



20<sup>th</sup> July 2022

## E-safety Newsletter End of Summer term

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we head into the summer holidays, when our children have more leisure time on their hands and are likely to spend more time in their virtual world, it is important to remind them, and ourselves, that the internet can be lots of fun and a great source of information, entertainment and social communication if we are able to navigate it with caution and safety at the front of our minds.

Children and young people today are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living much of their lives online. The internet provides many opportunities for our children, but also brings with it risks. We need to help our children understand these risks and equip them with the skills to keep themselves as safe as possible online. We also need to be confident that they understand how to report online harm and where to access help and support if they need it. Any child can be vulnerable online, and their vulnerability can fluctuate depending on their age, developmental stage (academically, emotionally and socially) and personal circumstance.

The most recent advice being delivered by the experts (including "The 2 Johns", EST e-safety training) is that in today's virtual world, it is almost impossible to avoid 'cyber strangers' or 'cyber traps'; the best way we can keep our children safe, is to ensure that they know how to identify the dangers, what to do if they stumble upon them and know that they can talk to us (parents/carers/trusted adults) about their online experiences and access our support. It is important to teach children how to navigate the online world and equip them with sufficient knowledge and understanding to keep themselves safer online.

### The key points to ensure your children know are:

- ✓ **How to evaluate what they see online** – children need to be able to assess and make judgements about what they see online, and not automatically assume that what they see is real or appropriate.
- ✓ **How to recognise techniques used for persuasion** – children should understand the techniques that are often used to persuade or manipulate others.
- ✓ **Online behaviour** – children should understand what acceptable and unacceptable online behaviour (in themselves and others) looks like. They should apply the same standards of behaviour and honesty on and offline, including respect for others.
- ✓ **How to identify online risks** – children should be able to identify possible online risks and make informed decisions about how to act.
- ✓ **How and when to seek support** – children should understand safe ways in which to seek support if they are concerned or upset by something they have seen online, and also how to report online harm.
- ✓ **No Blame Culture** – children need to feel safe to disclose any worries or concerns to their trusted adults so that they can be open and honest about anything that they may have seen or found themselves involved in (which can happen so easily and so innocently) without the fear of judgement.

To append this newsletter, I have attached some up to date weblinks to really useful information and advice sources. I have also included some more specific information about **Fortnite** (which is very popular amongst children, teens and adults who are all sharing their gaming experience with 'Cyber strangers') and **Snapchat** (a popular app for those 13+ years and above for chatting by text and sharing photos) which has a new feature allowing users to be added to group chats (which can enable friends of friends to be added and then have access to phone numbers and IP addresses of all users in the group chat).

If your child has expressed concerns, that you would like advice or support to address, please do not hesitate to let us know; we will be more than happy to support and advise you, or signpost you to further advisory services.

I hope that you and your children have a lovely and safe summer exploring all the positive and safe experiences you can have in the virtual world as well as the real world.

Yours sincerely



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## Appendix 1:

### Resources for parents and carers:

- [Internet Matters](#) – a not-for-profit organisation set up to empower parents and carers to keep children safe in the digital world. Their support for parents includes a range of downloadable guides covering subjects such as transition to secondary school, Vlogging & livestreaming, online gaming and cyberbullying
- [NSPCC](#) - includes a range of resources to help parents keep children safe when they're using the internet, social networks, apps, games and more
- [Parent Info](#) - from CEOP and Parent Zone, Parent Info is a website for parents covering all of the issues amplified by the internet. It is a free service which helps schools engage parents with expert safety advice, endorsed by the National Crime Agency's CEOP command. This website provides expert information across a range of online harms
- [Parent Zone](#) - offers a range of resources for families, to help them meet the challenges of the digital age, including parent guides on the latest digital trends and platforms.

### Resources for pupils:

- [BBC Own It](#) - support for young people to take control of their online life, including help and advice, skills and inspiration on topics such as friendships and bullying, safety and self-esteem
- [Childline](#) – includes information for pupils on sexting, gaming, grooming, bullying, porn, relationships.

