



Important Information on Cyber Safety for Children

Children and young people in care should be encouraged and supported to participate in positive experiences involving digital media, as long as it is safe to do so. There are a number of strategies that carers can use to help children stay safe online, including modelling appropriate internet usage and being aware of the risks associated to children on social media platforms. Carers can also be active in educating children and young people in their care to engage safe internet behaviour.

Many children and young people use social networking websites to share information about themselves, as well as to communicate with biological family. It is easy to forget that the internet is a public place where information can be accessed easily by unintended viewers or used for unintended purposes. Helping children and young people to be aware of the public nature of the internet can actively help to support internet safety.

Be engaged, open and supportive

- get involved. Share online time with your children as part of family life and continue conversations around social media
- always keep the lines of communication open. Ask about their online experiences and who they are interacting with, while monitoring where possible
- reassure your child that they can always come to you, no matter what. Let them know you will not cut internet access if they report feeling uncomfortable or unsafe when online
- if you notice a change in mood or behaviour, discuss this with your child and consult health professionals if required, as well as discussing with your Case Manager
- let your child know that additional support and resources are available, such as your Case Manager.

Set some rules and boundaries

- set age appropriate rules for devices and online access
- seek your child's input, to help them better understand the risks
- consider creating a family contract as a way to help you agree on the rules and renegotiate as required.

Use the available technology

- get to know the devices you and your children use and set them up for privacy and online safety
- utilise parental controls and monitor screen time
- choose apps and games carefully, considering age ratings, developmental capacity and consumer advice.

Due to legal reasons, information that identifies or is likely to identify a child as connected to the Child Protection system cannot be published. This includes publishing information identifying the child as being in Out-of-Home-Care or the subject of a risk of harm report. As per the ChildStory Factsheet, you do not require consent for kids to appear in a school photo, sports team photos or home video, as long as it's for personal use.

**Do all the good you can
because every life matters**



Cyber Safety Factsheet

Important tips for keeping your child safe online

Teenagers 12-17 years

Teenagers can spend a lot of time online – instant messaging, sharing photos and videos, playing games, communicating via chat forums and having contact with biological family members.

For young people between 12-17 years old, it is important to:

- continue to check suitability and age ratings (including developmental age)
- utilise parental controls as needed
- stay engaged and ask about their online experiences
- have an open door policy whilst using social media
- reinforce the importance of protecting their personal information and privacy
- equip them to use social media responsibly and think before they post
- educate them on the resources and information available to them
- if you become aware that your child is communicating with biological family members online, discuss this with your Case Manager, so adequate support can be provided
- remind them that they could expose themselves to risk by sharing sexually suggestive or intimate photos of themselves with others
- assist in building resilience, self-respect and empathy as they navigate through their teenage years
- let them know that anything they upload, email or message could stay online forever; they should only post things online they wouldn't mind you, their teachers or a future employer seeing.

For further information or questions specific to any child in your care, please speak to your Case Manager

* Printed 2019 *Information adapted from Office of the eSafety Commissioner.

Helpful resources

Headspace <https://headspace.org.au>

Parentline www.parentline.org.au

Kids Helpline <https://kidshelpline.com.au>