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Digital Parenting

10 'How to' guides

SET smartphone Parental Controls with Vodafone Guardian

MAKE THE MOST of BlackBerry Parental Controls

PROTECT privacy on Facebook

SEARCH safely on Google

Reporting concerns
How to contact websites, agencies and authorities

Expert views
Why are age ratings important?
How much time online is too much?
What technology can we expect in the future?

Toddlers and tech
It's second nature

Apps, BBM, Facebook...
What are teens' favourite digital spaces?

Grandparents
How can they get more involved?

www.vodafone.com/parents

You can find an online version of this magazine on our website, which you can download and save as a PDF or save single articles as individual PDFs if you wish. You can also find further information about many of the topics covered in Digital Parenting and a more detailed jargonbuster.

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Welcome

Technology moves at lightning speed and will continue transforming our lives. New gadgets, websites and apps appear every day and with children going online at an earlier age and spending increasing amounts of time in their digital world, challenges can arise. It's not surprising that some parents feel overwhelmed at times, trying to encourage, protect and give their children access to the tools and knowledge available — be they toddlers or teens.

At Vodafone, we're committed to supporting and empowering parents so that they can help their children to make the most of digital technology and deal with the challenges it might bring. We launched the first Digital Parenting magazine in 2010 to help parents feel more confident about getting involved and setting boundaries in their child's digital world. The magazine was read by a large number of parents and we received great feedback about it, so I'm delighted to be introducing our second issue and I'd like to thank everyone who has made it possible.

The topics we cover in this issue have been influenced by a number of factors, including the latest technological developments (especially the rise of apps, games, smartphones and social networking services), comments from our readers and insights from Vodafone's work with the UK Government and the European Commission.

Once again, we've drawn on the latest research and advice to bring you up to speed on critical topics. Where bullying is concerned, for example, we look at one recent study that reveals how some young people regard and refer to online meanness as 'drama' and don't see themselves as either a bully or a victim – a viewpoint that might differ considerably from that of their parents. We also explore the issues of privacy and online reputation, explaining why children and teenagers need to carefully consider what they reveal about themselves online as they're creating long-lasting digital footprints that could affect them when they apply for college or jobs in the future.

It was always our goal to give parents access to expert advice so you'll find articles by more than 25 digital and parenting experts in this issue, including psychiatrists, teachers, parenting advisers and industry representatives. As well as Expert View articles on subjects as wide-ranging as the importance of age ratings to the future of the internet, we've focused on the sexualisation and commercialisation of young people, as we know that parents are increasingly concerned about this.

We've also spoken to a number of young people around the UK about the technologies they enjoy and the difference they make to their lives. And, with London hosting the Olympics and the Paralympics in 2012, we've been privileged to hear from three young athletes about the important role technology plays in their professional and personal lives, especially when they're away from home and want to keep in touch with their family, friends and coaches.

To help you make the most of some of the safety and privacy tools already available, there are 10 step-by-step 'How To' guides in this issue, including how to use the Vodafone Guardian app and how to set up the new BlackBerry Parental Controls. And we've also developed a guide to help you report any online concerns your child might have to popular service providers (such as Facebook, Google and Xbox) and relevant authorities (such as the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and ParentPort).

Finally, there is a special feature on the role that grandparents can play in your child's digital world, especially as so many are now involved in caring for their grandchildren. Having spoken to a number of grandparents, we know that they are keen to play their part and set the same rules as those set by the children's parents. To support grandparents, we're very pleased to provide, for the first time, guidance to help them make accessing the internet and using mobiles and other digital devices more enjoyable and safer for their grandchildren.

Whether you read Digital Parenting cover-to-cover, dip in and out or use it as a reference tool whenever you have a particular question, we hope it helps you to stay up-to-date and gives you the confidence to be more involved in your child's digital world.

Annie Mullins OBE
Head of Content Standards for Vodafone Group

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Real life
Digital life
Striking the right balance

Annie Mullins OBE, Head of Content Standards at Vodafone Group, discusses how parents influence their children's use of technology, especially when it comes to finding balance in our hyper-connected lives.

Working for Vodafone, it will come as no surprise that I love technology. It's immersive and compelling and I often struggle not to be distracted by a text or email coming through on my iPhone, even when I'm with friends or family. My iPad is always with me; my mobile is a vital hub for all my contacts; I'm on Facebook every day and how could I live without the iCloud now?

Clearly, I'm not the only one who behaves this way. The latest report from the UK media regulator Ofcom revealed that the average Briton sends 50 text messages a week and that UK households now own, on average, three different types of internet-enabled devices (such as a laptop, smartphone or games console).

Technology connects us, drives us and inspires us in so many ways. As I watched Jessica Ennis win gold at the Olympics in London, I was struck by the explosion of camera flashes in the crowd. A moment in history captured, celebrated and instantly shared with friends and family around the world. Technology – and the fact that so many of us are embracing it – made that possible.

But, over the last year, I've heard a number of experts expressing their concerns about the increasingly central role that technology is playing in our lives and the potential impact this is having, especially on young people. I think it's important to share some of their insights in this article and to look at how our use of technology as adults may affect the way children and teenagers use it.

Growing up with screens

For young people who have always been surrounded by screens, being 'always on' and multitasking are simply part of daily life. As Sherry Turkle, author

of 'Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other', put it in an article in the New York Times, "Technology-enabled, we are able to be with one another, and also elsewhere, connected to wherever we want to be." Texting and instant messaging, building followings on Tumblr, tagging photos on Facebook… it's second nature for young people.

"Digital technology is part of how young people define themselves."

I recently watched my four-year-old nephew using the family iPad with ease and dexterity. It had apparently kept him fully occupied on a long flight from the US and it wasn't long before he demanded that I play his football game with him – all before he can even read, write or tie his own shoelaces. And, as part of my work, I recently spent time with a group of teenagers, hearing all about their digital lives. It was a real eye-opener.

It's clear that digital technology is now integral to young people's lives. It isn't just about having useful or fun gadgets, it's part of how they define themselves. And their use of technology is both the same and completely different to that of adults. Many teenagers, for example, use it to manage their social lives, to create images of themselves and friends that they share widely and to explore and participate in a world that is seemingly far from the prying eyes of adults, including their parents. So, the challenge for all of us, is to understand how young people use technology, to try to keep up with what they are doing and to help our families to strike the right balance between real life and digital life.

While I'm impressed that my nephew finds touch screen technology so intuitive and accessible, I also understand that there needs to be a good mix of online and offline activities in his life. Similarly, although I recognise the enormous educational and social benefits that technology offers children and teenagers, I'm acutely aware of the many challenges, pressures and risks they have to navigate along the way. As developers bring new ideas to the market and innovators create new ways for us to connect with each other, we're all trying to figure out what the impact might be on young people – how we can best encourage them to enjoy technology but at the same time use it safely and responsibly.

Being the benchmark

I spend my working life thinking about these issues so I know how hard it can be to keep up. For parents, the challenge is enormous, particularly given the ability of children and teenagers to adopt and adapt to the latest new thing. Testing boundaries and figuring out ways to outsmart the controls and safeguards that are put in place to keep them safe is what young people do – as the tech industry creates better Parental Controls, so young people will figure out how to get around them; as new websites appear on the scene, so young people will delete their browser history.

As role model, teacher, sounding board, rule maker and, of course, purchaser of the family technology, parents will always be best-placed to teach their children how to make the most of digital devices and services and minimise the risks. The way we use technology at home, the rules we set for ourselves, how we conduct our own friendships online and how we strike the right

balance between digital life and real life creates a framework for the whole family's digital world.

Some parents are shaping their children's digital footprint before they even squeeze their toes into their first pair of booties – from sharing pregnancy scans and photos from the maternity ward on Facebook to posting videos of baby's first steps and amusing eating habits on YouTube. And how many of us find it hard to put down our own gadgets during family time, especially if we're bringing work home with us? Whether it's checking our emails over dinner or fitting in a quick text while reading a bedtime story (after all, multitasking is crucial as a parent), we should consider the impact this might be having on our kids.

With this in mind, is it any wonder that young people don't like their screen time to be restricted by mum or dad? Should we really be surprised that the lines between their offline and online personas are blurring more and more? Is it fair to expect them to consider the digital trail they're leaving with every comment they post, every photo they share, every website they visit, every text they send… unless we do the same?

Balance is crucial

As technology seeps into all corners of our lives, there are fewer natural break-off points. Work and home are increasingly overlapping and children and adults alike might feel that they're competing for time and attention with all the digital devices in their household.

The need to find balance in our 'hyper-connected' lives was highlighted at a major internet conference that I attended last year. During one of the panels, William Powers, author of 'Hamlet's BlackBerry', explained how his family deals with this issue. Every weekend, the Powers family simply unplugs the internet. It might seem rather dramatic but, as Powers points out, being connected is better when it is balanced with time when we're not connected.

As Powers' co-panelist at the conference, Sherry Turkle, commented in her article in the New York Times, "We live in a technological universe in which we are always communicating. And yet we have sacrificed conversation for mere connection." So, yes, we (and our children) might be connected to hundreds of people but are we really 'in touch' with them? Have we, as Turkle puts it, sacrificed conversation for mere connection?

"Let's enjoy the myriad of benefits that technology brings but not at the expense of face-to-face interaction."

As we embrace technology and learn to live with its omnipresence, the conundrum we face is to make it work for us in our personal and professional lives but especially in our family life. Spending time – in person – with family, friends and colleagues is necessary for human relationships to flourish, so we all need to take a step back sometimes and look at how we're managing our own digital world. We have to keep asking ourselves if we're getting the balance right. Taking time out from tech now and again is an important part of this – be it whole weekends like the Powers' family or simply having a rule of no mobile phones at the dinner table (even if work is pressing, as it often is).

You'll know from my opening lines that I'm the first to acknowledge that great things happen thanks to technology –

we're connected to others, we're entertained, we learn, we're creative and we're empowered – but I also know that precious moments can take place without the involvement of any digital devices. So, while it's all well and good having 500+ Facebook friends and texts pinging through every few minutes, we should still nurture our relationships and interests in real life and encourage our children to do the same.

Let's enjoy the myriad of benefits that technology brings but not at the expense of face-to-face interaction with other human beings. I'm certainly going to try harder. ◢

Spotlight on
age

Toddlers are taking to 'touch screens' like ducks to water. Children are glued to their games consoles. Teenagers are managing their entire lives from their smartphone. How can you keep up and stay in control?

The technology timeline for kids and teens is far from straightforward. Not every seven-year-old, 10-year-old or 15-year-old uses the same technologies – it depends on things like how mature they are, what their parents' views are and what devices they have access to at home, at school and at their friends' houses.

With this in mind, we decided not to divide all the contents of Digital Parenting by age group. But we do understand that it can be helpful to have specific advice by age, so we've pulled together some key action points to help your son or daughter enjoy their digital world and stay safer and responsible at various ages.

On pages 8 and 9, you'll find four checklists for parents with children of different ages. Plus, we've included an 'essentials' checklist for parents of children of any age, which highlights the actions you should take for your whole family.

These are by no means definitive lists (the tech world moves far too quickly to be able to promise that!) but they're a good starting point. We hope you find them useful.

Top 10 things children aged 5 to 13
can do

1. Work a DVD player 67%
2. Log onto the internet 58%
3. Play computer games on a games console (Wii, Xbox or similar) 50%
4. Make a phone call 46%
5. Use a handheld games console (Nintendo DSi, PSP or similar) 45%
6. Use an iPhone (or smartphone) 42%
7. Work Sky+ 41%
8. Send a text message 38%
9. Search for clips on YouTube 37%
10. Use an iPad (or tablet computer) 31%

50%

38%

46%

42%

31%
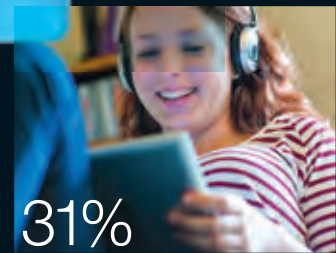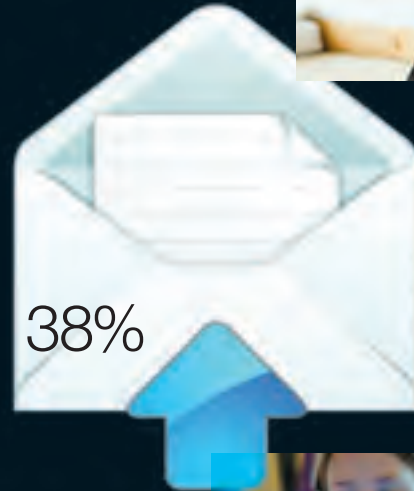
Top 10 things children aged 5 to 13
can't do

1. Recognise three types of butterfly 91%
2. Repair a puncture 87%
3. Tie a reef knot 83%
4. Read a map 81%
5. Build a camp fire 78% / Put up a tent 78.5%
6. Spot a blackbird, sparrow or robin 71%
7. Make papier mâché 72%
8. Make a cup of tea 65%
9. Build a den 63%
10. Climb a tree 59%

59%

91%

78.5%

65%

71%

Source: npower survey, March 2012
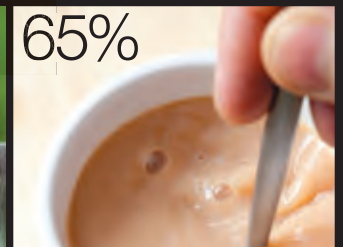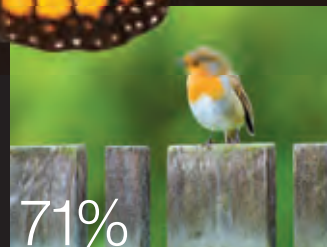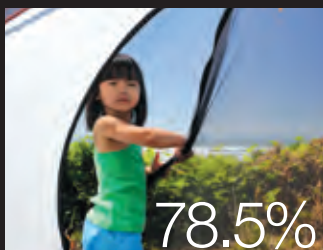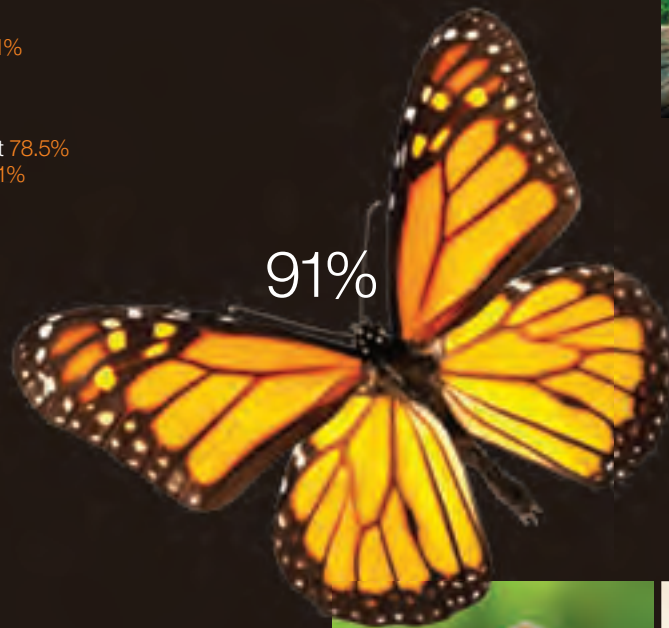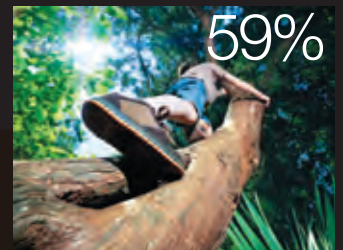
Under 5 checklist

✔ **START** setting some boundaries now – it's never too early to do things like set limits for the amount of time they can spend on the computer

✔ **KEEP** devices like your mobile out of reach and make sure you have passwords/PINs set up on them for the times you might lend them to your child... or for when they simply get hold of them themselves!

✔ **CHECK** the age ratings or descriptions on apps, games, online TV and films before streaming or downloading them and allowing your son or daughter to play with or watch them

✔ **EXPLAIN** your technology rules to grandparents, babysitters and the parents of your child's friends so that they also stick to them when they're looking after your child

✔ **REMEMBER** that public Wi-Fi (e.g. in cafés) might not have Parental Controls on it – so, if you hand over your iPad to your child while you're having a coffee, they might be able to access more than you bargained for

✔ **SET** the homepage on your family computer or tablet to an appropriate website like Cbeebies

☞ **Read our articles about toddlers and technology on pages 60 and 62.**

6 to 9 checklist

✔ **CREATE** a user account for your child on the family computer with appropriate settings and make the most of Parental Controls and tools like Google SafeSearch

✔ **AGREE** a list of websites they're allowed to visit and the kind of personal information they shouldn't reveal about themselves online (like the name of their school or their home address)

✔ **DECIDE** time limits for things like using the internet and playing on games consoles

✔ **BEAR** in mind what older siblings might be showing them on the internet, mobiles, games consoles and other devices and agree some rules as a whole family

✔ **TALK** to other parents about their views on things like what age to buy kids a mobile and don't be pressured by your child into letting them use certain technologies if you don't think they're old enough or mature enough… no matter how much they pester you

✔ **FAMILIARISE** yourself with age ratings on games, online TV, films and apps, so that you can be sure your child is only accessing age-appropriate content

☞ **Check out our step-by-step guide to setting up Google SafeSearch on page 80.**

10 to 12 checklist

✓ **MAKE** sure you've set some tech boundaries before they get their first mobile or games console – once they have it in their hands, it can be more difficult to change the way they use it

✓ **REMIND** your child to keep phones and other devices well hidden when they're out and about to minimise the risk of theft

✓ **TALK** to them about what they post and share online – written comments, photos and videos all form part of their 'digital footprint' and could be seen by anyone and available on the Web forever

✓ **DISCUSS** the kind of things they see online – this is the age when they might be looking for information about their changing bodies and exploring relationships, for example

✓ **HOLD** the line on letting your son or daughter sign up for services like Facebook and YouTube that have a minimum age limit of 13 – talk to other parents and their school to make sure everyone is on the same page

✓ **REMIND** them that they shouldn't do anything online that they wouldn't do face-to-face

☞ **Turn to page 104 to see how one parent dealt with her 11-year-old daughter wanting to join Facebook.**

13+ checklist

✓ **DON'T** think it's too late to reinforce boundaries or teach your child anything about technology – they might think they have the know-how but they still need your wisdom and guidance

✓ **TALK** to them about how they might be exploring issues related to their health, wellbeing and body image online – they might come across inaccurate or dangerous information on the Web at a vulnerable time

✓ **DISCUSS** how they behave towards others and what they post online and don't shy away from difficult conversations about things like pornography, bullying and other risky behaviours, such as sexting

✓ **GIVE** your son or daughter control of their own budget for things like apps and music but make sure you have agreed boundaries so that they manage their money responsibly

✓ **DISCUSS** things like downloading and plagiarism so that they understand what's legal and what's not

✓ **ADJUST** the settings on Parental Controls in line with your son or daughter's age and maturity – if they ask you to turn them off completely, think carefully before you do and agree in advance what is acceptable online behaviour

☞ **Read the article about teenagers and technology on page 96.**

Digital Parenting 'essentials' checklist

✓ **THINK** about how you guide your family in the real world and do the same in the digital world – don't be afraid to set boundaries and rules for your child from a young age

✓ **HAVE** a go at some of the technologies your son or daughter enjoys – play on the Wii together or ask them to help set you up on Facebook if you're not already on it

✓ **TALK** to your friends, family and other parents about how they help their children to manage their digital world – you might pick up some interesting tips

✓ **MAKE** the most of tools like Parental Controls on computers, mobiles and games consoles, privacy features on social networking sites, and safety options on Google and other search engines

✓ **TRY** not to use technology as a babysitter too often – we all do it sometimes, but it's important to know what your child is doing and set limits

✓ **MAKE** digital issues part of everyday conversation – show your child that you understand how important technology is to them and talk about all its amazing benefits, but don't shy away from difficult subjects like responsible online behaviour, bullying and pornography

Spotlight on
Digital
Spaces

There's always a new kid on the digital block. Just when you think you've got it sussed and you're on top of Angry Birds, Facebook and Twitter, along come Muzy, Tumblr and WhatsApp.

"You have to stay one step ahead all the time," says Vicki Shotbolt of The Parent Zone. "My son and his friends are always discovering new sites, new apps and new games and I want to encourage that, but I also want to know what they're doing and whether it's appropriate and safe. It can be a tricky balancing act."

As James P. Steyer, CEO and founder of Common Sense Media explains, "Today's 13 to 17-year-olds are the first generation to go through their entire teen years with such an array of digital devices and platforms."

Smartphones, games consoles, MP3 players, digital TV and tablets are ever-present for many teenagers… and their younger siblings and peers are also embracing tech. Toddlers seem to instinctively know what to do with the iPad and many 10-year-olds have the latest Xbox.

Whatever the age of your child, it's vital you're up-to-speed on all the gadgets, gizmos, websites and services they could be into. We asked Hannah Broadbent of Childnet, Kieran Alger of gadget website T3.com and representatives of LEGO to help guide you through some of the digital spaces young people enjoy.

Young people and digital media in the UK

Ofcom

www.ofcom.org.uk

PC/laptop internet use at home ranges from 65% of 5–7s to 85% of 8–11s and 93% of 12–15s

Driven by an increase in smartphone ownership, 29% of 12 to 15-year-olds and 9% of 8 to 11-year-olds use a mobile phone to go online at home

One of the most popular activities among 12–15s with a smartphone is social networking, with half (50%) going on social networking sites at least once a week

Playing computer and video games on a daily basis is popular among children in each age group (58% of 5–7s, 68% of 8–11s and 59% of 12–15s)

Children aged 12–15 are now more likely to say they would miss their mobile phone (28%) or the internet (25%) than TV

Source: Ofcom Children's Media Literacy Report, October 2011

Digital spaces to check out right now

tumblr.

www.tumblr.com

WhatsApp

www.whatsapp.com

ANIMOTO

www.animoto.com

Instagram

www.instagram.com

www.screenmuncher.com

Spotify

www.spotify.com

muzy

www.muzy.com

WeeWorld

www.weeworld.com

SOUNDCLOUD

www.soundcloud.com

EXPERT VIEW
Hannah Broadbent

Hannah Broadbent is Policy and Research Officer at Childnet International, a non-profit organisation that helps to make the internet a great and safe place for children. She led the development of the Parents' Guide to Technology for the UK Safer Internet Centre.

Childnet
International

www.childnet.com

Digital devices:
Smartphones, games consoles and beyond...

Hannah Broadbent of Childnet takes a look at some of the digital devices that children and teenagers enjoy and suggests how parents can stay involved.

At Childnet, it's our mission to work in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. Our Education Team visits schools across the UK every week, so we hear all about the experiences, concerns and questions that children, young people, parents and teachers have when it comes to the digital world.

Children and teenagers are using a wide range of devices to access the internet – not just PCs and laptops but also smartphones, handheld gaming devices, tablets and games consoles – and they are making use of a fantastic range of online services, such as social networking sites and video-sharing websites.

In our work with schools, we hear from many parents who are confused about how their children are getting online and what they are able to do via the ever-increasing range of internet-enabled devices.

Three key sets of devices that seem to cause confusion for parents are smartphones, gaming devices and other internet-enabled devices (such as tablets).

Smartphones

This includes:
BlackBerry
iPhone

Smartphones are mobile phones with internet access. They are capable of a range of functions, including offering on-the-go access to social networking sites, listening to music (which can be done online and offline), playing games, browsing the internet, checking emails, taking photos and videos and watching TV – along with the usual texting and calling.

You can personalise your phone by downloading 'apps' that carry out fun and useful functions, from checking train times to caring for a virtual pet. According to Ofcom, the most popular types of apps among young people are for games, social networking and music.

Smartphones are incredibly popular with young people – research has shown that almost half of young people aged 12–15 have a smartphone. Popular brands include BlackBerry, iPhone and Android phones, such as the HTC Sensation.

Gaming devices

This includes:
Xbox 360
PlayStation 3
PSP
Nintendo Wii
Nintendo 3Ds
Nintendo DSi

Children and young people love playing games. In fact, it is often through games that children first start to use technology. According to Ofcom, nearly half of children aged 5–7 have a games console in their bedroom, rising to seven in ten 8 to 15-year-olds.

Today's games consoles have in-built wireless so they can connect to your home internet or other Wi-Fi hotspots. This enables a wide range of online functions, such as downloading games or 'expansions' to existing games, playing with or against other people online (in a multi-player game), viewing films and TV, storing photos and music, browsing the Web and chatting to friends.

Gaming devices include handheld consoles, such as the Nintendo DSi and 3DS and the Sony PlayStation Portable (PSP), and other consoles like the PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 and Nintendo Wii that are designed to work with a TV.

Internet-enabled devices

This includes:
iPod Touch
iPad

Other internet-enabled devices, including tablets and media players, can provide young people with fantastic opportunities for entertainment and education.

By connecting to the internet, these devices carry out many functions and can bring a wide range of information to your fingertips, including via apps.

