young person could be pleased to see photos of their friend having a great time on holiday but at the same time they may feel envious because they are not there or have never been to such a place. We want young people to think and talk about how going online makes them feel.

**What is digital resilience?**

“Digital resilience involves having the ability to understand when you are at risk online, knowing what to do if anything goes wrong, learning from your experiences of being online, and being able to recover from any difficulties or upsets.”

Digital Resilience Working Group  
The UK Council for Child Internet Safety

**Why is digital resilience important?**

Digital resilience gives young people the ability to recognise when going online is having a negative impact and the strategies to bounce back and recover. If a young person realises that the balance has shifted and going online is not making them feel supported, empowered and happy we want them to have a variety of people and techniques that they can turn to.

### DIGITAL RESILIENCE TIPS TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE

#### BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK

- Reach out to someone and support others too. A problem shared is a problem halved.
- Find useful sites or organisations who can help

#### LIFESTYLE CHANGES

- Make time for the things and people that make you happy.
- Look out for new challenges.
- Life can be hectic. Find ways to help you relax

#### GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK

- You are not perfect and will make mistakes. Be kind and fair to yourself.
- Take some time offline if you want to.
- Sort out disagreements quickly.

#### PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Get some exercise, be active.
- Put your devices away at night to get a good night's sleep.
- Eat regularly and healthily.

These tips have been adapted with thanks from © Mind  
This information is published in full at [mind.org.uk](#)

#### HELP YOUNG PEOPLE TO:

- ☺ Recognise that going online can bring highs and lows
- ☺ Develop their own ways to manage risk and recover
- ☺ Adapt to the situations they face
- ☺ Look for support and know where to find it

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about



# WHATSAPP



WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients; not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

### DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

### ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours, in India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

### LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a 'simple and secure way to let people know where you are.' It is a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they don't know, they would be exposing their location to them, too.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

[CLICK HERE](#)

### CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to identify who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensuring that your child's profile is better protected.

### EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.

### REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.

### LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.

### THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.

### DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone'. However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.

### CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.

### Meet Our Expert

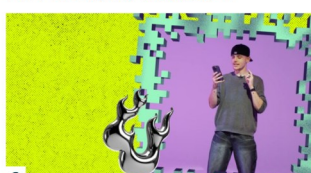
Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



## Online Safety Support—Childline

Childline have some excellent resources for young people which address online safety and promote digital resilience in a fun and accessible way. This can also be used by parents who want to "upskill" before having conversations with their children. You can access the resources from this link; [Online safety | Childline](#)

### FOR EVERYDAY SCROLLING



How to feel good on social media  
We've got ideas to make your scrolling work for you.



Taking control of your online safety  
Our tips will help you stay one step ahead.



Level up your gaming  
Give your gaming a boost with our top safety tips.

**Your privacy and what you share online**

**Trusting others online**

**Online Safety Act**

## FOR THE BIGGER QUESTIONS

The internet can be confusing, and sometimes things happen that leave you needing answers. We've got advice that can help.

**Sexting and nudes**  
Our advice is here to help you know your rights, the law, or what to do if something goes wrong.

**Fake news and misinformation**  
We want to help you spot fake news, and give you advice on what to do if misinformation is affecting you.

**Grooming**  
Grooming is when someone builds your trust and makes a connection with you to get you to do something sexual or illegal. We have advice if you're worried.

**Questions about porn?**  
It's normal to be curious about porn or wonder what it is. However you're feeling, we've got information to help.