

# Supporting children's digital journey

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matters.org

## Tips for parents to help children navigate the online world safely



### Conversations

Whatever the age of your child, it's never too late or too early to talk about what they do online and why. Having regular conversations gives you insight on when to offer help and makes it easier for them to share concerns about anything that may upset them online.



#### Helpful resource

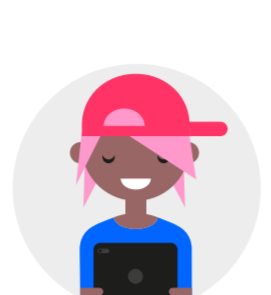
Visit our [online safety age guides](#) for age-specific advice on how to support your child online as they grow

### What to talk about



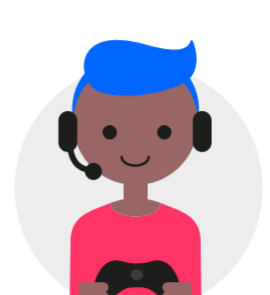
#### Pre-schoolers (0-5)

- Activities or apps they like
- Questions they have about what they've seen online
- What to do if they get upset about something they see



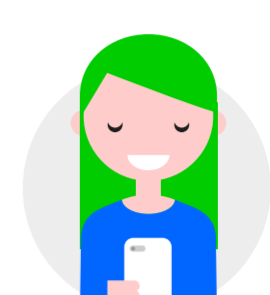
#### Young children (6-10)

- Why they like certain apps, games or activities online
- Digital challenges they may face and how to resolve them i.e. seeing inappropriate content and screen time use
- Importance of questioning what they see online to build critical thinking



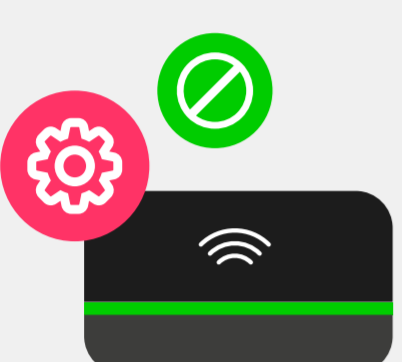
#### Pre-teens (11-13)

- How they use specific apps and platform they like
- Benefits and risks of social networking before they join any sites
- Potential digital challenge they may face, i.e. cyberbullying, online peer pressure and screen time use



#### Teens (14+)

- Apps they use, who they talk to and what they share online
- How they protect their privacy and manage their time online
- Digital challenges they face and how to resolve them (i.e. online peer pressure)
- The impact of their words and actions online
- Places to turn for help, i.e. trusted adults, Childline or online forums



### Safety

Take advantage of the great tech tools, broadband filters and parental control settings on apps, platforms and devices they use to create a safer environment for them to explore online.



#### Helpful resource

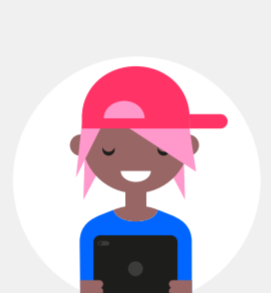
Visit our [Set Up Safe how-to guides](#) to set controls and privacy settings on over 70 networks, apps, devices and platforms

### What to consider



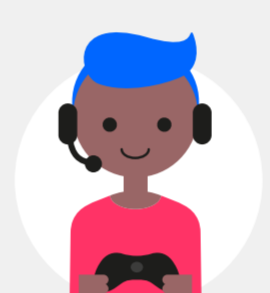
#### Pre-schoolers (0-5)

- Use broadband filters to block adult content across devices they use
- Consider setting screen time limits on devices they use
- Choose age appropriate apps and games to limit exposure to inappropriate content



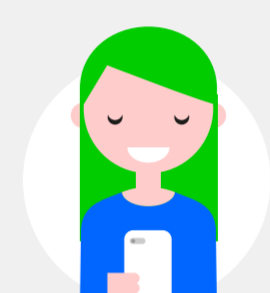
#### Young children (6-10)

- Opt for devices built for children that offer curated media and parental controls to manage what they see
- Make use of tech tools and apps like Apple's Screen Time app and Google Family link to manage what apps they use and when



#### Pre-teens (11-13)

- Review controls and filters set on their devices to make sure they are still suitable as the grow
- When setting limits and filters, get them involved so they feel part of the decision making process



#### Teens (14+)

- Set up a family agreement that you all sign up to, to manage expectations of what they should and shouldn't be doing online
- Discuss how they prioritise their digital world with commitments offline



### Behaviour

As soon as they are able to share and interact with others online, talk to them about what it means to be a good digital citizen and emphasise the importance of developing a good digital footprint.