Tablets, such as the iPad, function much like a laptop. They can be used to view websites and social networking sites, check emails, download files, play games, take photos and videos, watch TV and films and listen to music, plus more.

Many portable media players, such as the iPod touch, do much more than simply store and play music. Media players with Wi-Fi connectivity can often be used to browse the internet, play games, watch Web TV, stream online music, make online purchases, and, if they have an in-built camera, take photos and videos. The newest iPod touch even allows you to video call with the FaceTime app.

Take action

1 UNDERSTAND the capabilities of any devices, preferably before your child starts using them (e.g. can they access the Web from their mobile?) and learn how you can support them to be smart and safe when using them. Remember that if a device connects to the internet, online safety rules apply

2 PRINT out the shopper's guides from **www. saferinternet.org.uk/ advice-and-resources/a- parents-guide** so you know what questions to ask in store or over the phone when you're buying a device, such as whether it has internet access and if it's possible to apply content filters and other Parental Controls to protect younger users

3 TALK with your child about the safe and responsible use of their device and agree a set of family 'rules'. You might want to consider rules about not meeting up with people they have only met online, how much money they are allowed to spend on apps, what websites it's OK and not OK to visit, how long they should be using their device for and whether it should be switched off at night

Childnet has produced a 'Parents' Guide to Technology', which includes downloadable fact sheets about different devices and shopper's guides. The guide is available on the UK Safer Internet Centre website at:
www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide
For more information about Childnet, go to: www.childnet.com

Kieran Alger is the editor of gadget website T3.com. He previously headed up the digital team for men's magazine, ZOO, and also spent six years at AOL UK.

www.t3.com

Top tech
for teens

Technology can be entertaining and empowering for teenagers but you might find it baffling working out which gadgets are right for them. How much should you spend? Is it safe? Will it pass the school yard cool test? T3.com editor Kieran Alger gives you the lowdown on five tech gadgets for teenagers — from a photo-sharing app to an exercise-tracking wristband.

iPhone 4S

Apple's smartphone boasts a super-sharp Retina screen for watching video, fast dual-core processor for great game play and up to 64GB storage for all those photos and tunes. Chuck in access to 1,000s of great games and apps on the App Store, loads of new features like improved sat nav from the imminent iOS 6 software update and lashings of cool and it's the must-have handset for many teens. Just make sure you buy a protective case... that screen shatters easily.

Tip:
You can use Apple's Parental Controls (called Restrictions) to limit access to things like YouTube, Web browsing and even the App Store.

www.vodafone.co.uk

Sony PlayStation Vita

A tiny TV touch screen tablet and fully-stocked handheld games console rolled into one, the Vita has the tools to satisfy staunch gamers and casual fun seekers in equal measure. For part-time button pushers, there are motion sensors aplenty enabling iPad-style gameplay, pocket money games and even episodes of Glee to download from the Sony Entertainment Network. Meanwhile, hardcore gamers can waggle the excellent built-in analogue sticks at top titles like EA FIFA Soccer and enjoy crystal clear graphics on the eyeball pleasing super-sharp OLED screen.

Tip:
Keep younger children safe by blocking access to the Web browser or adding age limits to prevent access to games that might not be appropriate.

www.uk.playstation.com

Instagram

Bought by Facebook for $1 billion in 2012, Instagram is powering the latest photo-sharing social craze. The app makes it super easy to snap and share photos on your smartphone with the option to add effects from a range of pre-loaded styles, like 1970s. The stylised shots can then be uploaded with a single click to Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. A handy in-app feed also lets you see what your friends have been shooting.

Tip:
Use the app to block unwanted followers or report users who post inappropriately. Set up your own account and follow your kids to keep tabs on what they're posting.

iOS and Android

Philips GoGear Connect 3

The best iPod Touch rival out there, the lightweight, touch screen GoGear Connect 3 runs Android, perfect for anyone who has spent time with a Droid smartphone. Hook it up over Wi-Fi and you get access to a range of brilliant apps on the Google Play store – from movies and games to Facebook and iPlayer – turning this into a portable time-killer, not just a music player. The bundled headphones also beat those white ones you get with the iPod.

Tip:
Link the Google Play app store account to your Google account – that way you can keep an eye on apps that are being added (and paid for).

www.philips.co.uk

Nike+ FuelBand

It might look like a charity wristband but the FuelBand is much smarter. Strap this on and it will track your activity, including how many steps you've taken, calories burned that day and Fuel Points (think 'activity points') you've earned. Hook it up with the partner iPhone app or the Nike+ website and you can set 'Fuel Points' goals and track how you're doing against your daily targets. It's the ultimate way to inspire your offspring to stop watching YouTube and get moving.

Tip:
Get yourself one and challenge your kids to see if they can clock up more points than you. Just make sure they don't cheat by strapping it to the family pets!

www.nike.com

Bridging generations with 'Life of George'

Can an offline-online LEGO hybrid form a meeting point for parents and children?

It might seem a bit of a paradox that even the most tech-savvy parents often feel more comfortable seeing their kids play with physical toys than with screen games. Part of the reason for this, according to LEGO Head of Digital Child Safety and former Save the Children representative Dieter Carstensen, is probably nostalgia.

"Parents want their kids to play the way they did when they were children," he says, adding that the preference also reflects natural, intuitive concerns such as the value of physical play versus screen time, children's safety online, and the fact children still love playing with physical toys.

But parents also see physical toys – which are played with in non-virtual, public spaces – as providing an opening for their own involvement in play. Where digital play, no matter how 'social', rarely invites or inspires parents to get involved, physical toys invite active participation from others in the room.

In launching Life of George in 2011, the LEGO Group wanted to combine smartphone gaming and physical LEGO play to not only give kids what they wanted but also provide opportunities for parents and their children to play together.

"Playing Life of George doesn't require a parent's involvement, but it does leave the door open for it," says Mikkel Holm Jensen, Concept Design Manager for the Life of George product. "Children can play the game alone, in their room with friends, or in the living room with mum or dad after school or on weekends – with the second player finding parts, for example, while the main player races the clock to build."

Carstensen adds that the possibility for cross-generational collaboration also provides unique opportunities for children to acquire skills that are important for the digital space, such as creative thinking and teamwork.

One optional, but popular, aspect of Life of George actually requires parental involvement. If the child chooses to move from the offline world to online interactivity, he or she must sign-up for a LEGO ID, and the sign-up process requires a parent's consent.

"It might seem like a minor interaction," says Carstensen, "but it actually opens the door to a conversation about online play, social interaction and safety. No lecturing, no finger-pointing – but a simple, natural opportunity for the generations to connect around online entertainment and safety."

As Jensen points out, Life of George couldn't have served this bridging function if it hadn't combined physical and online play.

"We see the hybrid genre as a unique way forward for positive children's play and we're enthused about the future of 'George' and hybrids to come," he concludes.

Take action

1 **LEARN** about the games your child plays online

2 **LET** your child teach you and show off their skills

3 **TRY** to turn online games into shared family activities

4 **SEIZE** the opportunity to discuss good online behaviour and safety

What is 'Life of George'?

Designed for children aged eight and up, Life of George is a 12-level smartphone game that requires a physical set of 144 LEGO bricks and a special board to play. The smartphone app poses building challenges the players have to solve with their LEGO bricks as quickly as possible. A camera function lets the children photograph their models and share them in a moderated online gallery, along with their building times.

To find out more about Life of George, go to:
www.george.lego.com

NEWS & VIEWS

Digital Parenting Editor
Vicky Prior takes a look at what's
new in the digital world.

Safer Internet Day 2013

'Online rights and responsibilities' will be the focus of the next Safer Internet Day (SID), which takes place on 5 February 2013. The annual event promotes safer and more responsible use of digital technologies, especially among young people. SID is organised by Insafe, a European network of awareness centres co-ordinated by European Schoolnet.

Find out how your family and your child's school can get involved at: **www.saferinternetday.org** and #SID2013 on Twitter.

Digital diaries

More than half of UK parents (51%) have secretly accessed their kids' Facebook profiles

More than half of UK parents (51%) interviewed for AVG's Digital Diaries initiative have secretly accessed their kids' Facebook profiles and 10% have seen explicit or abusive messages on their teen's smartphone.
www.avgdigitaldiaries.com

Platform for Good

Piloted by the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI) and leading internet companies including Facebook, Google and Microsoft, in the USA, 'A Platform for Good' brings parents, teachers, teens and kids together to create a platform for volunteering, sharing, learning and participating. Stephen Balkam, CEO of FOSI, comments, "It's time to transform the discussion and create resources to inform, inspire and empower kids to make the right choices online." **http://aplatformforgood.org** and @platformforgood on Twitter.

A PLATFORM *for* GOOD

Volunteering

Sharing

Learning

Participating

The next step in reading and augmented reality gaming

Sony unveils Wonderbook: Book of Spells

Sony Computer Entertainment has teamed up with J.K. Rowling to launch Wonderbook: Book of Spells on PlayStation 3 in November 2012. Described as 'the next step in reading and augmented reality gaming', Wonderbook features exclusive new and original writing from J.K. Rowling and enables children to cast spells using their PlayStation Move Motion Controller like a magic wand. J.K. Rowling comments, "Wonderbook: Book of Spells is the closest a Muggle can come to a real spellbook. I've loved working with Sony's creative team to bring my spells, and some of the history behind them, to life. This is an extraordinary device that offers a reading experience like no other."

Cookie consent required in Europe

A new EU law, which came into force in May 2012, means that websites must obtain 'informed consent' from visitors before storing pieces of their personal data, known as cookies. For more information, go to **www.ico.gov.uk**

My CV

My Address

MY CREDIT CARD

MY NUMBER

EXPERT VIEW
Dr Richard Graham

Dr Richard Graham is a leading Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Clinical Director of the Adolescent Department at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and the Technology Addiction Service at Capio Nightingale Hospital.

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**

Capio Nightingale

www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/
helpforadolescents

www.nightingalehospital.co.uk/services/
addictions/technology-addiction/

Too much of a good thing?

Leading child and adolescent psychiatrist Dr Richard Graham investigates how young people's technology use can sometimes tip over into addiction.

One of the most difficult dilemmas that any parent faces today is knowing when the amount of time a young person spends online is becoming too much.

Other risks of the online world, such as cyberbullying or accessing inappropriate material, tend to be more easily understood and might present more immediately (the child might show signs of distress, for example). What is much more difficult to recognise is the gradual increase of online time until it reaches a level that many would consider not only a problem, but even an addiction.

My work in recent years has centred on the influence of social networking, social media and video games on adolescents, with a particular focus on technology addiction. In 2010, I founded the UK's first dedicated Technology Addiction Service for Young People at Capio Nightingale Hospital, so I have seen first-hand the effect that excessive use of digital technologies has on families.

When being online becomes priority #1

There are many reasons why a child or teenager might increase their Web use. Homework often has to be completed on a computer now and smartphones, games consoles, tablets and other portable devices mean that the digital world is available to them 24/7.

Yet, as some parents discover rather late, there is a point where online activities become the dominant part of a young person's life and even essential biological needs, such as sleeping and eating, take second place.

Clinical work with young people and their families – where their online activities are interfering with their school attendance, offline social activities and even their physical health – does suggest that internet addiction is a reality and can be compared with other behavioural addictions, such as gambling addiction.

Simply put, thinking about or getting access to the internet takes over, and a young person may spend more than half of their day online. Convergence of online activities makes it difficult to be clear what it is that pulls the young person back online and even compulsive gamers are often heavily involved socially with other gamers online.

My approach

I use the questions below to help determine whether someone is becoming addicted to technology:

1. **Do you stay online longer than you expected?**
2. **Do you ignore and avoid other work or activities to spend more time online?**
3. **Do you frequently get annoyed or irritable if someone bothers you when you are trying to do something online or on your phone?**
4. **Do you prefer to spend time with people online or through messaging to being with them without using technology?**
5. **Do you think a lot about when you can get back to being online when you are offline?**
6. **Do you often check messages or emails before doing something else you need to do?**
7. **Do you argue with or feel criticised by friends or family about the amount of time you spend online?**
8. **Do you get excited at the thought of when you can next get online and also about what you will do online?**
9. **Do you feel tense or bad if you can't get online (a feeling which goes away when you get back online)?**
10. **Do you hide or become defensive about what you do online?**

These questions help to indicate technology addiction but it is often the intensity of the feelings or responses that identify the level of difficulty experienced. For example, many young people get angry when they are asked to switch off their laptop but some parents fear aggression, even violence, if they ask their child to do this. Similarly, a teenager's online time might be rising to three or four hours a day but this is far more ordinary and less concerning than someone spending 14 hours a day gaming who cannot go to school or work because of the time they spend online. What is tricky is that, at some point, the gamer would have only spent a few hours a day online.

A range of motives

In a sense, the task is to establish how dependent the young person is on online activities in order to feel good – either about themselves or their lives. In other words, how much of a grip do their online activities have on them? As with other addictions, there is a slow realisation that the laptop or phone has become a dictator demanding attention to the point that the online activity takes over everything and is in control of the young person and their life.

The motives of going back online are many: to avoid feeling excluded, to placate peers who demand your return, to manage the reputation of the digital self, to obtain rewards in a game and so on. Understanding the range of these motives can help to inform any discussion of how much time is too much time spent online. I have found, for example, that a detailed description of what exactly a gamer might do in a role-playing game opens up the discussion and allows some recognition of what they may be forgetting.

Technology time-out

A simple test of how far someone has gone down that road is to ask the young person to go for three days without their phone or laptop. At a time when most young people never switch off their phone, the response to this question can be disturbing. But then it can be just as disturbing for many adults.

It is perhaps too soon to have established guidelines as to how much time a young person should spend online each day, partly because it depends on the actual online activity – some activities, such as instant messaging or gaming, seem to exhaust the brain more quickly than others. Some young people also feel drained by the expectation to respond to others online and are relieved when their mobile or laptop is 'put to bed' at night.

Similarly, as recommended in the USA, a week away from technology from time to time can have a really positive effect on the young person's mood; too much online time can lead to a very flat, depressed young person, who becomes livelier and more confident after a week offline.

If you're planning on suggesting a time-out from technology for your son or daughter, make sure you are in a place where getting online will be difficult and plan lots of physical activities. Some of the 'withdrawal symptoms' of going offline are minimised by having something to do, especially if it involves all of their senses and their body. It's fair to say, the eyes and the thumbs can really use a holiday. ▰

For more information about excessive use of technology, visit:
www.vodafone.com/parents/excessiveuse

Take action

1 KNOW Find out how long the young person spends online

2 MONITOR Ask yourself, is the time they spend online growing rapidly? Is it interfering with ordinary life?

3 BALANCE Organise offline activities and opportunities to balance out time in front of a screen – don't let online time mushroom

4 SUPPORT Get support from partners and other family members when trying to reduce online time

5 HOLIDAY Organise weekends and holidays to allow for more offline activities

Useful websites

www.childline.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/helpforadolescents

www.nightingalehospital.co.uk/services/addictions/technology-addiction/

www.bigwhitewall.com

The changing face of gaming

Does your son or daughter spend hours playing games on their computer, console or mobile?

Digital Parenting looks at some of the games they might be playing and suggests how you can take back some control.

Want to play in the World Cup, be an SAS Commando, or learn a new dance routine – all from the comfort of your living room? Consoles like the PlayStation, Xbox and Wii let you do just that and young people are particularly enamoured. In fact, as a nation, we spent a whopping £1.35 billion on console video game software in 2011.

For parents who don't take part in gaming, it might seem like a harmless way for their kids to be entertained for a few hours. For children and teenagers, it can become a very important part of their lives. According to the UK media regulator Ofcom, large numbers of young people play computer and video games on a daily basis, with 8 to 11-year-olds leading the pack.

Social games – where you play against other people and interact with the game content – are particularly popular. Moshi Monsters, Club Penguin and

Facebook apps, such as Cityville and Gardens of Time, already boast millions of players and show no signs of slowing down.

Furthermore, with many children and teenagers now expecting to be entertained on the move via their smartphone or tablet, they are turning to mobile apps to fulfil their gaming needs.

On Christmas Day 2011, for example, the Angry Birds app was downloaded 6.5 million times. So, as the turkey roasted in the oven, it's likely that lots of young people were amusing themselves by virtually slinging a few other birds around on their mobiles.

Whilst games can entertain, educate and even bring families together (anyone for a quick game of tennis on the Wii?), there are some potential pitfalls that you need to be aware of.

Parents are most concerned about:

→ **The amount of time their child spends playing games – Are they in front of the screen for hours on end? Is it affecting their homework, hobbies and friendships?**

→ **Who they are playing with – Are they playing against adults in multi-player games (e.g. on Xbox LIVE)? Could they hear bad language or put themselves at risk of a stranger making contact?**

→ **Whether they are accessing inappropriate content – Are they playing games containing violence or sexual imagery?**

Cost can also be an issue, as young people might run up large bills by signing up for online games, downloading mobile apps, and paying for in-game extras (such as clothes or food for their game characters).

Fortunately, there are tools available to help you navigate the gaming maze. Some consoles have built-in Parental Controls so that you can set 'time', 'age rating' and 'multi-player' boundaries; PEGI age ratings on games software can guide you when you're buying a new game for your son or daughter; and online safety apps, such as Vodafone Guardian, can help you to customise how they use their Android mobile phone.

It's certainly a complex area and, with experts predicting that the gaming landscape will change with 3D games on smart TVs, it's crucial that you understand what action you can take to help your kids enjoy their games and steer clear of any risks. ◾

Useful websites

Common Sense Media
www.commonsensemedia.org

Pan-European Game Information (PEGI)
www.pegi.info

Play Safe (UKIE)
www.ukie.org.uk/playsafe

Vodafone Guardian

The Vodafone Guardian app helps to keep children safer when using an Android smartphone. If you're worried about the amount of time your son or daughter spends playing games on their mobile, you can use Vodafone Guardian to limit their use of the internet or apps to certain times of the day. The app is available to download for free from the Vodafone AppSelect Store and Google Play.

For more information about games go to:
www.vodafone.com/parents/games

Reality check

"Everyone talks about games all the time..."

Walk into any family home and you'll probably see a games console lying around. As brothers James (10) and George (13) told us, they're part of daily life.

The boys started playing on a Game Boy aged six and now have an Xbox, a DS and a Wii. James' favourite game is Rugby World Cup 2011 – "I'm addicted to it," he admits – whilst George prefers action games like Call of Duty: Modern Warfare (even though it is rated 18+). (See age rating article on page 23.)

George enjoys playing games on his mobile too (BrickBreaker is his current game of choice) but ten-year-old James has to make do with borrowing his mum or dad's iPhone to play things like Stick Cricket and Flick Fishing.

Both boys say they spend hours every week playing games and that they get a thrill from winning and beating their best scores.

"I find out about new games from my friends or the internet," explains George. "Everyone talks about games at school all the time, so if you don't play, you don't know what they're talking about."

Their parents have set some rules – homework has to be done before games, for example – and, despite much pestering for a 3DS and Xbox LIVE, they are not letting the boys expand their gaming just yet.

Take action

1 HAVE A CHAT with your son or daughter about the games they like to play and try them out yourself, so that you know what they're about

2 SET UP Parental Controls and SafeSearch on your child's computer, games console and mobile devices – but remember, they might not be 100% effective and they aren't a substitute for parental supervision

3 CHECK the age rating on any games software before buying it so that you know whether the content is suitable for your child – PEGI labels appear on the front and back of the packaging, clearly displaying the age suitability. See page 23

4 DON'T BE PRESSURED into letting your child play games that are not suitable for their age and check regularly how older siblings and friends might be influencing their gaming

5 SET clear rules for the amount of time your son or daughter can play games on their computer, console or mobile device

6 TALK to them about the potential pitfalls of multi-player gaming (where more than one person can play in the same game environment at the same time), such as other players bullying them or strangers making contact

7 SET a budget for the amount of money they can spend on games, apps and in-game extras and keep an eye on what they spend

8 TURN the sound off during multi-player games and recommend where available that they use a voice mask (to disguise themselves by altering the tone of their voice) so that their age is less obvious

How to...
set up Parental Controls on the Xbox 360™

The Xbox 360™ console lets you customise and manage your family's access to games, film and TV content. The Xbox 360™ Parental Controls can be used to control the console itself and also to control access to the online service, Xbox LIVE.

What is Xbox LIVE?

Xbox LIVE is the online entertainment service for Xbox 360. You can connect for free to rent and buy HD movies or download Xbox 360 games and keep them fresh with new songs, workouts and levels. With a Gold membership, you can play Kinect and controller games with friends wherever they are.

Parental Controls allow you to control things such as:

→ Which games can be played (e.g. are they age appropriate?)

→ Which films and TV shows can be watched (e.g. are they suitable for your child?)

→ How long each family member can use the console on a daily or weekly basis

→ Whether or not someone can access Xbox LIVE (e.g. do you want your child to be able to play games online against friends and other people?)

Parental Controls are divided into two groups: 'console controls' and 'online safety and privacy'. Console controls are located in the Family Settings or Family Centre area on your console (depending on your Xbox LIVE membership type).

Step 1

Turn on console controls

a. On your console, go to 'Settings', then select 'Family'

b. Select 'On' to turn on Console Safety

c. Enter a 4-button pass code using your controller

d. Select 'Save and Exit'

Please note:
If you cannot see Settings on your console, you might be using an older version of the console software. You can find information on how to update your console software at **www.xbox.com**
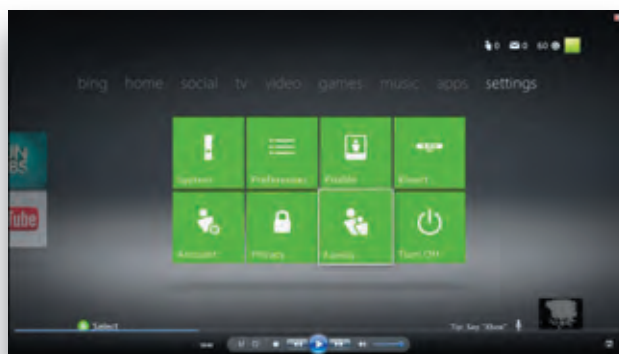
Step 2

Decide what you want to control

Ratings and content

These settings let you restrict games and video content based on the content's rating. You can also set whether or not unrated or explicit content can be played on this console. You can even set up exceptions for individual games that are outside of the rating restrictions you have set.

Family Timer

This setting allows you to limit the time that your console can be used on a daily or weekly basis.

Xbox LIVE access

This setting allows you to decide if your family can connect to Xbox LIVE from this console. Membership of Xbox LIVE enables you to do things like rent films and play games against other people online.

Xbox LIVE membership creation

This setting allows you to control whether or not new Xbox LIVE memberships can be created from your console.
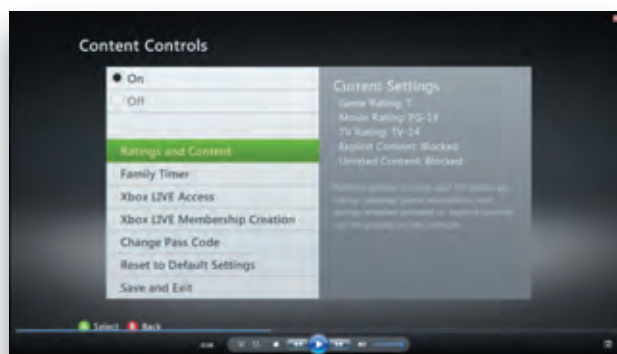
Step 3

Set the Family Timer

Use the Family Timer to limit the amount of time that your family can use your console on a daily or weekly basis. Family members can see how much time remains by pressing the Guide button on the Xbox controller. When the time expires, the console shuts down and can't be used again until the Family Timer automatically resets the next day or week.

a. On your console, go to 'Settings', then select 'Family'

b. Select 'On' to turn on Console Safety

c. Enter your 4-button pass code using your controller

d. Select 'Family Timer'

e. Select whether you want to set a 'Daily' or 'Weekly' timer

f. Move down to the time period and use the left stick to increase or decrease the time period, then select 'Continue'

g. Select 'Save and Exit'

When the Family Timer is on, notifications will appear 1 hour, 30 minutes, 15 minutes, and 5 minutes before the time runs out. These give players sufficient warning so that they can save
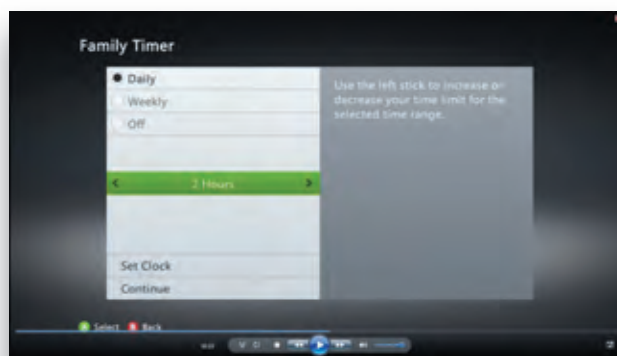
their games and come back to them at another time. However, when one of these notifications appear, you can add time or disable the timer altogether by entering the pass code.