The Essex Safeguarding Children Board also has a lot of information about [Online Safety \(escb.co.uk\)](#) and [parents can be directed to the website.](#)

# Keep your child safe on Fortnite

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- Fortnite is an online video game where players compete to be the last person standing in a post-apocalyptic world. The most popular version is Fortnite: Battle Royale, which sees up to 100 players pitted against each other to stay alive on an island. Players can build and demolish structures, and collect weapons, supplies and armour to help them along the way
  - Players shoot each other using a range of lethal weapons, but the brightly-coloured, cartoon-style graphics and lack of bloodshed mean it doesn't feel too gory or graphic
  - To play, the age recommendation is **12 and above** – although you don't have to provide your age when creating an account, so younger children can still use it easily
  - Fortnite: Battle Royale is **free to download** on PC/Mac, Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch, Android and iOS devices (Apple phones and tablets)
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## What are the concerns?

You may have seen news reports or heard concerns raised about:

- **Communication between players:** they can talk to each other via messaging or a headset and microphone. Children could speak to strangers or be at risk of cyber-bullying
  - **In-app purchases:** children can build up large bills on their parents' accounts by buying cosmetic items, like outfits for their character, and better-looking weapons ('skins')
  - **The game's addictive nature:** there have been stories of children staying up all night to play, and falling asleep in lessons. Some people say this is down to the communal feel of the game – you can play with your friends – and because it's different every time you play
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## 3 steps to take to keep your child safe

### 1. Use the parental controls on your gaming device

- Most devices allow you to **set time limits** on game play, **set age limits** for content, and **restrict in-app purchases**. Go to the website below for links to detailed instructions on your child's device – it covers PlayStation, Xbox, Apple and Android phones, and Nintendo Switch:
  - [Ask About Games](http://www.askaboutgames.com/advice/parental-controls) - [www.askaboutgames.com/advice/parental-controls](http://www.askaboutgames.com/advice/parental-controls)
- Battles in Fortnite last around 20 minutes, so make use of this natural stopping point when limiting your child's screen time. Set a limit in terms of matches rather than hours and minutes, or set time limits in 20-minute increments

### 2. Turn off the voice chat feature

Speak to your child to make sure they understand how to use this feature safely. Encourage them to follow the steps below if they meet someone who is offensive or inappropriate in the game.

To **disable the in-game voice chat function**:

- Select the menu icon, then 'Settings'
- Select the 'audio' tab (it's represented by a speaker icon)
- Tap the arrows next to 'voice chat'

To **'mute' individual players:**

- Pause the game
- Hover over the player you wish to mute and select the mute button (a loudspeaker icon)

### 3. Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate behaviour

To **report** players who make your child feel uncomfortable:

- Select the menu icon, then 'Reporting/feedback'
- On the 'Feedback type' tab, select 'Report player'
- On the 'Select player' tab, select the name of the player you want to report
- On the 'Submit' tab, select 'Accept' to send the report
- Select 'Send report'

## What else can I do?

- Download and play the game to help you understand it
- Take a look at the other parental controls explained on the Epic Games website:  
<https://bit.ly/2o3YnaC>
- Talk to your child about what they're doing online, and make sure they know they can talk to you about anything that has upset them. See more guidance from the NSPCC on how to do this here:  
<https://bit.ly/1HpiYgO>
- Check your bank statements and gaming system account balance regularly for in-app purchases you're not happy with, and to make sure your child isn't getting around any passwords you've set up

### Sources

**This factsheet was produced by Safeguarding Training Centre from The Key.**

- [Fortnite, Epic Games](https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/home)  
<https://www.epicgames.com/fortnite/en-US/home>
- [Fortnite: Battle Royale, Net Aware](https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/fortnite-battle-royale/)  
<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/fortnite-battle-royale/>
- ['Fortnite chat raises stranger danger fears from NSPCC, BBC News, 3 May 2018](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-43988210)  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-43988210>

# Keep your child safe on Snapchat

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Snapchat is an app for sending photos and videos (known as ‘Snaps’), and text messages. The ‘Stories’ feature lets users share photos or videos with all their contacts at once.