#### Helpful resource

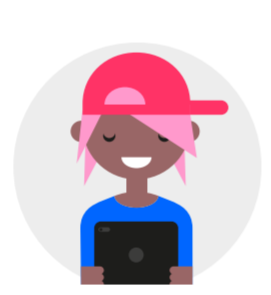
Share our [Top Internet Manners Guide](#) to help children recognise how to best interact with other online

### What to share



#### Pre-schoolers (0-5)

- Start talking to them about what is and isn't appropriate to share online
- Use books like Webster's Email or Webster's Friend to illustrate how to behave online



#### Young children (6-10)

- Introduce them to the Childnet's SMART rules
- Together visit BBC Own it website, a resource to help children tackle digital challenges



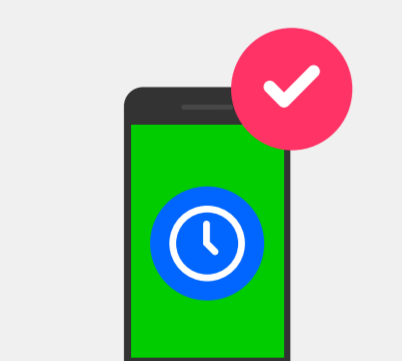
#### Pre-teens (11-13)

- Read the NSPCC Share Aware guide to encourage your child to be share safely
- Share the Stop, Speak, Support online safety code to help them take positive steps to support others online



#### Teens (14+)

- Help them feel confident about saying no if they are asked to do something that puts them or others at risk
- Encourage them to create an online image, which reflects who they are



### Timing

Screen time can be both educational and entertaining for children but it can also be a distraction from other activities.

Help children find the right balance by establishing a family agreement on when, where and how they should be using screens, making sure to review this as they grow.



#### Helpful resource

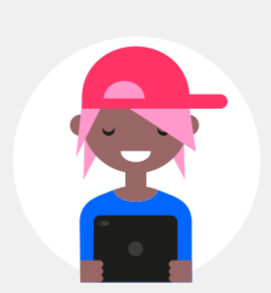
Visit our [Screen Time advice hub](#) to get more practical tips and expert advice

### How to manage



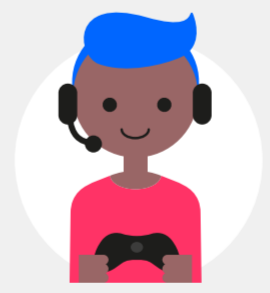
#### Pre-schoolers (0-5)

- Encourage a healthy mix of online and offline activities
- Use time limiting tools to help manage how much time they spend



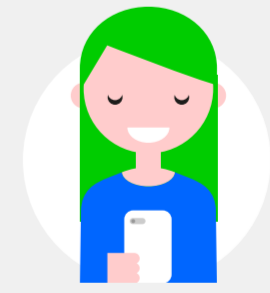
#### Young children (6-10)

- Encourage them to explore a range of different types of media
- Help them balance active screen time (where they create, move with screens) and passive screen time (i.e. streaming their favourite show)



#### Pre-teens (11-13)

- Teach them how to prioritise offline activities with screen time use
- Encourage them to leave devices outside the bedroom at night



#### Teens (14+)

- Talk to them about why it's beneficial for them to self-regulate their screen time (i.e. health benefits, removing distractions)
- Be a good role model as children tend to copy what they see



### Exploring

As children expand their digital world by exploring different media, using social media and playing online games, encourage them to question what they see to build critical thinking. Give them coping strategies so they know where to go for help and who to talk to for support.



#### Helpful resource

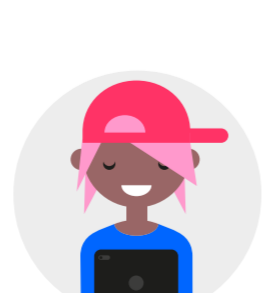
Visit our [Digital Resilience age guides](#) to help children become more digitally savvy

### What to do



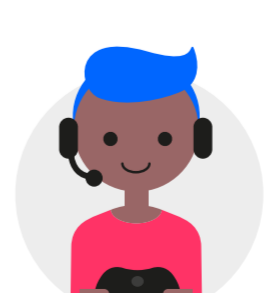
#### Pre-schoolers (0-5)

- Watch, play and explore with your child as they start their digital journey
- Supervise your child's use so you know when to step in



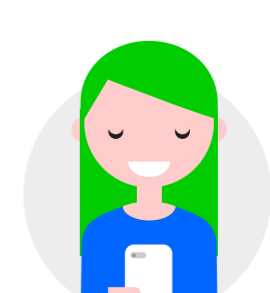
#### Young children (6-10)

- Get involved and show interest in what they're doing online
- Remind them that they can talk to you or a trusted adult if they have concerns



#### Pre-teens (11-13)

- Encourage them to question what they see online and not take everything at face value
- Talk about finding their identity and parts of content



#### Teens (14+)

- Help them critically assess what other people say about them online
- Reassure them that you're here to support them and not judge if they have an issue they feel embarrassed to share