Xbox LIVE online safety and privacy

Xbox LIVE offers a variety of online safety and privacy settings so you can control the Xbox LIVE experience.

The default online safety and privacy settings are divided into three age groups: child, teen and adult. Xbox LIVE determines which default safety and privacy settings to use based on the birthdate that was entered when the Xbox LIVE account was created. The default 'child' setting does not allow video communication or purchases, for example.

You can, however, completely customise the default online safety and privacy settings to

whatever is best for you and your family. For example, you can choose whether to allow or block your child from online gameplay and accepting friend requests. You can also do things like tailor who can see their Xbox LIVE profile and determine whether they can upload photos they take while playing games to services like **Kinectshare.com**
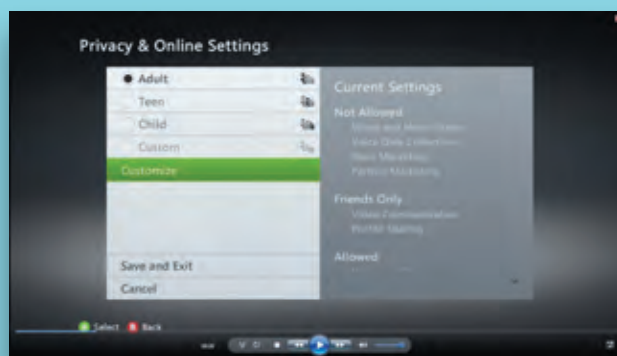
To change your child's settings:

1. Sign into Xbox LIVE using an adult account

2. Go to 'Settings', and then select 'Family'

3. Select the child account that you want to manage

4. Go to 'Online Safety', and then select 'Change Settings'

5. Change the settings to whatever you'd like

6. To exit, press the 'B' button on your controller, and then choose 'Save and Exit'

For further information, go to:
www.xbox.com/familysettings

www.xbox.com

XBOX 360.
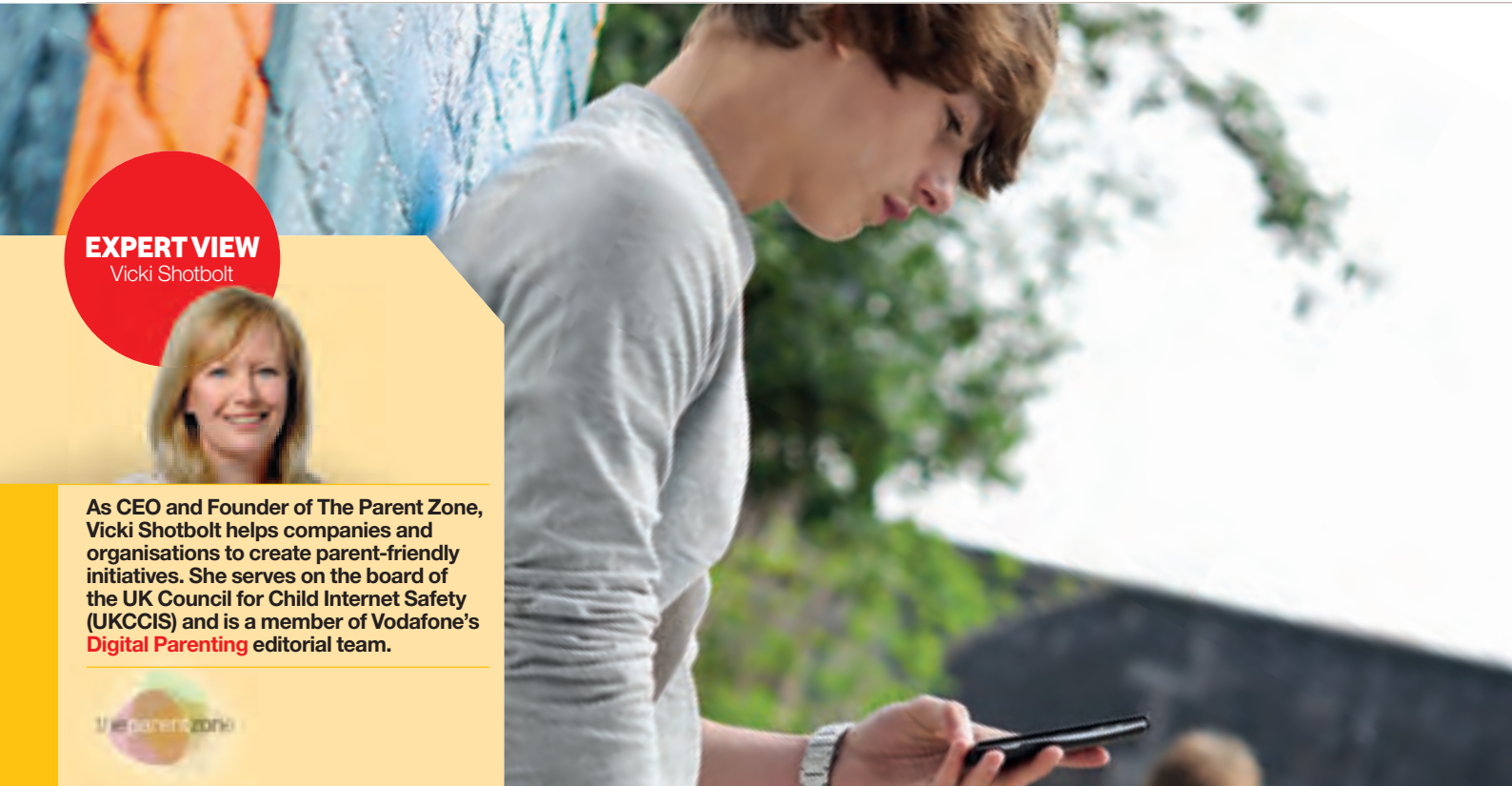
EXPERT VIEW
Vicki Shotbolt

As CEO and Founder of The Parent Zone, Vicki Shotbolt helps companies and organisations to create parent-friendly initiatives. She serves on the board of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) and is a member of Vodafone's Digital Parenting editorial team.

www.theparentzone.co.uk

Taking three 13-year-old boys away for a half term holiday is a real eye opener. Aside from discovering that no matter how many times you fill the fridge up with food they will still be hungry, you realise that only doing activities aimed at specific age groups can be tricky.

The adventure treasure hunt that was meant to be an activity 'suitable for all ages' turned out to be a serious bore for anyone over the age of five (I knew as soon as I saw the woodland animal cartoons on the treasure hunt map that it wasn't going to keep my boys happy!), whilst the paintballing should really have said 'age 13 and up… but not really great for a woman over 40 who doesn't like mud'.

Age ratings for games, videos and apps present an even greater challenge for parents. How often do we take the time to watch or play them before we let our kids have a go? And how often do we stick together as parents to make sure that if we say no to an over-18 game, they won't be able to head over to their friend's house to play it there?

The reality is that every parent takes a different approach to making decisions about whether they are going to allow their kids to watch or play things that the age rating says they shouldn't.

As one of my son's friends explained to me, "My parents are super strict. When they found out I had a Facebook account before I was 13, they made me shut it down. I had to go underground."

Getting the balance right

As parents, we all grapple with getting the balance right between allowing our children the freedom to explore new and exciting things in a safe and controlled environment (let's face it, we'd rather know what our kids are doing than discover they are doing it anyway and not telling us) and exposing them to things that are just not appropriate for their age.

We overlook age ratings on things like films, games and apps at our peril. It's a cliché, but those age ratings are there for a reason as I found out recently when I sat down to watch a film with my son. The seemingly innocuous '15' age rating actually meant a constant stream of bad language and 'scenes of a sexual nature' that were definitely not scenes I wanted to watch with him – or him with me.

I have to admit that I don't play games with him on his Xbox very often – mainly because he thinks I'm too rubbish at them to be worth playing with – but I have taken a look at some of the '18' rated games and it is an eye-watering experience. The shooting, blood and gore are just the beginning. In some of the most popular war games, players are invited to

make major decisions – shoot the civilians to save the kidnap victim or leave them to die and get to the next level?

Designed for adults but oh-so-attractive to children, these games encourage youngsters to explore things we would never dream of asking them to tackle in real life before they were ready or, possibly, ever. And yet, standing in the shop, faced with a child who is desperate for the latest game that is being heavily advertised and that all their friends are talking about – and quite possibly playing – how many of us have given in and thought 'what harm can it do'?

When it comes to websites, it can be even trickier as they aren't age-rated in the same way as other media. Some sites, like Facebook and YouTube, have minimum age limits but many under-13s find their way around them.

> ## "How many of us have given in and thought 'what harm can it do'?"

In the vast majority of cases, young people cope remarkably well with everything they do and see online. But does that make it a good idea to let children see and do things that are intended for a much older audience? Do we want our kids to be listening to bad language, seeing sex scenes and playing violent games at a young age?

Familiarising ourselves with age ratings

Last year, the Government asked Reg Bailey, CEO of the Mothers' Union, to investigate the sexualisation and commercialisation of young people and he recommended that more should be done to protect them from the 'wallpaper of sexualisation' that was surrounding them.

The advice we give to parents is to think really hard before you give in and let your children buy or use technology that isn't the right age for them. Furthermore, it's useful to familiarise yourselves with age ratings on games and age limits on websites like Facebook and YouTube and to explain to your children why they exist.

From the 9pm TV watershed to the PEGI age ratings on games to passwords/PIN numbers on mobile phones and services like BBC iPlayer, companies are developing tools all the time to help parents set restrictions so that children don't accidentally (or deliberately) access content that isn't suitable for them. Websites might not have age ratings as standard but it is possible, using tools like Google SafeSearch, to help prevent adult content, such as pornography, from being only a click away.

Most parents will have allowed their children to do, see and play things that according to the age

"We overlook age ratings at our peril."

Vicki Shotbolt, CEO and Founder of The Parent Zone and mother of a 14-year-old, highlights the importance of getting young people to stick to age ratings.

rating they shouldn't have done. I certainly have. It's partly because most of us remember sneaking into the cinema to watch a film that we weren't supposed to watch. The best films – or at least the ones I wanted to see when I was 15 – were always rated 18 and my local cinema didn't check too closely to make sure I was the age I said I was.

Creeping in wasn't always without consequences though. I might have been able to get past the guy on the ticket desk to watch The Exorcist and I might have avoided any obvious punishment... but I still can't hear the music from that film without feeling slightly nauseous.

In today's digital world, with content that is more graphic and more easily available than ever before, we have to start taking notice of age ratings. I'm going to. ◢

The lowdown: PEGI labels

PEGI labels appear on the front and back of computer and video game packaging, indicating one of the following age levels: 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18. They provide a reliable indication of the suitability of the game content in terms of the protection of minors. The age rating does not take into account the difficulty level or skills required to play a game.

3 PEGI 3
The content of games given this rating is considered suitable for all age groups. Some violence in a comical context (typically Bugs Bunny or Tom & Jerry cartoon-like forms of violence) is acceptable. The child should not be able to associate the character on the screen with real life characters, they should be totally fantasy. The game should not contain any sounds or pictures that are likely to scare or frighten young children. No bad language should be heard.

7 PEGI 7
Any game that would normally be rated at 3 but contains some possibly frightening scenes or sounds may be considered suitable in this category.

12 PEGI 12
Video games that show violence of a slightly more graphic nature towards fantasy character and/or non-graphic violence towards human-looking characters or recognisable animals, as well as video games that show nudity of a slightly more graphic nature would fall in this age category. Any bad language in this category must be mild and fall short of sexual expletives.

16 PEGI 16
This rating is applied once the depiction of violence (or sexual activity) reaches a stage that looks the same as would be expected in real life. More extreme bad language, the concept of the use of tobacco and drugs and the depiction of criminal activities can be content of games that are rated 16.

18 PEGI 18
The adult classification is applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes a depiction of gross violence and/or includes elements of specific types of violence. Gross violence is the most difficult to define since it can be very subjective in many cases, but in general terms it can be classed as the depictions of violence that would make the viewer feel a sense of revulsion.

Descriptors
Descriptors shown on the back of the packaging indicate the main reasons why a game has received a particular age rating. There are eight such descriptors: violence, bad language, fear, drugs, sexual, discrimination, gambling and online gameplay with other people.

Bad language
Game contains bad language

Discrimination
Game contains depictions of, or material which may encourage discrimination

Drugs
Game refers to or depicts the use of drugs

Fear
Game may be frightening or scary for young children

Gambling
Games that encourage or teach gambling

Sex
Game depicts nudity and/or sexual behaviour or sexual references

Violence
Game contains depictions of violence

Online gameplay
Game can be played online

Source: www.pegi.info

What's all this technology doing to their brains?

Some newspaper articles speculate that technology is damaging our children's brains — but what does the published research say? Dr Paul Howard-Jones of the University of Bristol investigates.

EXPERT VIEW
Dr Paul Howard-Jones

Dr Paul Howard-Jones lectures at the University of Bristol and is a leading expert on the role of neuroscience in education. He recently reviewed the effects of the internet on the brain, delivering his findings in the 2011 Nominet Lecture at the RSA.

NEnet

www.neuroeducational.net

Yes, it's true – technologies, such as Google, can change your brain. In a study of older adults, experienced Googlers activated a wider range of brain regions when searching the internet compared to new users. But this is no surprise. The brain is plastic: its function, connectivity and even its structure changes with our personal experiences. That's how we learn. Experienced Googlers strategise, make decisions and simply search more and these new skills are reflected in their brain activations. Similar changes are seen when we learn other skills, from juggling to complex maths.

The brains of our children are particularly plastic and with young people at the forefront of the technology revolution, it's prudent for us to ask questions, such as 'Might prolific use of social networking sites diminish their offline lives?'

"Ensuring technology benefits our children is about transferring offline parental wisdom to digital environments."

Wellbeing and connectedness

In the 1990s, the existing data linked teenage internet use with social isolation. Here was evidence, perhaps, that the internet was damaging social brain function. But if you think back to those text-only websites, DOS commands and floppy discs, it's no wonder the teenagers of the 90s who indulged heavily on their computers lost a few friends, especially with so few classmates online.

Now, with vastly increased connectivity and usability, more recent research shows the trend has reversed, with teenage use of social networking sites linked to positive wellbeing and greater social connectedness.

Of course, an online chat on Facebook is not like going to a party and our brains reflect this fact. A recent study showed the number of friends we have on Facebook predicts the size of some, but not all, of the brain regions implicated in face-to-face networking. And yet, the skills we need to use social networking sites safely, may in some important ways, be similar. Just as making friends with unknown strangers in offline environments can be risky, so the benefits of using social networking sites dissipate for teenagers who use them to make new friendships rather than to support existing ones.

This sort of behaviour, whether online or offline, is linked to poorer social wellbeing.

Parental wisdom

The general picture emerging about technology and the brain is chiefly this: in many ways, ensuring technology benefits our children is about transferring offline parental wisdom to digital environments.

Sleep is another example. Just as most of us would discourage our children from having a midnight chat to friends on the doorstep, texting after 'lights out' is also a bad idea and increases four-fold the probability of drowsiness in school the next day. Texting under the duvet can disrupt sleep more than illicit TV watching, with research suggesting small bright screens hinder the brain's secretion of melatonin, so delaying our natural sleepiness.

Sleep is not just about rest but also helps the brain consolidate the day's learning. When highly arousing activities, such as computer games, disrupt subsequent sleep, children find it harder to recall learning achieved the previous evening. On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence, including from neuroscience, to show how technology can support education and learning.

Insights from neuroscience are beginning to help us determine how children can best use technology to minimise risks and maximise benefits. Rather than telling us 'technology is good' or 'technology is bad', the research is telling us that it's all about how young people use it.

Film ratings and the digital world

EXPERT VIEW
David Austin OBE

Following a career in the Diplomatic Service, David Austin OBE joined the BBFC in 2003 as an examiner. He became Assistant Director for Policy and Public Affairs in 2011 and is responsible for all aspects of classification policy, as well as the BBFC's outreach and research work.

bbfc

www.bbfc.co.uk

U Suitable for all

PG Parental Guidance

12A **12** Suitable for 12 years and over

15 Suitable for 15 years and over

18 Suitable only for adults

R18 To be shown only in specially licensed cinemas, or supplied only in licensed sex shops, and to adults of not less than 18 years

David Austin OBE, of the British Board of Film Classification, explains how it is helping parents to make informed decisions about their family's online viewing experiences.

Be it a trip to the cinema, a DVD from the comfort of your own sofa, or logging on to your computer, it's never been easier to watch a film. But how can you be sure that your son or daughter's viewing habits are appropriate for their age? How can you help them to enjoy this amazing medium and, at the same time, avoid unsuitable content?

Introducing the BBFC

Nearly everyone recognises and understands the familiar British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) symbols, which rate films based on their suitability for different age groups. Along with advice as to what a particular film contains, they help parents make informed choices about what they and their children watch.

That's all well and good in the physical world – for visits to the cinema or for buying a DVD or Blu-ray – but what about online? What information is there to help guide parents when they and their children make viewing choices?

Independent research carried out for the BBFC in 2011 highlighted a clear demand from parents for a trusted guide to digital content –

82% of parents said that they prefer to download videos if they carry a BBFC rating.

In fact, since 2008, the BBFC and the home entertainment industry have been working in partnership to bring trusted BBFC symbols and content advice to films and other audio-visual material (such as video games and music videos) that are being offered online.

Many content providers, such as Warner, Fox, Paramount and Disney, and platforms like BT Vision, TalkTalk, Netflix and

blinkbox are working with us to ensure that the material they provide online comes with a BBFC age rating and content advice to empower parents and protect children.

To date, we have classified over 200,000 items of content for distribution online, ranging from full length feature films to music videos. Although this is small in comparison with the vast amount of material available on the internet, it provides parents with reassurance in relation to some of the most popular content and the number of platforms and content providers using BBFC ratings online is growing. ◢

What is available to help parents make decisions about films and other audio-visual materials online?

1
Look out for BBFC ratings as a matter of course. There's no better way of ensuring that your children are watching age appropriate material. Content providers and online platforms that provide BBFC ratings include blinkbox, Disney and Netflix.

2
Check the BBFC website at www.bbfc.co.uk for further information about individual films or classification more generally. The BBFC also offers a free app for the iPhone and Android phones containing information about age ratings and content for individual films and videos, including those classified for distribution online.

3
If you are at all concerned by what you have seen in a BBFC-classified film, contact the BBFC. The BBFC is there to help you make informed choices to protect your children and ensure you have a happy family viewing experience.

Stay informed about the BBFC

You can sign-up for regular updates from the BBFC on its classification decisions and other information it publishes for parents. You can also take part in the regular surveys of public opinion that the BBFC uses to update its Classification Guidelines. The next major survey will take place early in 2013 and will seek the views of thousands of parents on what they consider to be acceptable content (e.g. violence, sex, language) in the different age categories.

www.pbbfc.co.uk

Going for gold!

Ahead of the 2012 Paralympics, three young athletes took time out from their demanding training schedules to talk to Dr Karen Stone about how technology helps them in their training and personal lives.

Zoe Newson
Paralympic Power Lifter

Weighing under 40kg, Zoe Newson is a phenomenal power lifter who can lift twice her body weight. In early 2012, 20-year-old Zoe set a Junior European record to win gold and had her sights firmly set on London when we spoke in May 2012.

Zoe's talent for power lifting was noticed when she was 15 by a coach who was visiting her school to present a talk on the army. Zoe was initially unimpressed when he said that because of her short arms and body Zoe would be good at power lifting as her first sporting love was football – "playing it, watching it and reading about it" – however, these days Zoe could not imagine life without power lifting.

One of Zoe's coaches explained that most of the best power lifters in the lighter classes of the disabled categories are dwarfs because they tend to have the same amount of muscle fibres as able-bodied people but on shorter bones. This genetic advantage, alongside a natural talent and dedication to the sport, has led Zoe to be ranked fourth in the world.

Zoe trains five times a week with a focus on lifting weights, dumbbells and building strength and, while technology does not feature in Zoe's training, her iPod is a critical part of pre-competition preparation.

As she explains, "I never leave home without my iPod. I listen to music – anything really… rock, pop, soundtracks… and it gets me in the zone. Get into the song and it gets you there."

When competing away from home, Zoe keeps in touch with her friends, family and supporters via Facebook and last year was voted athlete of the month in a public poll on the site. She also writes a blog sharing her sporting achievements and winds down from training by browsing the internet and watching DVDs on her laptop.

"I never leave home without my iPod"

Factfile

Age:
20

From:
Ipswich

Key achievement:
Won Junior European Gold in 2012

Dr Karen Stone has three children, is a keen cyclist and has been interested in the Paralympics since her son became involved when he was 14. Alongside this, she is an independent consultant to local authorities, a writer and a coach.

For James Hollis, who has brittle bones, a slip on the kerb can result in a fracture and his involvement in swimming was encouraged to divert him from more perilous sports. He has recently broken the minute barrier in the 100m butterfly.

Paralympic cyclist David Stone, who has cerebral palsy, took up cycling because of the freedom, speed and independence it offered and he was hoping, in London, to repeat his gold medal winning performance of Beijing.

Zoe Newson, who is a dwarf, entered competitive power lifting when a coach visiting her school recognised that her short arms and height would suit her to the sport. She is now ranked fourth in the world in her category.

From the use of iPods to 'get in the zone' in those critical minutes pre-competition to high-tech equipment that can measure power output and detailed video analysis, all three athletes recognise the value of technology in the ultra-competitive sporting world. Their training schedules are demanding and, with time at a premium, the ability to share performance data with their coaches electronically and to talk by Skype is crucial.

Furthermore, communication with friends, family and supporters is aided by Facebook, Twitter and blogs and they all admit to enjoying shopping online.

All three athletes share an absolute love of their sport and would encourage other disabled young people to give competing a try. They also recognise that this demands a change of attitude in young people's parents, who must accept that disabled children have the same right to opportunities, even where some risk is involved.

As these dedicated young people prove, technology helps – but cannot replace – commitment, talent and self-belief.

Factfile

Age:
18

From:
Epping Forest

Key achievement:
First British swimmer in his category to break the minute barrier in the 100m butterfly

"Email means my coaches can monitor my training from afar"

James Hollis
Paralympic Swimmer

Sibling rivalry and a strong competitive spirit has contributed to James Hollis' success in becoming the first swimmer in his category to break the minute barrier in the 100m butterfly and to being selected for his first Paralympic Games. James and his sister Emma share the condition that results in brittle bones and both will be competing in London.

As James, aged 18, told me, "I want to achieve as much as I can and so does Emma. We push each other that much further."

Alongside the competitive drive, however, comes dedicated training and, while most of us sleep, James is in the pool at 5.45am, training for an hour and a half before school with a further two hour swimming session in the evening.

James, who has experienced countless broken bones, was encouraged to get involved in swimming by his mum as an alternative to more dangerous contact sports such as football and rugby. Now he could not imagine life without swimming and his attitude towards potential injuries is pragmatic.

"These things happen," he says. "A lot of my breaks have been silly things when I've just been walking and twisted my ankle. If I let it get to me and worried about it all the time I wouldn't do anything."

Competitions provide James with the buzz that makes the commitment worthwhile. He most enjoys "the last five metres and being absolutely exhausted but still pushing to the limit" and his iPod is an essential tool in James' preparation for this explosive moment. Listening to Eminem to block out everything in the stressful 15 minutes before the competition where "there'll be eight guys who all really want to win the race in the same room" is one of the secrets to his success.

Alongside his iPod, James values the ability to email his monitoring sheets to his coaches at British Swimming, since he now gets an instant response.

"I used to have to send them monthly via the post so you never really got feedback from that because it takes too long," he explains.

Then there is video analysis, using various forms of software, which enables James' performance to be compared to a perfect model.

James was very excited about the London games.

"Every athlete wants to compete in the Paralympics and it is even better that it is my first in front of a home crowd," he adds.

David Stone MBE
Paralympic Cyclist

London 2012 offered gold medal winning Paralympic cyclist David Stone the opportunity to repeat his success in Beijing on home soil. David, who has cerebral palsy, specialises in time trial events and road races. Devoting up to 25 hours a week to intensive road cycling, as well as spending time on a turbo trainer and under laboratory conditions, David employs technology to better understand his performance and to identify areas for improvement.

For those of us who think that a computer that tells us how fast we are riding our bike is impressive, the array of technical equipment available to competitive cyclists is amazing. David uses SRM cranks (the component of the bike that drives the chain via the pedals) to measure the power he exerts in each pedal rotation and the information for each ride is stored electronically and can be shared with David's coach.

As he explains, "My coach and I live at different ends of the country, so we talk using Skype while looking at the data. He can see exactly what I've been doing, where I've been working hard, and where I need to improve. There's no place to hide!"

Alongside his heart rate monitor and GPS, David uses the Strata website to track his rides and compare his performance with other cyclists. In the laboratory, state-of-the-art technology is used to identify, record and analyse a range of information, including ECG patterns, blood flow, oxygen uptake and heart rate. Blood tests are used to detect changes in lactic acid, which builds up in the muscles during strenuous exercise, to indicate whether lactic acid tolerance training has been effective. The purpose of this training is to make the body more efficient at reprocessing the waste products of exercise to allow the athlete to cycle faster for longer.