Snaps disappear after being opened, usually within seconds. Stories disappear after 24 hours. Images and messages aren’t automatically saved on phones.

The **minimum age** to use Snapchat is **13**, but it’s easy to sign up if you’re younger.

## What’s the problem?

- There’s a risk of seeing sexual content, and of bullying
  - Your child’s location could be shared automatically with their contacts, which could put them in danger if they have strangers as ‘friends’ on the app. A new ‘Meet Up’ feature allows people to get directions to another user’s location, if they’re sharing their location
  - There’s a risk of children being ‘groomed’ by strangers into sharing pictures and information about themselves. Gangs also use apps to groom and recruit children
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## 4 steps to help your child use Snapchat safely

### 1. Tell your child to only use it with real friends

Anyone could pretend to be a child or teenager online, so encourage your child not to talk to people they don’t know in real life. Encourage them not to share information such as what school they go to or where they live with people they don’t know offline.

### 2. Use privacy settings

By default, only ‘friends’ your child has added on Snapchat can contact them directly and see their story or location, so encourage your child to keep those default settings.

To check and change the settings:

- Tap the person icon in the top-left of Snapchat, then the cog in the top-right
- Scroll down to the ‘Privacy Control’ section and tap the relevant options (e.g. ‘Contact Me’ and ‘View My Story’)
- Under ‘See My Location’, enable ‘Ghost Map’ to turn location sharing off
- Under ‘See Me In Quick Add’ you can stop your child’s profile from being suggested to strangers as a potential ‘friend’

### 3. Talk to your child about image sharing and being careful about what they share

Even though images disappear in Snapchat, they can be screenshotted and then shared – outside of the original sender’s control.

So, remind your child to think carefully about the images they share, and with whom. Before they share anything, tell them to ask: “Would I be happy for other people to see this?”

In particular, make sure your child knows the risks of **taking, sharing or viewing naked or sexually explicit pictures of themselves or another child, either voluntarily or if asked to by someone else.**

This is known as 'sharing nudes and semi-nudes' or 'sexting' and is illegal, even when the person doing it is a child. It can also be distressing for a child to have their image shared more widely, or to see an inappropriate image that someone else has shared.

#### 4. Make sure your child knows how to use reporting and blocking functions

- To **report** a Snap or Story, press and hold on it, tap 'Report Snap', then explain the problem
- To **remove** or **block** a friend, swipe to the right to go to the 'Chat' screen, then tap and hold on the person's name. Tap 'Manage Friendship', then choose 'Remove Friend' or 'Block'

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## What can I do about online bullying?

- Encourage your child to talk to you if someone says something upsetting or hurtful to them
- Look for signs they may be being bullied, like being afraid or reluctant to go to school, feeling nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn, or losing sleep
- Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences

#### There are also a few ways you can save images and messages as evidence:

- Use another device to, quickly, take a photo of the image or message (this is the only way you can save the image without other people knowing)
- Tap on the message, quickly, to save it (other people will know, from the grey background)
- Take a screenshot, quickly (the person who shared it will get a notification)
- Change your 'delete' settings to save messages for 24 hours – swipe to the right to go to the 'Chats' screen, tap and hold a friend's name, then 'Chat Settings' > 'Delete Chats...' > '24 Hours after Viewing'

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## What can I do if I think my child is being targeted by a gang?

Share your concerns with our school immediately. You can also contact the NSPCC for advice – call 0808 800 5000 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Be alert to changes in your child – such as having new unexplained possessions, changing friendship groups, behaviour and mood changes, or unexplained injuries.

#### Sources used for this factsheet

- [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes, NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/)  
*https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/sexting-sending-nudes/*
- [Snapchat Support, Snapchat](https://support.snapchat.com/en-US)  
*https://support.snapchat.com/en-US*
- [Instagram biggest for child grooming online – NSPCC finds, BBC News](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47410520)  
*https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47410520*

This factsheet was produced by [The Key Safeguarding](https://thekey safeguarding.com/safeguarding): [thekeysupport.com/safeguarding](https://thekeysupport.com/safeguarding)