All this information is used to set specific training goals and also to do detailed planning for competitions.

Prior to Beijing, David and his coach flew out to view the course and used all the data and video footage of him riding the course to optimise gearing, cornering, tyre pressures and everything that could maximise performance.

While the use of technology and specific goals is critical to his success, it is also important for David to maintain his pure enjoyment of cycling.

"The biggest factor for me is the enjoyment of the bicycle – goals are secondary. If I make success the key motivator, it doesn't work for me. I have to just enjoy the challenge of riding the bike."

He explains that learning to ride a bike when he was nine provided him with "speed, freedom and independence and was also a way to escape things at school, like bullying."

David thinks that more disabled children and young people would get involved in sport if parents didn't "mollycoddle their children just because they are disabled."

He adds, "The bike has become a great part of my life and has given me enormous pleasure, freedom and independence. All young people should have this opportunity. Beijing taught me that you can achieve anything that you put your mind to."

Factfile

Age:
31

From:
Leeds

Key achievement:
Two gold medals (for road race and time trial) in Beijing Paralympics

"My coach and I talk using Skype while looking at my training data"

It's never too early...

Digiduck, Proud.pig, Footie_Fox and other farmyard friends have come together in a new story aimed at teaching very young children about online friendships and responsibility.

Developed by UK Safer Internet Centre partner Childnet, this illustrated book is available at: **www.kidsmart.org.uk/teachers/ks1/ sourcesDuck/projet/DigiDuck-eBook.pdf**

iKeepSafe encourages good digital citizens

NEWS & VIEWS

iKeepSafe CEO & President Marsali Hancock delivered the keynote address at the 2012 National Conference on Youth Cyber Safety in the US. Ms Hancock explored a number of key issues including how to encourage young people to become ethical, responsible and resilient digital citizens.

www.ikeepsafe.org/ikeepsafenews/ national-conference-on-youth- cyber-safety/ and @iKeepSafe on Twitter.

Stay safe

The CBBC Stay Safe website provides internet safety advice for young children, including through its award-winning 'Horrible Histories' videos.

Check out Guy Fawkes offering advice about internet privacy settings and Lady Jane Grey warning about the dangers of downloading.

www.bbc.co.uk/ cbbc/topics/stay-safe

NetFamilyNews

Writer and journalist Annie Collier edits the NetFamilyNews website, a useful resource for parents, teachers and others interested in young people and technology. Anne has covered everything from 'digital tattoos' and flirting apps to sexting and YouTube's face blurring tool in recent months.

Find out more at **www.netfamilynews.org** or follow @annecollier on Twitter.
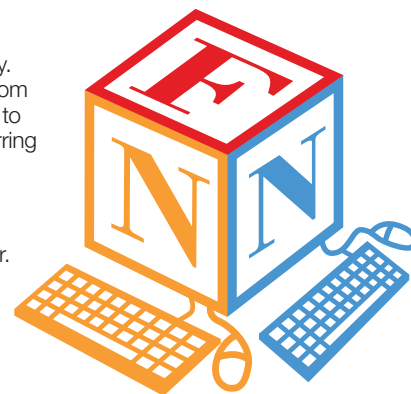
Yahoo! Safely

Yahoo! Safely provides extensive advice about making smart and safer choices online and using Yahoo! products safely, including choosing who sees your Flickr images, protecting your personal information when you're using Yahoo! Answers and dealing with harassment on Yahoo! Messenger.

http://uk.safely.yahoo.com/

Munch, Poke, Ping

Run by e-safety advocate Stephen Carrick-Davies, the 'Munch, Poke, Ping' project explores how social media and mobile phone technology affects young people's peer relationships, behaviour and identity and how they cope when there is conflict online. The project works directly with young people who are, or who feel, excluded.

www.carrick-davies.com/mpp

What will the must-have gadgets of 2022 look like?

Ian Campbell of Airtel-Vodafone peers into tomorrow's world.

EXPERT VIEW
Ian Campbell

Ian Campbell is Chief Operating Officer of Airtel-Vodafone in the Channel Islands. With a background in electronic engineering and systems integration, he has given a number of presentations about the future of technology and social media.

Airtel vodafone

www.airtel-vodafone.com

It's hard to visualise how the digital world will look by the end of the decade but one thing is certain: the rate of technological change will increase and, along with it, the social, economic and political landscape will be transformed. For developing economies, such as Africa and India, technological advances will be a life-changer; in the West, more of a game-changer.

The technologies that have been shaping our lives for 10 years are just the dawning of an Information Age that emerges ever faster before our eyes. Get set for so much more than flashier phones and second generation iPads – in the future, mobile technology will be central to the way we live our lives.

How we read and access data will change beyond all recognition, so stand by for the demise of the PC as we know it and look out for the launch of foldable e-newspapers, phone 'PCs', flexible tablets with foldable screens and the introduction of smart glass.

We can also expect to input and interpret data in new ways. We've already got games consoles that use gesture-sensing, smartphones that we can command by voice and augmented reality apps (where a real-world environment is augmented by computer-generated sensory input, such as sound or video). In the future, these kind of features will become an intrinsic part of smart devices.

In my view, there are six key ingredients driving this revolution as we head towards 2022 and beyond:

1. FASTER, SMALLER AND LOWER-POWERED MICROPROCESSORS:

For example, new Graphene based microprocessors currently under development will use very little power, are structurally flexible, nano-sized and much faster than today's slow, power-hungry chips. We'll even be able to build them into flexible fabric.

2. SCREEN TECHNOLOGY:
Smart glass will mean you can view data on domestic windows, car windows and large glass screens at the office or at home. The smart glass will interact with your mobile smart device, enabling you to see email, videos and presentations in high-resolution and colour. Seeing is believing, as this video from Corning shows:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZkHpNnXLB0

3. STORAGE:
In the short term, silicon storage capacity will increase two to three-fold within the next five years. In the longer term, storage will certainly become almost unlimited for the average user thanks to technologies such as Graphene that allow huge amounts of video content to be stored on a flexible, bus ticket-sized chip, for example.

4. COMMUNICATION SPEED:
Fixed and mobile data highways will become global super-fast highways. The advent of 4G and WiMax and the ever-improving developments around wireless and fixed-line speeds will ensure all connections are super-fast within the next five years. While 4G coverage is limited by certain factors, soon you won't even think about how you are connected to the Web!

5. POWER:
Mobile devices are limited today by battery life and size. In the future, with Graphene chips and ultra low-power screens, mobile devices will require a much smaller power source. In addition, solar (sun), kinetic (movement) and infrared (heat) power options will be available which, in theory, should mean no external mains power required.

6. USERS:
The human race is demanding flexible, high-speed access to content, friends, products, services, videos, music and games.

The concepts are already here; delivery is just a matter of logistics. Of course, we need to bear in mind that these changes may take some time to reach the mass market but with multiple companies already joining forces to make these ideas a reality, it's not a case of if, but when.

gital future

So what can we expect to see first? One trial product currently in development is an e-paper device that feels similar to a piece of laminated plastic. Suitable for downloading data – including newspapers on-the-go – it will be durable enough to last for years… or at least until the next big idea comes along. Expect e-papers to retail around $1 to $5 by 2016.

Other developers are using nano-technology to create a material that's flexible enough to fold. Ultra-thin wires, hundreds of times thinner than a strand of human hair, are embedded into the material to make it pliable. The result: mobile devices that can be folded up and carried in your pocket.

These are two routes towards the same outcome: portable, flexible devices.

Machine-to-machine communication will also become part of everyday life before the decade is out. Some hire car companies in the UK are already using chips that let cars communicate their location back to head office and, in the future, the cost of insurance policies is likely to be linked to the way we drive – a mobile device in our car could be used to determine whether we exceed the speed limit, with the data fed back to the insurer in real time.

> **"The technologies that have been shaping our lives for 10 years are just the dawning of an Information Age that emerges ever faster before our eyes."**

Near field communication (NFC) – where smartphones and other devices establish radio communication with each other if they are in close proximity or touching – will also become commonplace as early as Christmas 2013. This will see mobile phones, for example, increasingly being used as payment devices in retail stores. Earlier this year, Vodafone unveiled its 'mobile wallet', which will enable shoppers to simply wave or tap their smartphone instead of handing over cash or a card.

Social networking and location-based services are poised to be huge as more and more mobile users opt in to be able to see where friends, family and contacts are at any time. And advertisers are spotting the trend, as well as its potential as a selling tool.

As part of their loyalty schemes, some UK retailers are already using the technology to reach out to customers, via their phones, when they pass within a certain distance of a given store. According to profile information held by the retailer, shoppers can then be targeted with certain offers or products that will be of interest.

My final prediction for the digital world this decade is that we will see a conscious shift towards greater security and privacy controls, requiring legislation and co-operation on a worldwide scale.

The great challenge we face is that the internet has no geographical or government boundaries. In normal life, most people have the ability to prove their authenticity. But the online world doesn't work this way. At some point, this will have to change and we will all need to have the same accountability in our digital lives as we have in everyday life.

We will also see governments increasingly working together to ensure this accountability. Of course, difficulties will arise when there is conflict between leaders who are not like-minded, especially on issues such as freedom of information. But the need for global responsibility to protect against fraud and terrorism will drive the approach forward. Digital agendas and laws will emerge to tackle these issues. And they have the weight of progress behind them. ◪

Looking towards the future of the Internet

EXPERT VIEW
Vinton G. Cerf

Vinton G. Cerf is Google's Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist. As one of the 'Fathers of the Internet', Cerf is the co-designer of the Internet's TCP/IP protocols and architecture. Cerf holds a B.S. degree in Mathematics from Stanford University and MS. and Ph.D degrees in Computer Science from UCLA.

Google

www.google.com

When we got the opportunity for Vinton G. Cerf to provide a glimpse into our digital future, we were very excited. As a highly respected computer scientist and Internet evangelist, Mr Cerf offers some fascinating insights into technology. So, if you're interested in learning more about the often complex technicalities of the Internet as well as hearing about the pioneering work of scientific experts and space agencies, read on...

Q How far back does the concept of the Internet go?

A We might go as far back as 1934 and the Belgian entrepreneur Paul Otlet's remarkable effort to use the technologies of the time to assemble a sort of prehistoric World Wide Web. The notion that interconnecting computers could be beneficial came a while later, in the 1960s' when a computer scientist called J.C.R. Licklider wrote to his colleagues about an idea for an 'intergalactic' network. The inventor Douglas Engelbart then developed an oNLine System (NLS) that made these ideas concrete.

All of these ideas were made realisable as computer and communication technology grew more powerful and more affordable until, today, we have access to a vast quantity of information from our smart mobile phones. In the early days of ARPANET (the network that preceded the global Internet), only researchers sponsored by the US Government had access to the kinds of tools that we now take for granted all around the world.

Indeed, the general trend in technology is to go from extremely expensive and available to only a few to dramatically less expensive and available to the general public. The personalisation of information technology has changed our daily lives, no matter what we may be doing.

Q What makes computer networking and the Web so powerful?

A I think it can be strongly argued that communication is one of the key attributes of human societies. It is clear that other species make use of communication but humans have invented complex language and, perhaps even more important, have invented writing that allows information to be preserved over long periods of time and facilitate communication among parties who are not (ever) in direct contact.

What makes computer networking so powerful is that the 'writing' is in digital form and can be exchanged among and between computers as well as humans. Information in digital form can be searched, processed, organised, replicated, distributed and transformed through software.

Because software runs on computers, it is possible to amplify its power by putting it on millions of computers (well, billions by now) using the aggregate power to speed up processing. For example, Google's search engine takes advantage of a very large number of computers to 'crawl' through the World Wide Web's pages, create a comprehensive index and respond in real time to search requests from users.

We are entering a period in history in which it is conceivable that all the knowledge we possess as a society and as a species may be accessible to literally everyone. What is particularly interesting about the Internet and the World Wide Web is its ability to facilitate collaboration, sharing and discovery of information of interest.

It is a medium for social engagement, citizen interaction with government, financial transactions, art, imagery, films/videos, books, magazines and all manner of real-time and near-real-time communication. From tweets and instant messages to blogs and email, the Internet has become a medium for all manner of communication.

Q What risks does the Internet bring?

A The ubiquitous nature of the Internet raises concerns for the protection of society against harmful behaviours that can be perpetrated online. Alongside an overwhelmingly positive and constructive collection of uses and applications, fraud, stalking, spam, malware, denial of service attacks, identity theft, libel, piracy and many other harmful behaviours can be found on the Internet.

A common question is what to do about these harmful behaviours, which are by no means unique to the Internet (many of these behaviours are facilitated by other infrastructure including postal services, telephone services and so on).

While it is tempting to try to respond to these problems with laws and technology, it must be appreciated that only some abuses can be

> **Did you know?**
> Only about 2.5 billion people on the planet, out of seven billion, are thought to have access to the Internet so far.

inhibited through technical means and that laws do not, of themselves, stop bad behaviour. Laws can spell out the consequences of bad behaviour if the miscreant can be caught, but many bad deeds go unpunished for lack of evidence of the perpetrator. Differences in legal frameworks across jurisdictional boundaries also exacerbate these deficiencies.

Q Where is the Internet going?

A It is plainly spreading rapidly across the globe and it is also undergoing significant technical change:

A new address format (called IPv6) was introduced in June 2012 that will allow the Internet to continue to expand well beyond its present boundaries. IPv6 has 340 trillion trillion trillion addresses (think of them like telephone numbers) compared to the 4.3 billion that the older IPv4 format (e.g. 24.32.0.114) allowed. This means that more devices, such as smartphones and tablets, can be connected to the Internet. The IPv6 128-bit format is much longer than IPv4 but it should be of little specific interest to users since they use domain names (e.g. www.google.com) rather than numerical addresses to reference destinations on the Internet. The domain names are translated by the Domain Name System into numeric addresses for use by the lower layer Internet protocols.

Internet population 2007 vs 2012
A 2x increase in 5 years

North America
273m
+40m

Europe
501m
+179m

Asia
1bn
+582m

The Middle East
77m
+57m

Latin America
236m
+126m

Africa
140m
+106m

Oceania
24m
+5m
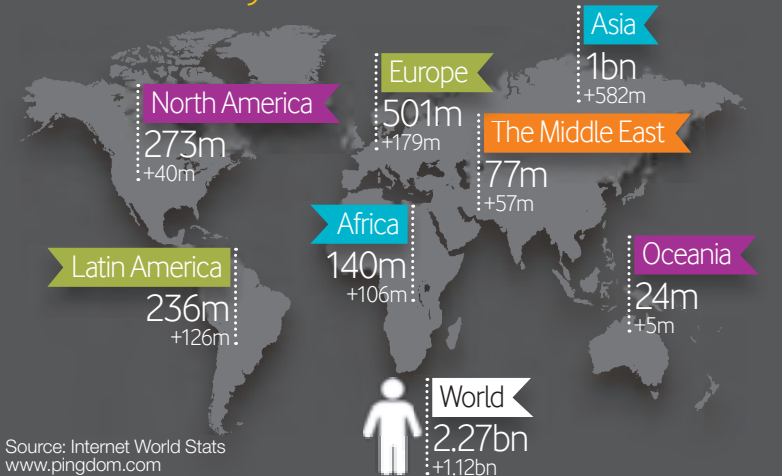
World
2.27bn
+1.12bn

Source: Internet World Stats
www.pingdom.com

Domain names are now expressible in non-Latin characters, such as Greek or Cyrillic characters (which means that website addresses can be written in languages spoken in countries such as Greece and Russia).

The top level domain space (think .com, .net and .org) is being expanded by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to add as many as 2,000 new top level domains. This means that even more addresses can be registered and also that new top level domains like .kids, .shop and .sports can help to identify special content and top level domains like .cat for Catalan or .sco for Scotland can mark cultural or linguistic areas.

New security mechanisms are being put in place to protect the Domain Name System and new cryptographic techniques are available to improve confidentiality and authentication of users. Cryptographic methods make it difficult for a hacker to fool the network into accepting as valid data that is attempting to misdirect a user to a false destination, for example.

Despite its roots in the early 1970s, the Internet is still evolving to meet new needs and support new applications. Perhaps the most interesting expansion, however, is not even on planet Earth. Since 1998, an effort to define and deploy an interplanetary Internet has been underway at NASA and other space agencies.

Q **Can you tell us more about the interplanetary Internet?**

A The basic idea is to bring to space exploration the same remarkable benefits that the Internet has brought to terrestrial communication. Rich networking capabilities will allow for much more elaborate, multi-spacecraft missions as well as allowing spacecraft that have completed their primary missions to be repurposed to be nodes of an interplanetary backbone.

Generally, spacecraft have communications, processing and storage capacity to carry out their scientific missions (gathering data and sending it back to Earth) but these same spacecraft can also be used as information and communication relays. By enriching the networking capability of our spacecraft in this way, we can support more elaborate, multi-spacecraft missions and gain additional value.

Distances in space are vast and even at the speed of light, radio signals take minutes to hours to cross the solar system. The fundamental protocols of the terrestrial Internet are not well suited to the long delays and potentially disrupted communication encountered at interplanetary distances so new protocols are now being tested on the International Space Station and prototype software is on board the European Messenger spacecraft, the NASA/JPL Mars Science Laboratory, the Rovers on Mars and two of the orbiters.

The development team is also working with the Consultative Committee on Space Data Systems to standardise these protocols for use by all space-faring nations. The expectation is that these protocols, once adopted, can form the basis for a growing interplanetary communication backbone in aid of manned and robotic exploration of our solar system.

More recently, the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) announced the award of a grant to study the design of a spacecraft that could reach a nearby star, such as Alpha Centauri in the southern constellation of Centaurus, in 100 years. The 'one hundred year spaceship' (100YSS) project faces challenges such as propulsion, communication and navigation.

With today's technology, it would take 65,000 years to reach Alpha Centauri, only 4.4.light years away (even more than ten trillion miles). Generating a signal that is detectable from that distance is also a major hurdle and lasers, synthetic aperture receivers and perhaps even gravity lenses may be needed. Assuming Albert Einstein's theory of relativity is correct, the speed of light cannot be exceeded so it would take 8.8 years for a signal to be sent and a response received.

Did you know?
The Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) are not the same thing. The Internet is an underlying communication infrastructure and the WWW is an application. Other applications on the Internet include voice communication and electronic mail (email) but the WWW is surely the most widely used and powerful application on the Internet today.

Despite these challenges, the problems are largely engineering. No new physics needs to be discovered or invented.

I cannot imagine a more interesting time to be associated with the Internet and working on the problem of extending our ability to communicate into our galactic home. J.C.R. Licklider may have been joking back in the 1960s, but we're taking it seriously.

Jargonbuster

Alpha Centauri
According to Wikipedia, "Alpha Centauri is the name given to what appears as a single star to the naked eye and the brightest star in the southern constellation of Centaurus."

ARPANET
The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) was "the world's first operational packet switching network and the core network of a set that came to compose the global Internet." (Source: Wikipedia)

Intergalactic Computer Network
According to Wikipedia, J.C.R. Licklider "formulated the earliest ideas of a global computer network in August 1962… in a series of memos discussing the 'Intergalactic Computer Network' concept." This concept can be considered the basis of the Internet as we know it today.

IPv6
"Each device on the Internet, such as a computer or mobile telephone, must be assigned an IP address in order to communicate with other devices. With the ever-increasing number of new devices being connected to the Internet, there is a need for more addresses than IPv4 can accommodate… IPv6 addresses… consist of eight groups of four hexadecimal digits separated by colons – for example 2001:0db8:85a3:0042:0000:8a 2e:0370:7334." (Source: Wikipedia)

Useful websites

100YSS
http://100yss.org

Consultative Committee on Space Data Systems
http://public.ccsds.org/default.aspx

European Messenger
http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/messenger/multimedia/orbit_concept.html

NASA/JPL Mars Science Laboratory
http://marsprogram.jpl.nasa.gov/msl/

Wikipedia
www.wikipedia.org

Can we teach our kids to code?

EXPERT VIEW
Daniel Appelquist

Daniel Appelquist examines how we could redefine our children's relationship with technology by teaching them computer programming.

Daniel Appelquist worked at Vodafone for 10 years, most recently in the role of Web and Internet Evangelist. He is now Head of Product Management at BlueVia, Telefónica's global developer portal.

When we talk about kids and computers – and especially kids and the Web – it seems we're usually talking about how to restrict. Is there another way? Could we be teaching young people to treat computers as a tool for creativity? If we were to show them how to design, write, test and maintain computer programs (known as 'coding'), could we change their relationship with the machine and with the Web?

In the pop culture of the internet, we love to talk about companies like Facebook, Google and Twitter. The story of the tech start-up, founded by kids with a cool idea, which then becomes the next household name, has become mythic. But where do these ideas come from? Where do these kids come from?

Back in time

Let's step back for some historical perspective. My history, in this case. When I was 12, my parents announced to me that they were having another baby.

My life as an only child of academics was about to change.

To cushion the blow, they bought me something that, at that time, was a novelty: a personal computer (in this case, an Apple II). They didn't know it back then, but this decision would shape the rest of my life.

The thing about the Apple II (shared by most of its contemporaries) was that when you turned it on, it allowed you to immediately start writing code. In fact, to get it to do anything at all, you had to start writing code. The way in which you interacted with the machine, the human-computer-interface, was code. If you simply started typing:
10 PRINT "HELLO"
20 GOTO 10
RUN
…you were rewarded with a continuous line of HELLOs scrolling up the screen. This was magic, circa 1981.

The point of all this is that if you owned a computer at this time, you became familiar with how to tell computers how to do things, how to write computer programs, how to 'code'. Kids who grew up with this experience of computers had the skills and inclination to take up more advanced computer-

related disciplines later in life, including computer science, information science, computer graphics, algorithms and user interface design. These were the kids who went on to invent things like the Web itself.

Fast forward to 2012

The way computers are presented to children now is often as a media consumption device – look at how laptops, tablets and smartphones are fast replacing the television for kids in the modern age.

> **"…where do these ideas come from, where do these kids come from?"**

My own kids have grown up with the Web as a given, with Moshi Monsters, BBC iPlayer and Wikipedia at their beck and call and with games like Angry Birds just a finger-tap away, and I often worry about how this experience of computers will colour their future.

Unfortunately, this relationship with the computer is reinforced by how computing is currently taught in schools, at least in the UK.

I was horrified when my kids started getting 'ICT' lessons in school that seemed to consist primarily of the use of office applications. This approach to teaching computing casts computer skills as vocational, rather than as an academic or creative discipline.

What has this got to do with you and your kids? Isn't all this innovation happening in California? In fact, the history of the computer started in Britain. It started with a group of mathematicians working

on code-breaking during World War II in a secret installation near Milton Keynes called Bletchley Park. It started with people like Alan Turing and Tommy Flowers who put two and two together and built the first programmable computer, the Colossus. In many ways, these were the original 'hackers', and our modern information economy owes them a huge debt.
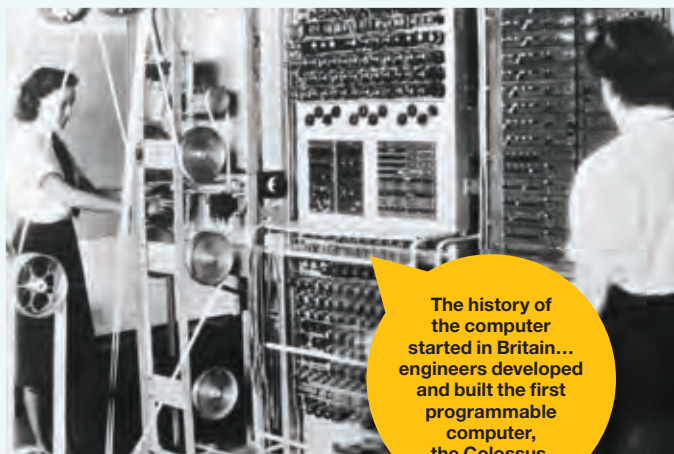
The history of the computer started in Britain… engineers developed and built the first programmable computer, the Colossus.

What can parents do?

All right, you might say, I get it. I want to teach my kids to code. But I myself don't know how to code, so how am I supposed to teach them?

Whatever curriculum is introduced in schools in the future, parents can still play a vital role in exposing kids to the concepts and tools they need to learn how to code. Many resources exist to help you help your kids get a leg up on writing computer programs – here are a few I'd recommend.

What is the Government doing?

The good news is that there is a move afoot in the UK to redefine how we teach computing to kids – to teach them not only how to use computers but also how to code them.

A proposed curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4, which seeks to cover computer programming and computer science basics, has been put together with the support of the British Computer Society and has been 'endorsed' by both Microsoft and Google. You can read more about it on the Computing At School website at **www.computingatschool.org.uk**

Furthermore, earlier this year, the UK Government announced plans to introduce computer programming instruction at an earlier age. How exactly these plans will come to life remains to be seen but there is clearly momentum.

As Professor John Naughton of the Open University put it in an open letter to the Education Secretary Michael Gove (published in the Guardian in March 2012), "…we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to prepare our children to play a full part in the world they will inherit."

Where to from here?

Teaching our kids to code could have another important impact: it could redefine their relationship with computers and with the medium of the Web to which they have become intractably linked.

Unlike previous mediums like television and radio, which have almost universally been consumed passively, the Web encourages active participation. The most extreme expression of this participation takes form through software development, through creating new experiences and bringing new ideas to life.

Where will the next Facebook, Google or Twitter come from? If we can teach our kids to code, then it's very likely they will come from under our own noses.

Keep in touch with the latest developments and contribute your own ideas at the Coding for Kids wiki **http://codingforkids.org** and **@codingforkids** on Twitter.

Code Club (**www.codeclub.org.uk/**) has developed a curriculum and a sort of 'after school club in a box' aimed at teaching programming skills (using Scratch) to children aged 10 to 11. In a fairly short time, they've not only developed a great curriculum but also lots of awareness of this topic. ◪

LEGO Mindstorms
mindstorms.lego.com
Kids aged seven upwards can start with LEGO Mindstorms, a kit for building robots with LEGO. It comes with a controller unit that is basically a programmable computer that uses a simple, visual 'drag and drop' environment.

Raspberry Pi
raspberrypi.org
Billed as a 'tiny and cheap computer for kids', the Raspberry Pi gives you fully functioning computer innards for around £30 and you supply your own keyboard, mouse and monitor (a modern TV will do the trick). Its Linux operating system is 'open' for tinkering with and comes pre-installed with programming languages and environments.
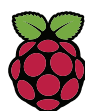
MIT Scratch
scratch.mit.edu
A project of the Lifelong Kindergarten group at the MIT Media Lab, Scratch is a great starter program for acquainting kids with the fundamentals of computer programming. It is available as a free download for PC, Mac and Linux and enables kids to build interactive stories, games and animations, whilst learning about simple computer science concepts like loops, variables and events.

EXPERT VIEW
Lee Epting

Lee Epting has over 20 years' experience in the technology sector, including senior roles at Vodafone and Nokia.

vodafone

www.vodafone.com

The mobile app revolution

They're just tiny pieces of software on your phone but they might have already changed the way you – and your kids – do certain things. Lee Epting, former Group Content Services Director at Vodafone, delves into the ever-evolving world of the app.

We're living in an incredibly exciting time. Mobile phones are no longer just used to make phone calls and send text messages; they're becoming networked computers with endless possibilities. These smartphones have already replaced books, maps, cameras, diaries and MP3 players in our pockets and bags. They will soon replace purses, wallets and even keys.

More than a billion smartphones are used every day around the world and that number is growing. Mobile and device manufacturers are developing new features, handsets are getting cheaper ('Pay as you go' smartphones can be bought for around £40), mobile operators are building faster networks, and more open, advanced mobile platforms have driven the proliferation of mobile applications or 'apps'.

What are mobile apps and how can I get hold of them?

Apps have been around for a while but, as smartphones become more prevalent and apps easier to find, they are playing an increasingly important role in our lives.

Mobile apps are small programmes that sit on a smartphone, giving you quick access to information, entertainment and much more, usually via the internet. There are currently over 600,000 apps for the iPhone alone, many of which fulfil every day tasks such as shopping, business, banking, diary planning and social networking. By early 2012, there were more than 30 billion downloads of these iPhone apps.

You can get apps via a 'shop' on your smartphone. For example, if you go to Apple's App Store, BlackBerry App World, Google Play or Vodafone AppSelect, you can download and install apps that are either free or paid-for (costing anything from 29p to £10). Payment is usually made via a credit card registered to the app store account or charged to your monthly phone bill or 'Pay as you go' credit. Some apps that are free to download may charge for additional features (such as accessing premium levels within a game or buying virtual goods) via 'in-app purchases'.

Safety in numbers?

Today, there are around five billion devices connected to the internet and it's estimated that this figure will rise to 15 billion by 2015 – that's more than two devices for every person on earth. With sales of smartphones and tablets, such as the iPad and Samsung Galaxy Tab, overtaking personal computers for the first time last year, it's clear that mobile devices will play an important role in this predicted growth.

Indeed, smartphones, tablets and mobile apps are becoming our main route to the internet and, given that the average user stores more than 2GB of personal data on their phone – emails, photos, videos, music and much more – the safety of that data is a pressing question for us all.

Mobile users can take straightforward steps to protect their devices against viruses, theft or loss. Passwords and PIN numbers should be used at all times, apps are available to back up valuable photos, music or address books and 'find, lock and wipe' services can – either temporarily or permanently – protect a lost smartphone.

Whilst mobile apps are certainly transforming the way we lead our lives, their benefits won't be fully realised unless people are confident that they can control and protect the personal information held on the device.

Young people and apps

With almost half of 12 to 15-year-olds in the UK now owning a smartphone, parents might have additional concerns when it comes to their kids using mobile apps.

Keeping track of the apps your child is downloading can be a challenge. Whilst there are many educational

Angry Pigs
£2.00
Time to revenge and strike back!
★★★★½ (1648)
By SolverLabs
If you experience problems downloading or installing this application, please
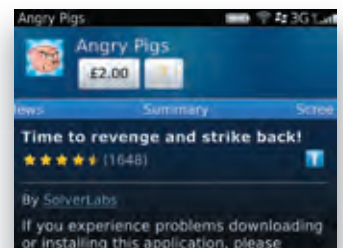
What is an in-app purchase?

Some apps offer you the chance to buy subscriptions and extra content once you're in the app – these are called in-app purchases.

Bonus game levels, maps, upgrades, tokens, subscriptions and clothes or equipment for characters in a game are examples of things you might be asked to pay for once you are using an app (even if the app was free to download in the first place).

When you make an in-app purchase, you'll see the name and cost of the item on your screen. In-app purchases are charged directly to the credit card that has been assigned to the app store in question, charged to your monthly phone bill or 'Pay as you go' credit, or deducted from the app store allowance or gift card.

Some children and teenagers might not understand that in-app purchases cost real money and there have been times when kids have unwittingly run up large bills buying them.

Take action

1 TAKE a look at the apps that your son or daughter has on their mobile (they show up as icons on the home screen) to check whether they're appropriate for their age

2 CHECK age ratings and content descriptions on apps when purchasing but remember that these are assigned by the app developer, so you should also take a look at the app yourself to check it is age-appropriate

3 DISCUSS the costs of downloading apps and put some ground rules in place (if possible, before they get their first smartphone). Ask questions like 'How do/will they pay for apps?' and 'Are they aware of extra costs, such as data charges and in-app purchases?'

4 BEAR IN MIND that some children might not realise that virtual payments, such as in-app purchases, require real money to be spent

5 USE Parental Controls on their handset to turn off app purchases and/or in-app purchases if you're uncomfortable with your child making them

6 MAKE SURE you keep your passcodes/PINs for your own phone, tablet and things like your iTunes account secret so that your son or daughter can't access apps on your devices… and be careful if you sometimes lend them your phone to play on

7 ENCOURAGE your child to read the privacy policy of any app before installing it so they know what personal information the app requires them to submit and how it will be used

8 REVIEW their app purchases regularly and make sure any receipts are sent to you

9 BUY your son or daughter a gift card or set up an allowance on stores like iTunes rather than providing your credit card details so that they know how much they can spend

10 MAKE THE MOST OF apps like Vodafone Cloud (to back up your child's data) and Vodafone Guardian (to help you manage how they use their mobile)

11 READ our guides about setting Parental Controls and app content rating controls on BlackBerry devices (see pages 54 and 58)

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apps available – from those that help toddlers to spell to ones that teach budding teen astronomers about the stars – not all apps are appropriate for young people.

Furthermore, your child might have to pay for certain apps or in-app features. In-app purchases hit the headlines in 2011 when a number of children ran up large bills buying stuff as part of game apps like Smurfs' Village and Tap Zoo. Even if an app contains a warning about additional costs for in-app purchases, young children in particular might not understand that they are required to spend real money.

No doubt, you want your kids to enjoy the benefits of the mobile internet but, at the same time, would rather they didn't look at unsuitable material, run up large bills, or share too much information with strangers or people outside their friend group.

So what precautions should you be taking? As with any approach to safety and security, prevention is best, but with so many apps and app stores, where do parents start? We've put together a few tips to help you.

Facebook apps

Apps on Facebook include games, such as Words With Friends, and features like Events and Photos. Some apps are created by Facebook; others by outside developers. With the Apps and Games dashboard, it's easy to find and add apps to your Facebook profile (timeline) that let you share what you're reading, listen to music with friends, play games and more.

Facebook users can control who can see their activity from that app. After you install an app, go to App Settings in the account drop-down menu at the top right corner of Facebook and click Account Settings. Then, select Apps from the menu in the left hand column and manage your privacy settings for individual apps you've added.

Facebook recommends that users read the app's privacy policy so they know what information will be collected (such as name, profile picture and email address) and how it will be used. Users are encouraged to use the 'report' button to advise Facebook about any apps they think are not using information appropriately.

For more information, go to the Facebook Help Centre at **www.facebook.com/help** and the Facebook Safety Centre at **http://www. facebook.com/safety/tools/ apps/**

Useful Vodafone apps

Vodafone Cloud
Back up and store photos, videos and other files.

Vodafone Digital Parenting
Read more about key digital issues in this app that goes hand-in-hand with our magazine.

Vodafone Guardian
Set boundaries for your child's Android mobile use, such as when they can go online and who they can text.

vodafone

Apps for kids

Common Sense Media has combed through thousands of apps and games for young people and picked some of the best:

5 to 8-year-olds:
Kids ABC Phonics
Colorama
Fruit Ninja

9 to 11-year-olds:
Edge
123D Sculpt
Rock Band

12 to 14-year-olds:
JellyCar 2
Bear Grylls – Bear Essentials
SoundHound

15 to 17-year-olds:
All-in-1 Gamebox
The Sims 3
Geocaching

Source:
www.commonsensemedia.org

Jack Hipkin

"Without technology, my life would be so much more difficult"

16-year-old Jack Hipkin talks about 3G, VLC and HD and reveals the extent of his digital world.
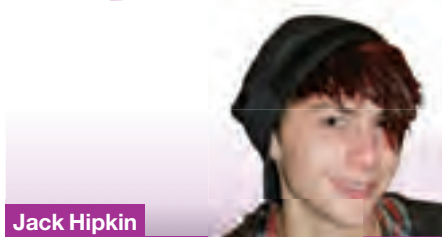
Technology is an amazing thing. I use it in so many ways – from my laptop to my PlayStation 3.

My mobile...

For me, the most important piece of technology is my phone – a Samsung Galaxy. I use it for most things but mainly calls and texts to help me keep in contact with my friends.

I really like the fact that it has 3G so I can access the internet anywhere. I go on YouTube a lot to show my friends the latest episode of Code MENT (an anime series).

Skype is great as I can do video calls for free from a wireless connection but my favourite part of my phone is the MP3 system, which I use to play my music on the way to college. I can even edit and set my ringtone.

Facebook...

I'm often on Facebook. It's totally essential for keeping track of my social life as I use it to organise things like gatherings and birthdays, post photos and updates and keep in touch with friends all over the country.

Accessing it on my phone, means I can keep my friends in the loop all the time. It does have downsides though – cyberbullies can try to get to you on it, which I know from personal experience can be difficult and hurtful.

"I spend about two hours a night online... and even more at the weekends."

My computer...

I use my computer at home and a laptop for various things, including watching and producing anime (a type of animation) with VLC media player and CyberLink PowerDirector. I'm not sure my parents know what they are, which is fine.

Plus, I play computer games like Dawn Of War online with my friends.

When I add it all up, I spend about two hours a night online – but that's not including Facebook, which is open all the time when I get back from college – and it's even more at the weekends.

My other favourite sites are YouTube, which is great for finding funny clips, music videos or even promoting yourself, and MyAnimeList, a database that lets you input your list of watched anime and gives you recommendations for each one.

I also love accessories and have lots for my computer, like a Logitech mic and a webcam that I use to keep in contact with my friends on the days they aren't staying round. Using them with Skype means you can talk to someone for hours at a time and they're also good for talking to my friends in the States.

I often upgrade my computer with new things like higher RAM capacity, new graphics or sound card, or even a new motor, but I do worry about my laptop being damaged and getting viruses just by opening a Web page.

My games consoles...

I've got a Nintendo Wii, PlayStation 3, PlayStation 2 and Sega MegaDrive, which I use for playing together with friends on a weekend or just by myself on an evening.

My favourite games are Gauntlet IV, Star Wars Battlefront 1 and 2, Skyrim and the Jack and Daxter trilogy.

My TV...

My HD TV has got lots of useful functions, such as Freeview and a built-in DVD player, so I can watch TV and DVDs with my friends. I use it as the screen for all my games and for my laptop and computer. Because it's HD, it makes everything more enjoyable.

Without technology, my life would be so much more difficult. I wouldn't be able to contact most of the people I know and half of my entertainment sources wouldn't exist. So I am very grateful that all this technology is available for me to use. ■

Want to find out more about Jack's favourite technology?

www.cyberlink.com

www.samsung.com

http://myanimelist.net/

www.lucasarts.com

www.videolan.org

The cloud

'Cloud computing' is the term used to describe software services and applications that are provided via the internet rather than installed on your computer. Put simply, it helps you to sync your computer or laptop with your mobile devices and lets you access or share your personal data (e.g. emails, photos, videos, music, contacts and documents) at any time. Google email (Gmail) and Apple's iCloud are examples of cloud computing.

Want to know more? Read the PC Magazine article at:
www.pcmag.com/article2/ 0,2817,2372163,00.asp

Wi-Fi

Wireless networking (often called Wi-Fi) enables you to access the internet without phone lines or cables. Many people have wireless internet at home so that they can use their computer, mobile and other devices to get online from anywhere in the house. Wi-Fi is also available in many cafés, airports, trains and other public places. Bear in mind that young people can sidestep existing Parental Controls on laptops and smartphones when they're using public Wi-Fi.

Check out the BBC's guide to Wi-Fi at:
www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/guides/about-wifi

Paul Cording, Content Standards Manager, Vodafone Group.

Protecting children, empowering parents

Vodafone Guardian app

Vodafone has developed a smartphone app, called Vodafone Guardian, which enables parents to protect children and young people from inappropriate calls, messages and online content.

Vodafone Guardian is designed for the Android operating system – used by smartphone manufacturers such as Samsung, HTC and Sony Ericsson, as well as on Vodafone's own brand smartphones – and offers parents a greater degree of control of their child's mobile. It is available free of charge.
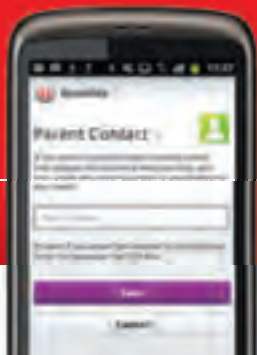
The app enables parents to stay in control in a number of ways, including:

→ **Blocking specific contacts or mobile phone numbers to prevent bullying text messages or calls**

→ **Specifying times during which their child can make or receive calls, use apps, access the Web and use the camera**

→ **Restricting outgoing calls to named contacts, such as Mum, Dad or specific friends**

→ **Transferring bullying text messages to a secure folder on the phone that could be used as evidence with the child's school or the police**

By default, a text message is sent to the parent's mobile phone if the child calls the emergency services. Calls made by the child to specific counselling hotlines for children, such as ChildLine, are not recorded in the outgoing calls log on the child's smartphone, ensuring full confidentiality at all times.

Vodafone Guardian is available to download for free from the Vodafone AppSelect store and Google Play.

Vodafone Guardian has been developed by the Vodafone Foundation (registered charity no.1089625) as part of its Mobile for Good programme.

With smartphones playing an increasingly important role in the way families manage their daily lives, Digital Parenting is just one way in which Vodafone helps parents get more involved in their child's digital world, explains Paul Cording.

First published in 2010, 250,000 copies of this free magazine have since been distributed to parents through UK schools and have received very positive feedback. Digital Parenting was also promoted in Vodafone's in-store publication.

Vodafone also launched two apps in late 2011 aimed at protecting children and young people and empowering and informing parents. The Vodafone Guardian app enables parents to protect their kids from inappropriate calls, messages and online content, while the Vodafone Digital Parenting app supports this magazine by providing advice about key issues, such as managing online reputation, mobile costs and setting up Facebook privacy controls.

Commenting on the launch of the apps, Vodafone Group CEO Vittorio Colao said, "The smartphone revolution is enormously positive for society, transforming the way millions of people communicate, share and learn. Children and young people have an intuitive understanding of the new world of smartphone communications and the mobile internet. However, parents who are concerned about the potential risks from cyberbullying and unsuitable content often lack the tools, support and skills to protect and support their children. The Vodafone Guardian and Digital Parenting apps empower parents and enhance their ability to share in their children's digital journey to adulthood."

Vodafone Digital Parenting app

The Digital Parenting app aims to help parents get to grips and get more involved with some of the digital devices and services their children enjoy, such as Facebook, Google and smartphones. It puts some of the key articles from the magazine right at parents' fingertips.

Available on a range of Android devices, the app includes:

→ **An overview of some of the technologies young people use at different ages**

→ **Information and advice about important issues, such as managing online reputation, mobile costs and sexting**

→ **A series of 'How to' guides to help parents make the most of Parental Controls and privacy tools on Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Vodafone**

→ **A 'How to' guide for the Vodafone Guardian app, which helps to keep children safer when using a smartphone**

→ **A selection of videos about digital parenting**

The Vodafone Digital Parenting app is available to download for free from the Vodafone AppSelect store and Google Play.

Vodafone digital safety and media literacy initiatives around the world

Germany
SchauHIN!
www.schau-hin.info

Vodafone partnered with the Ministry for Family Affairs and public broadcasters ARD and ZDF to set up the media literacy initiative 'SchauHIN! – Was Deine Kinder machen!' The SchauHIN website and app provide advice about children's safe use of the internet, mobiles, games and TV.

Italy
Infamiglia
www.infamiglia.vodafone.it

Vodafone's InFamiglia website aims to facilitate dialogue about technology between parents, grandparents and young people. The website includes video tutorials and a forum where experts answer visitors' questions.

Egypt
Knowledge is power
www.vodafone.com.eg

The Vodafone Egypt Foundation launched this major literacy initiative in late 2011 with the goal of eradicating illiteracy in Egypt within five years. 12,000 volunteers have already been engaged, 3,000 literacy classes have been held and 50,000 adults have graduated from the course.

India
Learning with Vodafone
www.vodafone.in

The Vodafone India Foundation has committed to provide the 'Learning with Vodafone' solution across 1,000 schools in India over the next three years. This cloud-based solution uses innovative software and mobile technology, such as tablets and smartphones, to enable continuous engagement between teachers and students, both inside and outside the classroom.

Australia
Digital Parenting
www.vodafone.com.au/digitalparenting

Vodafone Australia has developed its own version of the Digital Parenting magazine to help parents Down Under stay up to speed with digital trends. The magazine can be downloaded from the Vodafone website and was also available at Vodafone stores across Australia.

How to...
activate Vodafone Content Control on your child's mobile

Vodafone provides tools to help prevent access to age-sensitive content and services, such as those rated 18, which are particular to local laws or codes of conduct in individual countries. Below is an example based on Vodafone UK's parental content control solution.

Vodafone UK was the first mobile network operator to launch Web filtering Parental Controls – called Content Control – in 2005.

Parents should always check which controls are in place when purchasing a mobile handset for their child.

With Vodafone Content Control activated, the user receives a splash screen if a website they try to access is classified as 18 and above.

To change the Content Control, users must be over the age of 18, have the approval of the Vodafone account holder (if they are not the registered user) and, if necessary, provide proof of age.

If the user has a Vodafone online account, they can check if Content Control is activated even if they do not have the phone to hand. In this tutorial, we show you how a Vodafone account holder can check the Content Control setting in this way.

Step 1

Getting a Vodafone online account

If you have a Vodafone mobile pre-pay or post-pay contract, you can set up an online account to manage a number of settings. Simply go to **www.vodafone.co.uk** and click on 'Log in to My Account', which will provide you with the option to 'Register for My Account'.

During registration you will need the mobile phone to hand as you will receive a security password to complete the registration, linking the SIM and number to that account.

It will also help if you have an existing email account to support forgotten passwords etc.

Step 2

Checking 'My Settings'

Once you have an online account, you can manage various areas of your Vodafone account including your tariff plan, extras, TopUp on pre-pay, call barring and Content Control.

You'll find the Content Control setting under the 'My Settings' section.

Click here to see the current setting on your child's mobile phone.
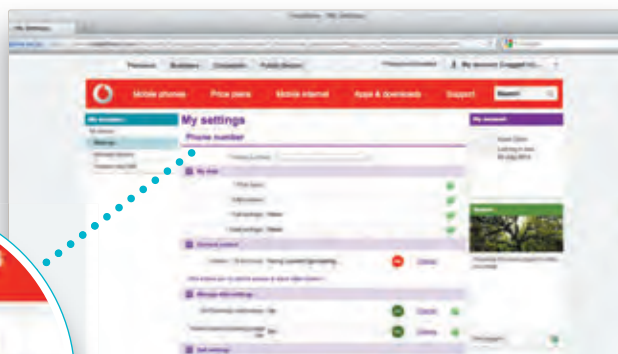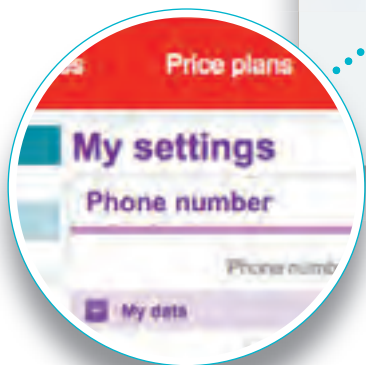
Step 3

Content Control setting

If the Content Control setting is off, you can request for it to be activated.

The setting will change the next time the handset/SIM is used to access the internet.

As with PCs, you might need to switch some devices off and on and also clear the memory cache.

You can get support at 'Phones and Devices' on the Vodafone Support pages at **www.vodafone.co.uk**

If you would like the Content Control bar to be lifted, you will be required to verify your age.
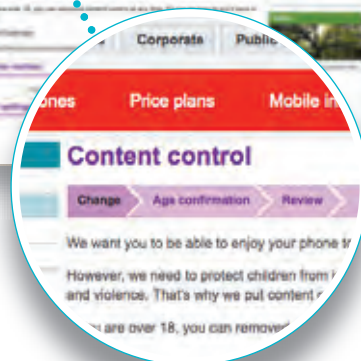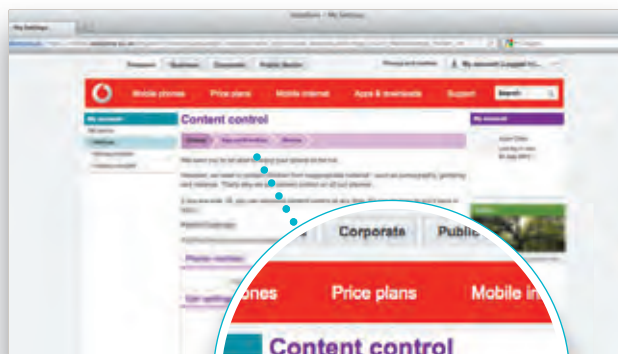
Step 4

Confirmation

Any changes made to the settings will appear on a confirmation screen and be sent to your email address.

If you are the account holder but you do not have access to an online account, you can also check the settings via Customer Care (191 from a Vodafone phone) or at a Vodafone Shop.

For your local market solution outside of the UK, please refer to your local Vodafone website or contact Customer Care.

If you're in the UK, visit the Support section at **www.vodafone.co.uk**

vodafone
www.vodafone.co.uk
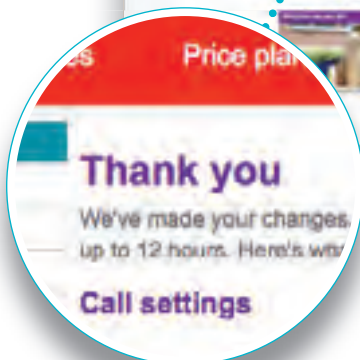
How to...
set up the Vodafone Guardian app

The Vodafone Guardian app helps to keep children safer when using a smartphone.

As part of Vodafone's commitment to supporting parents in encouraging their children's safe and responsible use of digital technology, it offers the free Vodafone Guardian app for use on a range of Android devices.

Vodafone Guardian helps parents to manage their child's smartphone by providing protection from inappropriate calls, messages and online content.

The app enables parents to stay in control in a number of ways, including:

➜ Blocking specific contacts or mobile phone numbers to prevent bullying text messages or calls

➜ Specifying times during which their child can make or receive calls, use apps, access the Web and use the camera

➜ Restricting outgoing calls to named contacts, such as Mum, Dad or specific friends

➜ Transferring bullying text messages to a secure folder on the phone that could be used as evidence with the child's school or the police

Vodafone Guardian is available to download for free from the Vodafone AppSelect store and Google™ Play.

Step 1

Set a Parent Contact

Once you have downloaded the app, enter a parent contact number so that you receive a text whenever Vodafone Guardian is deactivated for any reason. Click 'Save'.

You will also receive a text when an emergency call is made from the handset. Calls to ChildLine numbers are always allowed, you are not notified, and Vodafone Guardian removes the log entries for such calls.

Step 2

Choose a password

You can set a password so that you control the app. No changes can be made to the Vodafone Guardian settings without this password.

Simply enter your password twice and click 'Save'.

Step 3

Enable Message Helper

If you enable Message Helper, Vodafone Guardian will show an 'I Do Not Accept This' button next to incoming messages. Pressing that button will make the message vanish from your child's in-box and it's there to help them stay calm and keep positive if they get an unwanted message.

Go to Message Helper and choose 'Always enabled', 'Never enabled' or 'Enabled between' (and enter your chosen hours and days).

Step 4

Customise the settings

You can customise the settings for calls, text messages and phone features, such as Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, Camera, Browser and Adding and Removing Apps. For example:

→ If you want to set a time schedule for when your child can receive or make calls or receive texts, click on 'Calls & Messages' then 'Active Hours' and choose the time limits. This is useful for limiting how your child uses their mobile during school hours or after bedtime, for example

→ If you decide that you'd prefer your son or daughter to not have access to the internet at all from their mobile, go to 'Phone Features' then 'Browser' and choose 'Never allowed'

→ To prevent use of the camera while they're at school, go to 'Phone Features' then 'Camera' and set the timer underneath 'Allowed between'

Vodafone Guardian has been developed by the Vodafone Foundation (registered charity no. 1089625) as part of its Mobile for Good programme.

vodafone
www.vodafone.co.uk

Staying in control of mobile costs: a step-by-step guide

With the cost of living predicted to rise, it's no surprise that many families are tightening the purse strings and that mobile phone bills are coming under increased scrutiny.

For children and teenagers in particular, budgeting on their mobiles can be a steep learning curve. Texts, downloads and apps can all add up and, if they're on a 'Pay monthly' contract, they might not even notice the costs mounting until it's too late.

So, how can parents help their kids to stay on top of mobile costs? Our five-step guide is a good starting point.

Did you know?

More than half of five to 15-year-olds in the UK have a mobile phone and two in five children aged 12–15 now own a smartphone.

Source: Ofcom Children's Media Literacy report, October 2011

Step 1

Choosing a mobile

Surrounded by adverts for the latest BlackBerry Curve, iPhone and Samsung Galaxy, young people often know exactly which handset they want. But, just like any other family purchasing decision, it's crucial that you do your own research too.

Get advice from friends and other family members and talk to your own mobile provider, considering things like:

→ **How much are you or your child prepared to spend on the handset?**

→ **Are you happy for them to have the latest smartphone with internet access, a camera and other sophisticated features or would you prefer they have a more basic model?**

→ **Does your own mobile provider have any special offers on handsets?**

Top tip

Check out the smartphone 'Shopper's Checklist' on the UK Safer Internet Centre website at **www.saferinternet.org.uk**

Step 2

'Pay monthly' vs 'Pay as you go'

Choose how you or your child will pay for the phone – either 'Pay monthly' (sometimes called 'Contract') or 'Pay as you go' (also referred to as PAYG, Pay as you talk, or Pre-pay).

Pay monthly

Customers must be over 18 and usually sign up to a contract for 12 months or longer. The monthly fee covers the cost of the handset and the calls, texts and other services, with many providers offering inclusive text and call packages and additional benefits, such as handset upgrades.

By setting up a 'Pay monthly' contract on behalf of your child, you can choose to receive an itemised bill (online or paper) on which your son's or daughter's calls, texts and premium rate service charges, such as downloads, are listed.

If you choose an inclusive package for them, find out what the call and text limits are and check whether your provider will only allow your child to receive calls or texts once they have reached that limit (as you might be charged at a higher rate if your child exceeds it). Sit down with them and go through the monthly bills together so that everyone knows what the money is being spent on.

Pay as you go

With 'Pay as you go', the mobile handset can be bought up-front and you or your child has to pay for calls or texts in advance. You, or they, can top up their phone in various ways, including from a bank account, at a cash machine, using vouchers bought in a supermarket or newsagents, with a swipe card, or via the mobile provider.

Some people say that PAYG gives young people more control over their mobile spending. TopUp vouchers or credits can be given in lieu of pocket money, for example, and can help them to budget their phone time.

Disadvantages include that your son or daughter might keep asking for money for TopUps or that they might find themselves out of credit when they need to make an important call.

Step 3

Premium rate services

You need to be aware of premium rate services (also called phone-paid services), which cost more than the standard call/text rate on mobiles and landlines. These can be used to pay for a wide variety of content, from apps, games and music downloads to TV voting.

They're very popular among young people – one in four have either bought a game, music, or a video on their mobile, according to research from PhonepayPlus, the premium rate regulator. Some young people also access 'free' apps and games that can have charges later.

Premium rate services can cost between 10p and £1.50 per minute/call/text (plus any network charges).

For 'Pay monthly' mobile users, the charges show up on the monthly bill while for 'Pay as you go', they are taken out of the balance straight away.

If you're concerned about premium rate services, check whether your mobile provider blocks them for users under the age of 18. It's also recommended that you show your children how to use PhonepayPlus' Number Checker at **www.phonepayplus.org.uk** to check the cost of particular premium rate services and that you let them know that they should be able to text STOP to a service if they no longer want to use it. The PhoneBrain website is a good starting point for your children to find out about premium rate **www.phonebrain.org.uk**

In the UK, you can recognise different types of premium rate numbers by the first few digits. For example:

→ **Mobile text shortcode numbers are five and six-digit numbers, which usually begin with 5, 6, 7 or 8. You can send texts to these numbers and they can be used to purchase apps, games and music downloads.**

→ **118 is for directory enquiries.**

→ **With 0800 reverse, the person receiving the calls pays for it.**

→ **0871, 0872 and 0873 numbers are generally customer helplines, technical support lines and sales/booking lines.**

→ **090 is mainly used for competitions, TV voting, horoscopes and chat lines.**

Number Checker

Not sure about a number that's on your bill? Check it out here...

Check it! >

Did you know?
In March 2012, Apple announced that its customers had collectively downloaded more than 25 billion apps from the App Store since it launched – that's more than three apps per person in the world!

Step 4

Apps

If your child downloads apps onto their mobile, talk to them about how the costs could add up. While some apps are free, others have to be bought – young sports fans might choose to spend £0.69 to download Flick Kick Football on iTunes or £3.56 for FIFA 12 on Google Play, for example.

In some cases, your child might also be asked to pay extra once they have downloaded an app. In-app purchases, such as for clothes, food or weapons for a character in a games app, are increasingly common and some kids might not understand that they'll be paying real money even though they're playing in a virtual world.

With payment methods for apps including credit/debit cards, the user's mobile phone bill, PayPal and cash (via TopUps), it pays to remind your son or daughter to think before they click on the 'Buy' button. You can also make the most of Parental Controls on your child's mobile – you might be able to set them to prevent app downloads and in-app purchases, for example.

Step 5

Travelling abroad

Before your child takes their phone on holiday, make sure they understand the costs of making calls, sending texts, and using mobile internet when they're abroad.

On 1 July 2012, the EU introduced a maximum charge of 69.6p per MB for using mobile internet (e.g. for accessing maps, videos, photos, social networks and email) in EU member states. The maximum price to make a call is 28.8p per minute, 7.9p per minute to receive a call, 8.9p to send a text message and 37p to send a picture message.

Furthermore, to help avoid unexpectedly high bills for using mobile internet, if your son or daughter is travelling inside or outside the EU, they will get a warning text message, email or pop-up window when they are nearing €50 of data downloads. They will then have to confirm they are happy to go over this level in order to continue using mobile internet.

Vodafone's EuroTraveller service helps 'Pay monthly' customers to stay in control of mobile costs when abroad. For just an extra £3 a day, you can use your UK price plan in Vodafone's Europe Zone (but no extras).

Useful websites

- www.phonebrain.org.uk
- www.phonepayplus.org.uk
- www.saferinternet.org.uk
- www.vodafone.co.uk

vodafone

Vodafone in the UK
www.vodafone.co.uk

→ Vodafone 'Pay monthly' customers can keep an eye on their bills online and can text 44555 from their handset at any time to receive a free text message showing their usage information – Vodafone does not offer a credit limit on mobile accounts, however

→ Vodafone 'Pay monthly' customers can register for itemised online bills for free or pay £1.54 per month for itemised paper bills.

Itemised billing is not available on 'Pay as you go' accounts

→ For just an extra £3 a day, Vodafone 'Pay monthly' customers can use their UK price plan when travelling in Europe, so they'll have freedom from unexpected bills – find out more about Vodafone EuroTraveller at www.vodafone.co.uk/eurotraveller

→ Customers can request that Vodafone bars premium rate SMS services on a particular mobile and can also take advantage of the Vodafone Guardian app to limit what their child can download onto their mobile

→ Vodafone customers can post questions about their mobile in the company's eForum at http://forum.vodafone.co.uk

PhonepayPlus

PhonepayPlus
www.phonepayplus.org.uk

PhonepayPlus regulates premium rate (or phone-paid) services in the UK and investigates complaints about them.

Where PhonepayPlus decides that its rules have been broken, it can fine the company responsible, bar access to its services and even bar the individual behind the company from running other services under a different company name.

PhonepayPlus has taken action on behalf of consumers on a wide range of issues, from malicious apps that charge users without their knowledge to misleading advertising.

The PhonepayPlus code of practice is built around six outcomes for consumers. Services must:

→ Be upfront about the service they offer and the cost

→ Treat consumers fairly

→ Comply with the law

→ Not invade consumer privacy

→ Not cause harm or unreasonable offence to consumers

→ Resolve consumer complaints quickly

To help you keep in control of your bill when using premium rate PhonepayPlus has three top tips:

→ Treat your mobile number like your credit card number, you can be charged to both

→ Read the small print

→ Check your bill regularly

You can find out more about PhonepayPlus at www.phonepayplus.org.uk. PhonepayPlus also runs the PhoneBrain website for young people at www.phonebrain.org.uk

For further information, go to:
www.vodafone.com/parents/mobilecosts

"The pressure for the iPhone is building"

For Oliver Wyatt and his daughter Mabel, who live apart, technology is essential for staying in touch and being entertained (dad even gets his dancing shoes on sometimes!)

REALITY CHECK

Oliver Wyatt and Mabel

Mabel (aged 9)

I don't live with my dad all the time, only on Wednesdays and weekends. When we see each other, we like to spend time playing on the Wii, especially making ourselves look stupid on Just Dance. I've also got a DS but I don't play with that as much.

I'm always reading on my Kindle and I love it because wherever I go I can carry about loads of books. I love reading and the Kindle makes it easier.

On a Saturday, when I'm with my dad, we like to watch films via Netflix and LOVEFiLM on the Xbox… though my dad usually chooses the rubbish ones.

When we're not together, I miss him, so we Skype and talk most days, but what I really want is for us both to have iPhones so we could use FaceTime, and I could use this with my mum as well because she's got one already. I will keep nagging my mum and dad for an iPhone but I think I might have to start saving up for one.

Oliver

It's really important to me that when Mabel isn't with my partner and me we still talk regularly – this is one of Mabel's main arguments as to why she should have a mobile, specifically an iPhone, so she can contact me when she wants and vice versa.

There are ongoing discussions between me and Mabel's mum about the age you should have your first mobile. It seems that Mabel's 10th birthday in a few months time seems like a sensible point, although Mabel has made it quite clear that having my HTC Desire handed down to her is not an option!

I have to admit, I also have a secret longing for an iPhone and FaceTime seems like a good excuse to get one. My partner and I are expecting a baby and Mabel has already said that she wants to be able to see her brother every day and if she had her own phone she could do this!

We use Skype on a regular basis but neither of us can really get used to the time delay and we usually end up talking over each other. It would be good if Mabel could get in touch with me by herself whenever she wanted to. As staying in touch with her is really important to me, the pressure for the iPhone is building…

When we spend our time together, and Mabel hasn't got her head stuck in her Kindle, then it's the Wii that she loves. I have to leave my dignity at the door when Just Dance makes an appearance.

Being able to share this sort of thing when we're together is really important for us. I've been trying to persuade Mabel that what she really wants is Kinect for the Xbox but there is something about the Wii that really appeals to her. ◼

Want to find out more about Oliver and Mabel's favourite technology?

amazon.co.uk — www.amazon.co.uk

LOVEFiLM — www.lovefilm.com

NETFLIX — www.netflix.com

Wii — www.nintendo.com

skype — www.skype.com

XBOX 360 — www.xbox.com

EXPERT VIEW
Stephen Deadman

As Group Privacy Officer and Head of Legal for Privacy, Security & Content Standards at Vodafone, Stephen Deadman is responsible for Vodafone's privacy strategy and policy and the management of Vodafone's global privacy programme.

vodafone

www.vodafone.com

Worried your child might be over-sharing? Digital Parenting invited privacy expert Stephen Deadman of Vodafone to answer some burning questions about digital privacy.

Digital
privacy

Q Why has digital privacy become so important in people's lives?

A Because we increasingly live our lives through technology – we use our mobiles to communicate, the internet to find information, social networking to share details about our lives. Technology evolves faster than social norms and, increasingly, our use of it creates a footprint very different from the one we create in the physical world. As a society, we are just coming to terms with how to navigate this new environment and manage our digital footprints.

The norms we've established in the offline world – essentially, the things we are comfortable with – might apply differently in the digital world. For instance, if you make a fool of yourself at a party, some people may remember but most won't and, over time, it will probably be forgotten anyway. But if your foolishness is captured in a photo and published online, everyone could see it… and the internet is not designed to forget!

Similarly, if I use a paper map to get from A to B, the map doesn't need to know anything about me. But today, we rely on our mobiles or sat nav devices to help us get around and these technologies use satellites to track our whereabouts (to within a few metres) in order to work – an enormous benefit but also a potential risk when this geographical data is treated in unexpected ways (stored insecurely, for example, or shared with governments).

When our social norms and expectations don't match our experiences online – which happens quite frequently because norms change more slowly than technology – that's when privacy concerns arise.

What is a digital footprint?

It's the trail you leave from all your digital activities and interactions, such as emails, Web searches, uploaded photos and text messages.

Q What are the main risks that young people could face if they reveal too much personal information online and via their mobiles?

A I think there are two main risks from over-sharing: the risk to reputation and the risk to safety.

The more likely (although arguably less harmful) of the two is the risk of embarrassment and harm to reputation. When we share information about ourselves, we don't tend to think about how that information might be interpreted by others – be they people we didn't intend to see it or even those we did intend but who can still see it later in life.

Young teenagers, for example, may think nothing of posting comments and sharing photos online, but these could create embarrassment later on and even harm their prospects if they are seen by potential employers, colleges or universities.

> **"Digital media is constantly blurring the boundaries between the parts of our lives that were once separated physically and by time – like school, work and home."**

For adults and young people alike, digital footprints need to be carefully managed. Teachers have been reprimanded, and even sacked, for posts on social media about how they spent the weekend partying because the school believes they set a poor example to students and could bring it into disrepute. This may seem unfair – everyone should be entitled to let their hair down – but digital media is constantly blurring the boundaries between the parts of our lives that were once separated physically and by time – like school, work and home.

The other major risk is to safety as young people's use of technologies could make them vulnerable to stalking and harassment. One of the attractions of technology is that it enables people to make new connections. But because there is no failsafe way to know exactly who you are dealing with online, young people may make connections with people who are not who they say they are.

Mobiles make this digital connection potentially more worrying because they bridge the digital and physical divide – you carry your mobile with you and can easily share your location as well as your online profile. While we've seen very few instances of people being physically stalked, tracked or harassed in the real world as a result of location-sharing, it continues to be a concern that we should acknowledge and address.

Q Does the growth in smartphones bring new privacy concerns for children and teenagers?

A Smartphones are powerful computing devices that are always with us and always on, so they magnify many of the benefits, but also the concerns, of the digital world. Add in the fast-moving but sometimes 'wild west' innovation of downloadable apps, combined with additional information like your location, and you can see why they bring privacy concerns.

With every year that passes, smartphones get more functional and easier to use, which means that they are now being used by quite young children. What's more, it's now so easy to develop apps that children are becoming app developers themselves.

The smartphone environment is hard to control without also undermining its potential and value. Just a few years ago, the services available on your phone were closely guarded by your mobile operator; now, there's an app for almost anything you can imagine! But the developer could be located anywhere in the world and the app could include functionality that may not be appropriate for children (or for any user, for that matter). We see this in the recurring stories about apps inappropriately collecting your location or contacts and using them in undisclosed ways, for example.

Q How important is it that young people use privacy settings and Parental Controls?

A With the explosive growth of smartphones, we're only just beginning to understand how to build in controls around privacy and age appropriateness.

Parents can't always depend on the age verification features that online services or apps might include – they don't always work so well and might be circumvented – so the first thing to bear in mind is: who is the app or service designed for… adults, teens or everyone?

It's very important for parents to understand how their children are using their phones and online services, like Facebook and YouTube. Are they enabling location features that might share their whereabouts with strangers and advertisers? Are they disclosing information in social networks that might put them in danger or embarrass them if shared too widely?

Many of the apps and features that are most appealing to young users take as their starting point an agreement to share personal information (like sharing your location with the public when you 'check in') unless you change your privacy settings. While this starting point, or 'default', may be appropriate for adults or older teens, it may put younger children at risk.

So, understanding how things like Facebook privacy controls and iPhone Restrictions work is very important. I'd also advise parents to familiarise themselves with additional controls that can be downloaded, such as Vodafone Guardian, and child-safe browsers like Mobicip or Child Safe from F-Secure.

Q What do parents need to know about how advertisers might target their child online?

A Everybody loves a free app or a useful website but we don't always understand how those apps and services are funded by advertising. Every time we take an action online, we generate a piece of data that can be remarkably valuable to those who seek to understand us in order to better target advertising or provide more tailored services.

We are identified online using things like cookies, which are small data files stored on our computers. They enable our browsing and buying behaviour to be profiled and for the advertising we are shown to be more relevant to our interests. When our interests and profiles are combined with location, advertisers have a unique opportunity to show us something we are interested in at the time and place that we are most likely to respond – like a coupon for pizza at exactly the time that we're searching for a lunch spot and passing the pizza joint.

This type of behaviourally targeted advertising has caused a lot of discussion about privacy and how much people understand and are happy with what is going on. Even adults can be unaware how their data is collected and used, so children are unlikely to understand what this means for them. Parents should be mindful of this and, where possible, ensure that their child's devices have the appropriate settings that reflect their choices.

Did you know?
Around three in ten parents are concerned that their child may be giving out personal details to inappropriate people online
(Source: Ofcom Children's Media Literacy Report, October 2011)

Q As digital technologies advance, should we just accept that the meaning of privacy in the online world is very different to the real world?

A I don't believe that the meaning of privacy is changing or that it means something different online.

Most of what we do online has a 'real world' equivalent – finance, commerce, social interaction, work, and the search for information. What is different is the capacity for the collection of greater information about these activities than ever before and the combination of this information in ways that blur previously clear borders between the contexts of these activities – our work selves, our school selves and our home selves, for example.

"As technology becomes more and more pervasive in our lives, we're likely to see a continuing evolution – and improvement – in the mapping of offline social norms to their online equivalents."

It's this blurring of contexts that leads to privacy concerns. For example, Google's revision of its privacy policy in early 2012 makes explicit that it combines data from your interaction with all the various Google services you may use and this caused a lot of controversy. One reason for this is that people may have very good reasons to want to keep data shared in the context of one service discreet from data shared for another.

But the fact that these privacy concerns continue to arise means that privacy is not dead! And as technology becomes more and more pervasive in our lives, we're likely to see a continuing evolution – and improvement – in the mapping of offline social norms to their online equivalents.

What is Vodafone doing to help parents when it comes to their child's digital privacy?

We're working to better build privacy into our own practices and products and we're also working with the wider industry to ensure that high standards are applied by all the different companies that provide digital products and services.

At the heart of our global approach to privacy are the Vodafone Privacy Commitments – seven statements that drive everything we do on privacy at Vodafone. We strive to embed 'privacy by design' in all our products and services and we also develop practices and products to help our customers when they interact with other companies' services, websites or apps.

We also work with our partners in the mobile and internet industries to identify and implement standards and practices that better respect our customers' privacy – we provide privacy guidelines for app developers, for example – and we participate in technology standards organisations that help shape the technologies of tomorrow to ensure that privacy is factored into this process from the outset.

Last but not least, we work with governments to ensure that policy and legal frameworks are developed to encourage the best privacy outcomes for our customers.

In terms of specific tools to help parents manage their child's digital privacy:

Firstly, parents can set a child profile on their child's Vodafone account. This restricts the account from accessing Vodafone services that we deem appropriate only for older teens and adults.

Secondly, we carefully vet apps that are available via Vodafone's AppSelect store to ensure they meet with minimum safeguards and privacy protections.

But these two steps won't stop a younger user accessing inappropriate apps, websites or services provided by other companies and that don't use Vodafone's mobile network (e.g. if the user is in a Wi-Fi hotspot) or that are shared 'peer-to-peer' between friends (e.g. via Bluetooth).

So, thirdly, we have developed a Parental Controls solution that gives parents a high degree of control over their child's Android smartphone. Called Vodafone Guardian (see page 44), it enables parents to choose how certain features on the smartphone operate (e.g. who the child can call or text and how long they can spend browsing the Web from their mobile).

Take action

1 DON'T be too paranoid. Even if technology forms a bigger part of your child's life than it does your own, you still have an important role to play. As parents, we have to help them learn to use technology for good and empower them to live their lives and also give them the maturity to do so wisely and responsibly – both for their own protection and for others. Just like everything in life, growing up with technology is a journey to adulthood and full independence

2 BE a partner with them on this journey. Road safety is a good analogy – when our kids are very young, we hold their hands when they cross the road, we then let go of their hands but cross with them still and, eventually, we have enough faith in them to allow them to cross on their own. So it is with technology. Help your kids trust in your guidance and you will, in turn, learn to trust them

3 KNOW when to let go. You don't want to encourage your kids to try and deceive you in order to avoid over-monitoring; rather you should endeavour to have a trusting and open dialogue about technology, its benefits and its risks. If you have taught them to be streetwise – in the digital sense – they will learn to take responsibility for themselves. That is the ultimate goal

Q What are industry and government doing to help protect the digital privacy of young people?

A There have been some important industry developments in the last year that will help to provide better protection for children – two in particular are worth mentioning.

The first is an initiative by the EC and a large group of mobile and internet companies to create a common self-regulatory framework to help keep children safe online, including protecting their privacy in the context of their use of social media. Vodafone is actively involved in this initiative, called The ICT Principles (read more about it on page 120).

The second is the Mobile Privacy Initiative led by the mobile operators' global trade association (the GSMA), which aims to create privacy standards across all types of mobile services and apps. In February 2012, the GSMA announced the publication of the Mobile Privacy Design Guidelines for app developers. Vodafone helped lead the development of these guidelines and has announced that all new Vodafone branded applications will comply with them.

While governments around the world are re-examining their approaches to privacy protection in laws and regulations, technology will always move more quickly than laws can follow. So it becomes ever more important that governments and industry work together to ensure that the fundamental principles needed to safeguard and enhance our privacy are respected. Vodafone works with governments around the world to help them understand how this can best be achieved.

Q You're a father – how do you help your own children to manage their digital privacy?

A I have three children all at different ages and at different stages in their exploration of technology.

Over the last year, my 11-year-old son has been much more interested in the social aspects and benefits of technology. He uses his iPod touch to message and communicate with friends and I have monitored this reasonably closely to understand his level of maturity. I also use tools to help me do this, such as installing a child-safe browser. So far, he hasn't shown a great deal of interest in social media, but when he goes to senior school, this is likely to increase as he begins to explore a wider social world. This is a natural and important part of growing up so I am helping him to understand how to use social media in a safe and responsible way before he gets there!

My two younger children have more limited needs for use of technology.

My nine-year-old son is still primarily interested in gaming, although he is doing this more socially than before. Only a few of his friends have mobiles and he is really just beginning to want to use technology to communicate and socialise. It's really important to understand what my children's social group are doing, so I talk to other parents to understand how they manage this.

My six-year-old daughter is only really interested in solo games and has her favourite apps and sites that she visits, so that's much easier for me to monitor.

BlackBerry®

How to…
set up BlackBerry® Parental Controls

BlackBerry® Curve™ 9320 smartphone

Parental Controls are designed to help you have more control over how the features of the BlackBerry® smartphone are used.

With Parental Controls you can block content, turn features on or off, and decide what types of communication are available.

When you turn on Parental Controls, a four-digit PIN is required to change the allowed services, which prevents children or other parties from changing the settings.

The BlackBerry® Parental Controls application is now available for all BlackBerry® 6 and BlackBerry® 7 OS smartphones and will soon be available on BlackBerry® 5 OS smartphones.

For BlackBerry® smartphones bought before Summer 2012, you may need to download the Parental Controls application from BlackBerry® App World™. Simply type 'Parental Controls' into the search box in App World™ then select the application to download. Alternatively, you can scan this QR code in App World™ by hitting the Menu key and selecting 'Scan a Barcode'.

Step 1

Turn on Parental Controls

a. On the home screen or in a folder, click the 'Options' <Wrench> icon.

b. Click 'Security'.

c. Click 'Parental Controls'.

d. Select the 'Enable' checkbox to turn on Parental Controls.

Step 2

Select Parental Control options

You can select one or more of the following options to allow or limit the use of the Parental Controls feature.

For example, to allow the uploading of files to YouTube™, select the YouTube™ Uploader checkbox. This restriction does not limit access to the YouTube™ website – it only limits the ability to upload videos to the site.

For other features, the following applies:

→ To allow phone calls, select the Phone checkbox.
 – To limit incoming calls to stored contacts, select the Limit incoming calls to contacts checkbox

→ To allow text messages, select the Text Messages checkbox

→ To allow the exchange of files over a Bluetooth connection, select the Bluetooth checkbox

→ To allow the use of location services, like GPS, select the Location services checkbox

→ To allow internet access, select the Browser checkbox

→ To allow the installation of third party applications, select the Application installations checkbox

→ To allow the addition of new email accounts, select the Email account setup checkbox

→ To allow access to Facebook®, click the Facebook® checkbox. The Facebook® option and the Twitter option work together. You must either allow or restrict access to both applications. If you select or clear the checkbox for one option, the setting is automatically applied to the other option

→ To allow access to Twitter, select the Twitter checkbox

→ To allow picture taking, select the Camera checkbox

→ To allow access to BlackBerry® Messenger, select the BlackBerry® Messenger checkbox

Step 3

Save your Parental Control settings

Once you have set all the Parent Control features you wish, save your settings and enter a four-digit PIN as follows:

a. Press the Menu key, then Save.

b. Enter your four-digit password. Click OK.

c. Enter the four-digit password again to confirm. Click OK.

Step 4

Change your Parental Control settings

a. On the home screen or in a folder, click the 'Options' <Wrench> icon.

b. Click 'Security', then 'Parental Controls'.

c. Make changes to your options.

d. Press the [■■] key, then 'Save'.

e. Enter your four-digit PIN. Click 'OK'.

BlackBerry®
www.blackberry.com

"It has one thing that everyone uses…
BBM"

14-year-old Max Shotbolt explains why so many teens love their BlackBerry.

Max Shotbolt

Almost all my friends have a BlackBerry and once you use one, it's easy to see why. There's one thing in particular that everyone uses… BBM.

BBM (short for BlackBerry Messenger) is a free instant messaging app that works between BlackBerry smartphones and that is almost like a cut down version of Facebook. Unlike texts, BBM is instant and has other features that are very enticing for people my age – for example, it has status updates and personal messages that vary from 'on the beach' to 'soooo tired'.

The Groups feature lets you get a collection of your contacts together, such as 'school leavers 2012' or something else that the people in the group have in common, so you can send them all requests at the same time, which they can accept or decline.

One of the ways that contacts work on BBM is that someone gets hold of your PIN and then sends you a contact request that you can either accept or not, which is why the phrase 'bc (broadcast) my pin' is so common on BBM. This means that you're asking someone to send all their contacts a brief description of you and your PIN so that they can add you to their contacts.

Although I said BBM is like Facebook, there's no personal information shared about you. You can only have one picture of yourself on BBM and you can choose to have none at all. It doesn't ask you for any personal info (although you can choose to use Status or your Profile Name to say more about yourself) and BlackBerry makes it very easy to decline a request or delete a contact, which helps to stop any bullying that might go on.

Something that has happened to a lot of my friends is BRAPEing. That's when someone gets hold of your phone, whilst it's unlocked, and uses your BBM account to cause trouble by doing things like broadcasting your PIN to all of their contacts, sending an inappropriate message to one of your contacts or sharing private information with other people. In my experience, this happens so frequently that people recognise certain things as BRAPE and know to ignore whatever has been said.

No-one ever really talks about the dangers of BlackBerry in the same way they do about things like Facebook. I think that's because people my age know so much more about it than adults… ■

BlackBerry Messenger (BBM)

BlackBerry Messenger is an instant messaging app just for BlackBerry smartphone owners. It works like a private mobile social network, where you can set your own status update and profile picture, create groups and share images and content with your fellow BBM contacts. With BBM, you can:

→ **Send and receive messages in seconds, see when your contacts are typing and know when your messages are delivered and read**

→ **Scan barcodes to invite new BBM contacts (every BlackBerry handset has a unique barcode – just position your handset so you can see the other person's barcode through your screen and your new contact will be scanned and added to BBM)**

→ **Share Facebook and Twitter status updates**
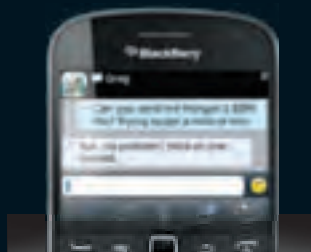
→ **Swap PINs to add BBM friends quickly and easily (PINs are unique eight-digit letter and number codes – similar to a phone number – assigned to each BlackBerry device)**

Take action

1 FIND OUT about the various features that are available on a BlackBerry – BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) is particularly popular with young people, for example

2 MAKE THE MOST OF BlackBerry Parental Controls to restrict your child's access to certain features on the device, such as BBM and location services, if you'd rather they didn't use them. Simply follow our step-by-step guide to setting BlackBerry Parental Controls on page 54

3 IF your child uses BBM, encourage them to carefully consider who they give their BBM PIN to. While it might be tempting to publish it on their Facebook profile or ask a friend to broadcast it to all their BBM contacts, do they really want so many people to be able to contact them or pass their PIN on even further?

4 SUGGEST that your son or daughter sets a password on their BlackBerry device (to protect them from things like BRAPEing) and downloads the BlackBerry Protect app so that if they lose their device (or if one of their friends gets hold of it), they can log in to the BlackBerry Protect website and lock their device to prevent anyone else from being able to use it

5 EXPLAIN to them why they should 'think before they post' – for example, if they choose to include their photo or name on their BBM profile, it's important that it's appropriate and if they make a comment or share an image, it could be forwarded on to other people or saved and shared using a 'screen muncher' app, which might cause them embarrassment or upset. (Screen munching is very popular among young BBM users as it lets them take a shot of whatever is on their phone's screen and then share it with other people)

6 DISCUSS how messages can be broadcast to large groups of people very quickly. Would they really want the whole school seeing a message or photo they've shared? Could it embarrass or upset them (or someone else)?

7 MAKE SURE your child understands that although BlackBerry Messenger offers free messaging, it does use internet data, which means they might be charged if they go over their contract allowance for such data. Each BBM message uses a small amount of data but, if they're a heavy user, it can add up

8 SHOW them how to make the most of built-in controls to do things like:
– Block someone in BBM (go to the contact list screen and highlight the contact, click Menu then Delete Contact)
– Store BBM chat history (go to the contact list screen, click Menu, Options then Save Message History)
– Leave a Group (go to the contact list screen then BBM Groups, click Menu, then Leave Group and choose Leave Group or Delete Group)

9 CONSIDER potential additional costs on 'Pay as you go' BlackBerry devices. If your child has a 'Pay as you go' BlackBerry (rather than a monthly contract) and they want to use BlackBerry Messenger, they'll need to opt in to the BlackBerry Internet Service. If they're a Vodafone customer, for example, this costs £5 and lasts for 30 days. It can be set up by calling Vodafone for free on 40035

10 REASSURE them that they can come to you if anything happens on BBM that upsets or worries them

11 FIND further advice about how to encourage your child to use smartphones in a safe and responsible manner on the UK Safer Internet Centre website – **www.saferinternet.org.uk/downloads/resources/ParentTechBriefing/tech/Parent_tech_briefing_Blackberry.pdf**
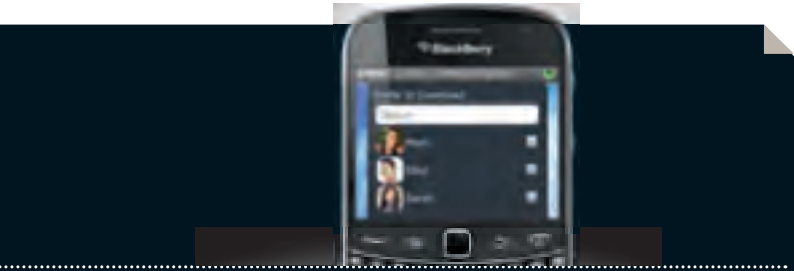
→ **Create BlackBerry Groups** so that you can message multiple contacts at once (often called a 'broadcast')

→ **Share your location and plan your schedule** with your contacts

→ **Invite and accept friends via BlackBerry Tag** by simply tapping your device against another BlackBerry smartphone

For more information about BlackBerry Messenger, go to:
http://uk.blackberry.com/services/blackberrymessenger/

 BlackBerry®

How to…

set up BlackBerry® App World™ Content Rating Controls

BlackBerry® App World™ is the official store for BlackBerry® users to browse, download and update third party applications (apps), such as games and ringtones.

Each item in the BlackBerry® App World™ storefront is assigned a rating based on the audience that it is intended for.

You can filter what content you see in BlackBerry® App World™ and lock your settings using a four-digit password. Please refer to the boxout on the next page for the Content Ratings descriptions.

Step 1

Set Content Ratings controls

a. On the home screen or in a folder, click the App World™ icon.

b. Click 'My Account', then 'Content Controls'.

c. Choose the type of content you want to see.

Step 2

Lock the settings

a. Click 'Lock Settings'.

b. Enter your four-digit password. Click 'OK'.

c. Press the Menu key, then click 'Save'.
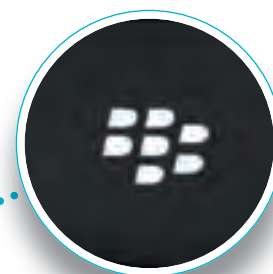
Step 3

Change any of the settings

a. Click 'My Account', then 'Content Controls'. Then select 'Unlock'.

b. Type your four-digit password. Click 'OK'.

c. Then follow the process previously outlined in Steps 1c, 2a, 2b and 2c.

Descriptions of Content Ratings

Applications (Apps) distributed through BlackBerry® App World™ will be rated using the following criteria:

G

General is intended for all audiences and will include:

→ No violence

→ No sexual content, situations and/or themes

→ No profanity and/or crude humour

→ No drug and/or alcohol reference

→ No simulated gambling

→ No user-generated content

→ No social networking integration

T

Teen 13+ is intended for teen audiences and might include:

→ Mild or infrequent cartoon, fantasy and/or realistic violence

→ Mild or infrequent sexual content, situations and/or themes

→ Mild or infrequent profanity and/or crude humour

→ Mild or infrequent references to drugs and/or alcohol

→ Simulated gambling

→ User-generated content

→ Social networking integration

M

Mature 17+ is intended for mature audiences and might include:

→ Intense or frequent graphic cartoon and/or realistic violence

→ Intense or frequent sexual content, situations and/or themes without nudity

→ Intense or frequent profanity and/or crude humour

→ Intense or frequent references to drugs and/or alcohol

A

Adult 18+ is intended for adult audiences and might include:

→ Extreme depictions of graphic violence, appropriate only for or legally restricted to persons of the age of majority

→ Explicit references to drugs or alcohol, appropriate only for or legally restricted to persons of the age of majority

→ Gambling, appropriate only for or legally restricted to persons of the age of majority

Please note that BlackBerry® will not accept apps with graphic sexual content, nudity or hate speech.

::: BlackBerry®

www.blackberry.com

Ben Worthen of The Wall Street Journal asks What happens when toddlers zone with an iPad?

More than half of the young children in the U.S. now have access to an iPad, iPhone or similar touch-screen device. For parents, their children's love of these devices raises a lot of questions.

By Ben Worthen of The Wall Street Journal*

Kids for years have sat too close to the television for too long or played hours of Madden on family room game players. But pediatric neuroscientists and researchers who have studied the effects of screen-time on children suggest the iPad is a different beast.

A young child will look away from a TV screen 150 times an hour, says Daniel Anderson, a professor emeritus of psychology at the University of Massachusetts. His studies over the past 30 years also showed children have trouble knowing where on a TV screen to look.

A well-designed iPad app is more engaging because often the place on the screen that a child touches is the same as where the action happens.

Many researchers hope this will help children learn. One study using an iPod Touch and sponsored by the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop found children 4 to 7-years-old improved on a vocabulary test after using an educational app called "Martha Speaks." The 13 5-year-olds tested averaged a 27% gain. A study using a different educational app had a similar result, with 3-year-olds exhibiting a 17% gain.

In many ways, the average toddler using an iPad is a guinea pig. While the iPad went on sale two years ago, rigorous, scientific studies of how such a device affects the development of young children typically take three to five years.

There is "little research on the impact of technology like this on kids," says Dimitri Christakis, director of the Center for Child Health, Behavior and Development at Seattle Children's Hospital.

The iPad and similar devices allow children to interact with technology at a younger age than ever before. Tiny fingers not yet old enough to manipulate a mouse or operate a videogame console can navigate a tablet touch screen.

"Unfortunately a lot of the real-life experimentation is going to be done by parents who now have young kids," says Glenda Revelle, associate professor of human development and family sciences at the University of Arkansas.

Some parents readily share a tablet with their children, citing the many apps marketed as educational tools. Some do not. Still other families turn to it as a tool of last resort to entertain and appease children on plane and car trips.

In the list of parental worries about tablet use: that it will make kids more sedentary and less sociable. There's also the mystery of just what is happening in a child's brain while using the device.

The brain develops quickest during the first few years of a child's life. At birth, the human brain has formed about 2,500 synapses – the connections that allow the brain to pass along signals – per brain cell. That number grows to about 15,000 per brain cell by age 3. In later years, the number decreases.

The more television children watch during these formative years, Dr. Christakis says, the more likely they are to develop attention problems later on. The study was based on observation, not lab research, he says. Other studies haven't found a correlation. While he hasn't studied tablets and young children, he suspects the effect could be similar – or perhaps more significant. "One of the strengths of the iPad" – it is interactive – "may be the weakness," Dr. Christakis says.

out

52% of kids ages 5 to 8 have used an iPad, iPhone or similar touch-screen device to play games, watch videos or use other apps

Thirty-nine percent of children ages 2 to 4-years-old and 52% of kids ages 5 to 8 have used an iPad, iPhone or similar touch-screen device to play games, watch videos or use other apps, according to a survey last year by Common Sense Media, a San Francisco-based nonprofit group. Apple has sold more than 65 million iPads, and analysts predict that consumers will buy about 120 million tablets from Apple and other manufacturers this year.

Julia Campins's 2-year-old son received an iPad in December from his grandfather. Mostly he uses it for Dr. Seuss books in which the app reads the story, and games about animals.

Ms. Campins, who lives in San Francisco, says it keeps her son calm and entertained on flights. At home, Ms. Campins, a 31-year-old lawyer, and her husband, Nick Campins, only give him the iPad when they need to get things done around the house.

The family rule: If her son whines, the iPad goes away. "When we feel ourselves using it too much, or whenever he starts whining for it, we take that as a sign and cut back."

I first let my son use a borrowed iPad on a cross-country flight when he was 2 and a half years old. He had cried for four straight hours on a previous trip, and I hoped the iPad would keep him entertained. He understood how to use it instantly and for five hours played kids' games, used a drawing app and watched episodes of 'Curious George.'

About a year later, my wife and I bought an iPad, loaded it with word and puzzle games and let our son use it on a more regular basis. His knowledge of words seemed to pick up immediately. We also noticed things that worried us. He would go into a trance-like state when he used the iPad. He wouldn't respond when we called his name.

"He's concentrating," says Sandra Calvert, a professor at Georgetown University. It's physiologically the same thing he does while deeply immersed in, say, Legos. Psychologists call it "flow experience."

There is a subtle difference: The child decides when a building is finished; an app determines when the task is completed correctly. Researchers say it's unclear whether this difference has any impact on a child.

Soon, getting our son to put down the iPad became a nightly battle. "It gives him a dopamine squirt," says Michael Rich, director of the Center on Media and Child Health at Children's Hospital in Boston, referring to the brain chemical often associated with pleasure.

Many apps for kids are designed to stimulate dopamine releases – hence encouraging a child to keep playing – by offering rewards or exciting visuals at unpredictable times.

My wife and I stopped letting our son use the iPad. Now he rarely asks for it. He is 4 and his friends aren't talking about cool iPad games, so he doesn't feel he's missing out.

The experts interviewed were mixed on whether we did the right thing. About half say they would have taken away the iPad if their kid exhibited similar behaviour – asking for it constantly, whining. The rest say we overreacted.

Gilly Longton, Orlando and Louisa

"It's the world they were born into"

Gilly Longton reveals how her toddler twins have already figured out her iPhone and are making early headway with their computer skills.

The second my two-year-old twins Orlando and Louisa were born, their picture was captured on my iPhone and, within the hour, news of their arrival was winging its way around the world. So it's no surprise that they are techno-savvy. It's the world they were born into.

If I want a moment's peace when we're out, I let them 'play with my iPhone'. They touch the photos icon, play bits of video and scroll through the pictures shouting the names of friends and relatives they spot.

People are always amazed that they know what to do with their tiny fingers, including unlocking the phone!

Being twins, sharing is something we are working on at present, so I even have an old iPhone that I keep charged (with no SIM card) so they can have one each for picture viewing.

We've downloaded the Dig Dig Digging app because it's my son's favourite book by Margaret Mayo and he loves that. I can also find Peppa Pig on YouTube on my iPhone in double-quick time with my eyes closed! Peppa has saved my life on more than one occasion, but it's not something they watch every day.

Like most parents, I would prefer them to be playing with their toys, looking at books or running about in the park than engaging with phone apps but the digital age creeps up on you and they absorb and mimic your behaviour.

My laptop is constantly open on the kitchen table – it's where mummy "puts her busy work". Needless to say they wanted their own "busy work" computers, so they now have LeapFrog consoles with mini keyboards and screens where they can tap out 'guess the letter' games.

They also have an Oregon Scientific console with game cards that slot in. They have to touch the screen when the console asks questions like "Where is the rainbow?" and "What's the first letter of the word apple?" Most of it is a bit beyond them at the moment, but they like the physicality of playing with them.

All these things are fashioned like mini laptops and I would be very surprised if we get to five-years-old before they demand a trip to the Apple store for their own 'puter' (although they won't be getting one!).

Like most two-year-olds, they watch their fair share of CBeebies. Their favourites are Grandpa In My Pocket and anything featuring Mr Tumble. We've looked around the CBeebies website and it was a big hit. It doesn't yet have the same hold as TV, although I expect that will change.

The CBeebies site is great because it gives a subtext for parents so you know what skills they are learning while they are playing each game and the twins seem to get a real sense of achievement from participating with their favourite characters.

They also attend a Sure Start crèche twice a week for two hours where they are encouraged to use the computer for basic mouse skills, colouring exercises and matching games. Recently, they brought home a computerised printout of their name which impressed me no end and now has pride of place on the fridge door. ■
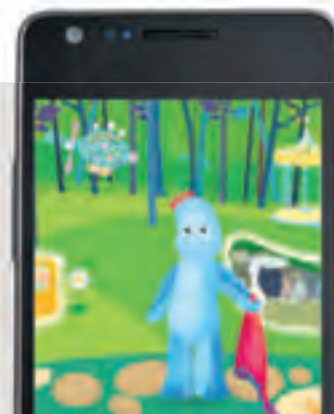
Want to find out more about the Longton family's favourite technology?

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies

www.leapfrog.com

www.youtube.com

![YouTube]

How to...
set up YouTube™ Safety Mode™

YouTube Safety Mode enable parents to choose whether to limit content on YouTube™ that might be unsuitable for their children, even though it's not against YouTube's Community Guidelines.

When you opt in to Safety Mode, videos with mature content or that have been age restricted will not show up in video search, related videos, playlists, shows and movies.

Step 1

Go to safety preferences

Simply go to the bottom of any page on YouTube™ and click the grey 'Safety' button to open the preference setting.
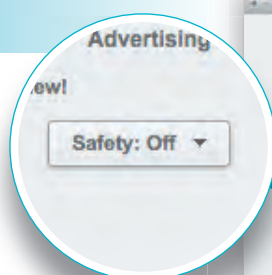
Step 2

Turn Safety Mode 'on' or 'off'

Choose to turn Safety Mode 'on' or 'off' and click on Save. If you turn it on and you have a YouTube™/Google account, you can sign in to your account and lock Safety Mode so that no-one else can change the settings whenever YouTube™ is accessed from that browser.
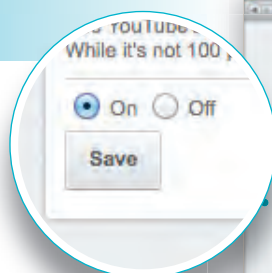
Please note: While no filter is 100% accurate, YouTube™ uses community flagging, hides objectionable comments and uses pornographic image detection to identify and hide inappropriate content. Safety Mode on YouTube™ does not remove content from the site but rather keeps it off the page for users who opt in.

www.youtube.com

Bruce Pilbrow is CEO of The Parenting Place in New Zealand, a highly respected organisation for parents and youth to access support, encouragement and inspiration. Bruce is passionate about community and the importance of getting the family unit right.

Hannah Dickson has edited Parenting magazine since 2008. She has worked in magazines for 16 years and believes a good read can entertain, inform and inspire. As the mother of two children, she's passionate about giving children a great start.

Digital parenting… from Aberdeen to Auckland

Parents all over the world are asking similar questions when it comes to their child's digital spaces. What are the benefits of technology for my son or daughter? Are there any potential risks we should be aware of as a family? How can I get more involved in what my kids do on their computer, mobile and other devices?

Digital Parenting invited The Parenting Place, a leading parenting organisation in New Zealand, to tell us how it advises parents of younger children about technology.

The Parenting Place works closely with Vodafone in New Zealand to help young people and their parents navigate the ever-changing digital world. Together, The Parenting Place and Vodafone NZ produced *Connected*, a book encouraging young people to think carefully about how to keep their internet and mobile phone use in balance with the rest of their lives. *The Connected Roadshow* saw presenters from The Parenting Place travel throughout New Zealand encouraging parents to become better coaches and mentors and raise great 'cyber citizens'.

How to help under 10s make the most of technology and avoid the pitfalls

Technology already plays an important role in parents' lives. Many of us are even announcing our child's birth, first words and first steps online, so it's not surprising that right from the time our kids start to interact with the world, that world is digital.

With entertainment, learning and socialising now done through mobiles, computers and other gadgets and devices, young people simply live in a connected world – they understand and are completely at ease with technology and they love it. Even as toddlers, their reaction to digital devices is intuitive. But that doesn't mean they don't need guidance. As with any area of life, kids need their parents to be one step ahead of them.

At The Parenting Place (**www.theparentingplace.com**) we're committed to providing support and encouragement to parents at every stage of your parenting journey – whether you're the parent of a toddler, a tween or a teen.

In this short guide for Digital Parenting, we offer advice to parents of children aged up to ten-years-old.

A warm and creative family life is a great start to any childhood and we recognise that technology plays a major role in enhancing your child's learning potential and social skills.

We believe that the key to harnessing the potential of the digital world and minimising its potential risks is to be proactive and interactive. Rather than simply relying on technology as a cyber-sitter, it pays to see it as a launching pad for other family activities and interactions.

To help you along the way, we've put together our pick of the ways your family can engage with the digital world.

Conversation starter
Highs and lows

Playing 'highs and lows' of the day is a great way to encourage kids to talk about what's going on in their life and get an insight into their thought processes and feelings. It's also useful to have the same conversations about their digital lives. What's making them feel good? Does anything surprise or worry them? What haven't they understood?

Get playing

Let's face it, games are hugely entertaining. The good news is that there is evidence to suggest they can also have an educational benefit – playing games can speed up reaction times, increase spatial visualisation skills and expand multi-tasking and co-ordination skills.

On the downside, some games might not be appropriate for your child (if they contain violence or adult content, for example) and playing games can be addictive and isolating for some children.

The best way to make sure that the games your son or daughter is playing are age appropriate and safe, is to play with them. As you play together, talk to them about what they are seeing and hearing and give them a context and a realistic expectation about what hanging out in a digital world involves – you should explain why some games might not be suitable for them and encourage them to take notice of age ratings, for example. You might also want to use Parental Controls on games consoles to help prevent them from playing things like violent games.

We recommend

www.funbrain.com
Part of Pearson's Family Education Network, Funbrain offers free educational games, online books and comics, including kids' favourite 'Diary of a Wimpy Kid'.

www.sesamestreet.org
Fans of the popular TV series can play games, watch videos, find recipes and do much more on the Sesame Street website.

www.uptoten.com
UpToTen offers over 1,000 age appropriate learning games for kids aged up to ten.

www.nickjr.com
Children can enjoy games, crafts, colouring pages and lots more starring their favourite Nick Jr characters like Dora the Explorer and Backyardigans.

Conversation starter
Brain gain

Even a child with all the latest tech gadgets lacks a piece of equipment that you have owned for years – a properly functioning pre-frontal cortex. That's the part of the brain that handles risk assessment and social behaviour and researchers say it isn't working properly until a person reaches their mid-20s.

So, while your children may be bright, clever and intuitive when it comes to technology, you have the instincts, wisdom and risk-assessment that they won't have for a few more years! You need to be their coach and guardian, drawing on your parenting skills, not just your technological ones.

Get in the know

Kids are sponges when it comes to new information and it's amazing what you can show your son or daughter on the internet. The very best of the world's artistic and scientific institutions are on the Web and you can easily find videos that will bring most topics to life. When something sparks their interest, take it to the next level online and engage in a subject together.

Got a kid who likes frogs? Head to the BBC website where Sir David Attenborough can teach them about everything from the freezing North American wood frog to the poison dart frog. Be prepared though, once they find their favourite video, there'll be many, many repeat views.

Online research doesn't have to end with the computer – it can be a great launching pad for other family activities. If you're planning a family holiday, for example, Google is a great place to start. Sit down with the kids and research the possibilities. Start big with their crazy dreams, then get specific with plans and maps.

We recommend

www.google.com
The best place to start – simply search on a keyword or phrase.
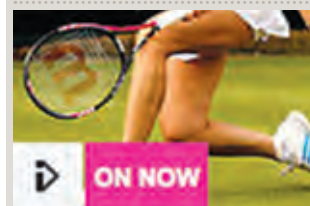
www.bbc.co.uk
A one-stop shop for everything from nature to news.

www.factmonster.com
A great reference site that's perfect for homework projects.

e Early Years
(0–6)

m Middle Years
(6–12)

T Tweens & Teens
(12–18)

Get creative

While there has been a lot of debate over whether technology enhances or limits kids' creativity, there's no doubt that you can have plenty of fun with your family online. The key is to mix it up a bit.

Get your child to re-tell a favourite family anecdote or memory, then write and illustrate it together on a story-writing website or app.

Another time, print out some colouring pages from your child's favourite cartoon website, get out every crayon in the house and colour together the old-fashioned way.

Jargonbuster

Apps are small software programmes that sit on mobile devices, like smartphones. They enable to you to find information, play games and much more. Find out more about apps on page 36 of Digital Parenting.

We recommend

wemakestories.com
This story-creation site lets kids aged 6–11 make their own comic books, pop-up books and treasure maps.
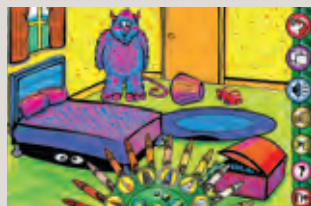
www.crayola.com
The Crayola website provides over 1,000 colouring pages, crafts and lesson plans.
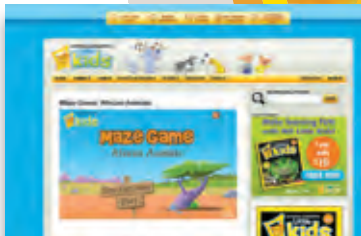
**kidsblogs.
nationalgeographic.com/
littlekids/**
National Geographic's activities and videos introduce pre-schoolers to the wider world.

Get musical

A love of music is a great foundation for future education – rhythm, patterns and movement can help with reading, number basics and motor skills.

Even if you're not a musical genius yourself, you can go online to share favourite musical moments from your youth, discover ways to build a drum or compose a new hit on a virtual guitar.

We recommend

melodystreet.com
MelodyStreet is full of colourful characters that gently teach children about music through storytelling, games, and, of course, music.

www.sfskids.org
The San Francisco Symphony has created this interactive site to teach kids about music and musical instruments.

www.creatingmusic.com
Kids can compose music, play with musical performance and try out music games and music puzzles here.
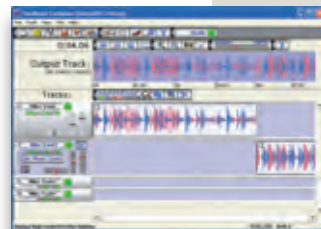
Conversation starter
Be a role model

You can be sure your children will be watching your digital habits when it comes to online safety and balance so practice what you preach. Juggling work and time with the kids is really tough but if you can try to find some time when no-one in the family is using technology that would be a good way to show that it is possible! Put down your laptop or mobile when you're eating dinner or watching TV together – if they see you constantly emailing, texting or on Facebook at home, they might be less accepting of the boundaries you set for them.

G
General Parenting

R
Marriage and Relationships

Conversation starter
Safe and sound

We don't share the keys to our house with anyone other than family and we shouldn't share our passwords and PIN numbers with anyone else either – not even our friends. Explain to your kids that keys and passwords are the same in the sense they protect what is private, valuable and personal.

Get connected

Talking to grandma and grandad or faraway friends is a great way for kids to develop important relationships and learn appropriate behaviours via webcam and smartphones.

Video chat tools like FaceTime (on the iPhone and iPad) and Skype are also helpful if a parent has to be away for work. One study found that children as young as 17 months who were physically separated from a parent gained reassurance from the video presence of that parent.

Where once you might have sent postcards to your child when you travelled, try sending a daily video from your phone – show your hotel room, your breakfast and your taxi ride to a meeting. Your kids can return the favour by sharing something about their day. Don't completely ditch sending postcards though – they'll always enjoy getting something through the post too.

We recommend

www.google.com/chat/video
Video chat for free from Google Mail and iGoogle.

skype

www.skype.com
Skype offers free internet calls.

www.apple.com/mac/facetime/
Have face-to-face video calls with friends and family on the iPhone and iPad.

How much is too much?

Parents often wonder if their kids are having too much 'screen time'. There is no precise answer to the question 'How much is too much?' but it's useful to consider what else they are doing. Are they also doing their homework, chores around the house, getting enough sleep, participating in sport and spending time with family and friends? It's all about balance.

It's a family thing

Children are ready to learn about keeping themselves safe on the internet as soon as they are ready to use the internet.

While obvious precautions, such as installing Parental Controls and keeping the computer in room that the whole family uses are vital, it's important that you discuss as a family why you're setting certain rules and boundaries. If your son or daughter has a smartphone or another internet-enabled mobile device like an iPod touch, they could be online anywhere and at any time, so make sure you include some rules about them too.

You could work together to create a family agreement, motto or contract about your digital lives, so that everyone feels part of the process – here's an example to get you started. And, even if you don't want to create a formal family agreement, these Action Labs can be a good starting point for a family discussion about technology. ◢

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Computer							
TV							
Mobile							
Video Games							
Total							

Action lab 1

Discuss as a family how much 'technology time' is right for you and use this chart to record the hours each of you is spending in front of a screen. When you've monitored it for a week or two, sit down together and decide whether you need to make some changes to your routine

Action lab 2

As well as, not instead of, is the key message. Technology is a key part of your child's life, but it's not their whole life. It can enrich your family life, but does not in any way replace your children's most vital resource – you

Our screen time agreement
In our family:

➔ We ask before we use the computer or games console

➔ We let our parents know our passwords – but no-one else

➔ We don't go on any new websites or play any new games without mum or dad's permission

➔ We agree to get off the computer or games console as soon as our time limit is up

➔ We never give out personal information – such as our last name, address or telephone number – on a website

➔ We tell an adult if we see something on screen that makes us feel uncomfortable, scared or sad

➔ We have rules about how, when and where we can use our mobile (e.g. switching it off at school and after bedtime)

➔ We understand the house rules are to protect us and keep us safe

Microsoft

How to…
make the most
of Windows®7
Parental Controls

With so many families having the Microsoft® Windows operating system on their home computer, Digital Parenting takes you through the built-in Parental Controls that Microsoft® offers in Windows®7.

As a parent, you might be worried about the amount of time your son or daughter spends on the computer and the kind of games they access.

With Parental Controls in Windows®7, it's easy to supervise your child's PC use without having to peek over their shoulders.

You can set specific time limits on your child's computer use (e.g. set different logon hours for each day of the week so, if they're logged on when their allotted time ends, they'll be automatically logged off).

Plus, you can prevent them from playing games that you don't think are appropriate for their age.

To help keep communications open, the Parental Controls icon is always visible so children know when the feature is in use.

Step 1

Turn on Parental Controls

First, make sure that your child has a standard Windows®7 user account.

Open Parental Controls by clicking the 'Start' button, click 'Control Panel', and then, under User Accounts and Family Safety, click 'Set up Parental Controls' for any user. If you're prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.

Click the user account that you want to set Parental Controls for. If you haven't set one up yet, click 'Create a new user account'.

Under Parental Controls, click 'On', enforce current settings.

If Windows® Live Family Safety is installed on your computer, you will see a sign-in page and there is no need to continue with Steps 2–4 of this tutorial.
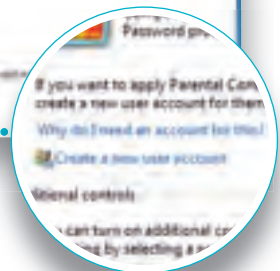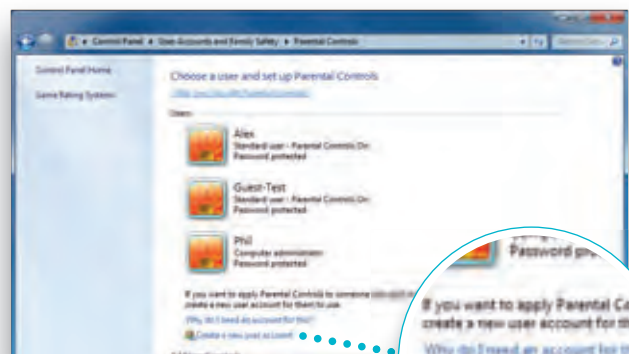
Step 2

Set Time Limits

Click 'Time Limits'. In the grid, click and drag the hours you want to block or allow. Click 'OK'.

☐ Allowed
■ Blocked
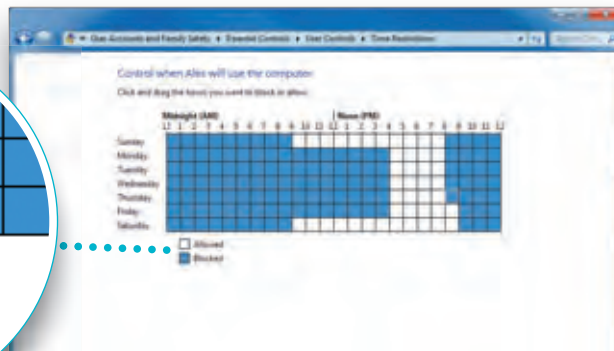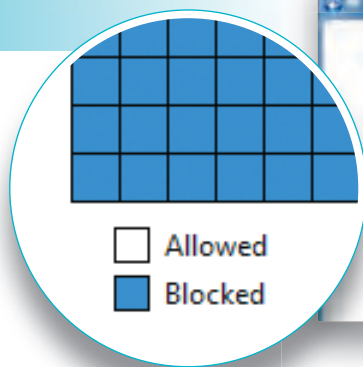
Step 3

Choose which games children can play

Click 'Games', then choose one (or a combination of) the following four options:

a. To block ALL games, under Can [person's name] play games?, click 'No'.

b. To block games by age ratings, under Can [person's name] play games?, click 'Yes'. Under Block (or allow) games by rating and content types, click 'Set game ratings'.

Under Which ratings are OK for [person's name] to play?, click a ratings level.

c. To block games by content, under Can [person's name] play games?, click 'Yes'. Under Block (or allow) games by rating and content types, click 'Set game ratings'. Under Block these types of content, select the content types that you want to block.

d. To block specific games, under Can [person's name] play games?, click 'Yes'.
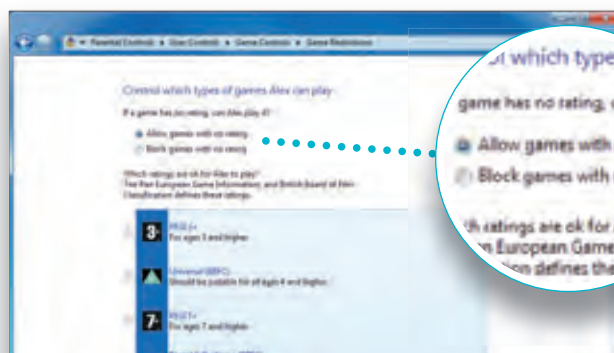
Under Block (or allow) any game on your computer by name, click 'Block' or 'Allow specific games'. In the alphabetical list of games, find the game that you want to block, and then select 'Always Block'.

Step 4

Allow or block specific programs

Click Allow and block specific programs. Click [Person's name] can only use the programs I allow. Select the programs that you want to allow. If the program you want doesn't appear in the list, click 'Browse' to locate the program.
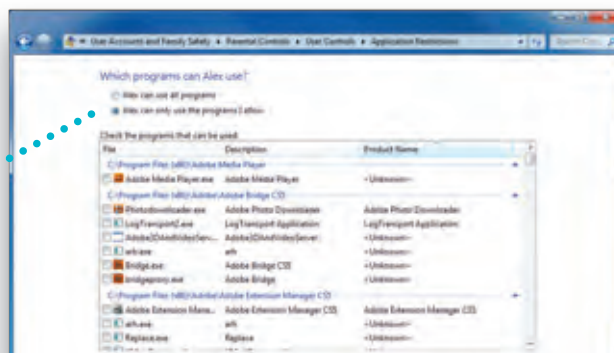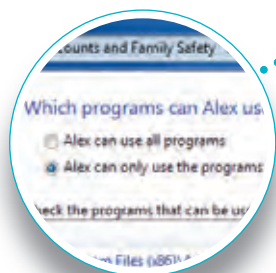
Windows Live® Family Safety

Windows Live® Family Safety lets you choose what your children see and who they talk to online and get reports of their online activity, as well as set the time and game restrictions as shown in this tutorial. You can find more information and setup instructions at **http://familysafety.live.com/getstarted**

For further information about Parental Controls for Windows®7 and Windows® Vista®, go to:
www.windows.microsoft.com/parental-controls

Family safety options are also integrated in the Windows Live® products, Hotmail®, Messenger® and Spaces®:
http://familysafety.live.com/getstarted

and family settings are available for the Xbox® and Xbox 360®:
www.xbox.com/familysettings

Find out more about online safety and privacy at:
www.microsoft.com/security

Microsoft

www.microsoft.com

"We used our common sense"

Are you worried about the amount of time your son or daughter spends in front of a screen? You're not alone. We spoke to Marketa and Mehjoub Sahraoui about the ground rules they have set for their children's digital world.

REALITY CHECK

The Sahraoui family

Marketa and Mehjoub Sahraoui have two children – Aya (10) and Adam (8). They are both very active and are keen swimmers but they also enjoy electronic games.

While their parents recognise the enjoyment they get from online gaming, they worry about how much time the children, especially Adam, spend in front of a screen.

"We notice sometimes that if Adam plays Wii in the evening, he will go to bed thinking and talking about the game and he will wake up thinking about the game," says Marketa. "We don't like this as the game seems to take over his mind. It's not right."

Setting limits

Marketa and Mehjoub have tried to set some limits for the children. Online gaming and Wii are restricted to a couple of hours a day over the weekend, with the computer only being used for homework during the week.

"We used our common sense," explains Marketa. "We decided that these limits were sensible and fair – even if our children might not have the same opinion!"

Mehjoub admits that they end up being flexible though. "They can have extra time playing games as a treat for some good work or good behaviour or on special occasions."

As well as time limits, the Sahraoui's have set Parental Controls on their laptop and they also make sure they know what the children are doing online.

"We keep checking with the children when they're on the computer – it's mainly Habbo and Club Penguin, which we are OK with."

Looking ahead

Marketa and Mehjoub know that Aya and Adam would like to have access to other technologies.

"They would both love their own email addresses, mobile phones and computers, but we don't feel they need them until they are older. Aya will probably get a phone when she starts secondary school though," comments Marketa.

Aya and Adam are pretty vocal when it comes to the limits on their gaming.

"Sometimes it isn't fair!" says Aya.

"I feel upset because there are rules about it. I would like to play more, especially with my friends," adds Adam.

But that doesn't stop mum and dad feeling that the rules are important.

"On the whole, the children have got used to the limits and understand why they're there – that doesn't stop them asking to play on weekdays though!" ■

Want to find out more about some of Aya and Adam's favourite technology?

CLUB PENGUIN — www.clubpenguin.com

Nintendo — www.nintendo.com

HABBO — www.habbo.com

Digital grandparenting

What do grandparents need to know to help young people stay safer online?

Many of the more than 14 million grandparents in the UK are actively involved in their grandchildren's lives. Whether they're a now-and-again babysitter, a regular carer or even if they live many miles away, what role can they play in keeping their beloved grandchildren safer in their digital world?

Facebook, smartphones and tablets aren't just for the young. Lots of grandparents are using the internet and other digital technologies to support their hobbies, build friendships and stay in touch with their families.

In a survey conducted by Vodafone in 2011, a tenth of the UK-based grandparents interviewed said they use technology every day to make contact with their grandchildren and more than a quarter (29%) revealed that they might feel isolated from their family if they didn't have access to the internet. From text messages and email to webcams and sharing photos on social networking sites, it's all helping to bring grandparents and grandchildren closer.

For the millions of grandparents who help look after their grandchildren,

there are other reasons why technology simply cannot be ignored. Whether they're in charge for a few hours, while mum and dad are out for the evening, a weekend here and there or every day while the child's parents are at work, it's important that grandparents understand the kind of gadgets and websites that young people enjoy so that they can support them and help them stay safer when they're in their care. And with the rise of smartphones like the iPhone and BlackBerry giving young people a mini-computer in their pocket 24/7, it's even more important to know what's going on.

Even the most tech-savvy grandparents might have concerns about what their grandchildren are doing on the internet, mobiles and other devices and, when it comes to the times that they're

'Grandparents' checklist

Here are a few tips to help you get more involved in your grandchildren's digital lives…

✓ **TAKE** an interest in how your grandchildren use digital technologies – talk to them about their favourite websites, hobbies and games and who their online friends are

✓ **DO** fun stuff together, like playing games on their Wii or watching TV programmes on BBC iPlayer, and ask them to show you the websites they like – they'll no doubt enjoy sharing their tech know-how with you

✓ **TALK** to them regularly about their experiences in the digital world (both good and bad), so that they can build their confidence and know they can turn to you if something upsets or troubles them

✓ **ENCOURAGE** them to share any worries or difficult experiences with an adult they trust, such as a parent, teacher or you – some children find it easier to talk to a grandparent than other adults so they'll appreciate your offer of support

✓ **FIND OUT** from their parents what technology rules they have in place at home (e.g. how much time they are allowed to spend on the internet or their games console) so that you can also stick to them when your grandchildren are with you – your son or daughter might not have even thought about such rules (in which case, giving them a copy of this magazine might be a good way to get the conversation started) or they might just have forgotten to tell you about them

✓ **PUT** passwords or PINS on your own computer, mobile and other devices if you think your grandchildren might use them when they come to visit. Make sure your grandchildren don't know your passwords or PINs (e.g. your Wi-Fi password or mobile PIN) as they might be tempted to break the rules

✓ **MAKE** the most of tools like Parental Controls on computers, mobiles and games consoles and safety options on Google and other search engines for when they are at your house – take a look at our 'How to' guides for more information

✓ **TAKE** the things you might already be teaching your grandchildren in the real world and apply them to the digital world – like the importance of being kind and considering other people's feelings

✓ **REMEMBER**, even very young children use technology so it's never too early to encourage them to use it safely and responsibly… it's better to get them into good habits as quickly as possible

✓ **DON'T** wait until something goes wrong – help them develop the skills they need to take care of themselves (just as you would if you were teaching them to cross the road by themselves)

✓ **IF** you discover something that worries you, it might be difficult to know what to do but it's better to take steps to find out more rather than ignore it. You could start by talking to your grandchild and agreeing with them what to do next, such as talking to their parents. If you're still worried, you can email The Parent Zone for advice at **help@theparentzone.co.uk**

✓ **HAVE** a good look through the rest of this magazine – it contains lots of important information but we recommend you start with our Spotlight on Age (page 6) and Spotlight on Digital Spaces (page 10) articles

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under the grandparents' roof, it can be particularly tricky knowing what rules are already in place and how to help if something goes wrong.

"It's normal to worry about your grandchildren and the digital world," says Geraldine Bedell, editor of Gransnet, the social networking site for grandparents. "For one thing, young people might think they are better with technology than we are – it's one of the few areas where our wisdom is not in demand. For another, most grandparents want to be the fun people in the family, not the boring old heavy-handed makers of rules."

Grandparents' digital concerns often mirror those of their own children. Of the grandparents who spoke to Vodafone, around a quarter are worried that their grandson or granddaughter could be meeting strangers online (25%) or accessing inappropriate content on the internet (24%). Other concerns might include young people giving away too much personal information online, being bullied and spending too much time in front of a screen.

For the great majority of kids for the vast majority of the time, the digital world will be a source of harmless fun, creativity and learning, so it's important to stay upbeat and positive about it. At the same time, grandparents can play an incredibly important role – as an extra pair of eyes and ears, a guide and a confidant. ◼

If you'd like to pass this article on to your child's grandparents, simply go to www.vodafone.com/parents to save it as a PDF that you can email or print.

A former feature writer for the *Observer* and columnist for the *Independent on Sunday*, Geraldine Bedell is the editor of Gransnet. She writes and broadcasts widely on grandparents and the second half of life.

www.gransnet.com

Think technology baffles grandparents?
Think again.

Geraldine Bedell of Gransnet reveals how online forums are liberating and empowering grandparents all over the UK.

"So, what do they talk about? Knitting?" This is one of the most common responses when I tell people I edit Gransnet, the leading social networking site for grandparents.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary – despite the fact that most people know at least one hale and hearty grandparent – the image of grans is still of little old grey-haired ladies quietly occupying themselves with harmless handicrafts.

"Are there enough of them online?" is the other question I regularly get asked. In fact, over-65s are the fastest-growing age group on the internet and they spend more time logged on than anyone else. And half of all grandparents are younger than 65 anyway (10% of them are under 50).

Far from being parked in the corner, many grandparents are busier than ever – working, volunteering and looking after their elderly relatives as well as their grandchildren – and generally being what one gransnetter calls "the jam in the sandwich".

So the stereotypes are out of date (in both directions, in fact, because knitting is now highly fashionable among artistic young people).

Given that Skype, Facebook and photo sharing have opened up new ways to keep in touch with your family, it's not surprising that grandparents have been tempted to embrace technology. And like everyone else, once they've dipped a toe in the water, they tend to be seduced by the wealth of experiences available.

Like other thoughtful adults, though, grandparents worry about aspects of their grandchildren's use of digital technologies. Are they spending too much time online? What are they seeing? Do their parents look up from their own laptop or mobile often enough to notice that they're playing violent computer games? What are their own responsibilities here, as grandparents?

So there are plenty of incentives to find out more, not only so they can engage in conversations about being safe online with some authority, but also to discover what else we can get out of the various devices on which we are increasingly dependent.

"You know that no-one will judge you online."

If we don't talk about knitting (mainly), what do we talk about on the Web? Quite a lot of the time, things you're not supposed to discuss in polite company: politics, religion, sex, bowels, mammograms, difficulties in our relationships. There is stuff you can say anonymously on a forum that you could never mention anywhere else.

"All the things we've bottled up for years now have a safe outlet," comments one of our users. "You know that no-one will judge you. Gransnet is the only place I have ever been able to express my true feelings about my mother."

Such confidences tend to create an atmosphere of support and loyalty because once you've been entrusted with someone's secrets, hopes and disappointments, you're bound to feel concerned for them.

The most surprising aspect of Gransnet to me, after a year of existence, is the complexity of our users. Of course *I'm* complex, but a lot of the time we don't see other people as having the same hidden depths. And perhaps this is particularly true of anyone over 50.

There is a resistance to thinking about the middle aged and old as multifaceted, not least because of persistent ageism. There was recently a discussion about loneliness on the site, and a number of the funniest, most lively gransnetters admitted to being lonely some of the time. You just wouldn't have known.

The ways in which we define and pigeonhole people in the real world don't apply online and, for some gransnetters, that is a real liberation. If they don't want to tell the rest of us – or don't want

to tell us until we've got to know how forceful and interesting they are – that they walk with a stick, they don't have to.

Not only are gransnetters the sum of all our (now quite long-lived) parts, but we're also a pretty diverse bunch – bonded by our love for our grandchildren, but beyond that, living all over the country, at different stages of life and with a lot of different attitudes. So we're not easy to categorise.

Our members are pretty diverse politically, as in everything else, but there are certain causes that broadly unite us. It is a truism that women become invisible as they age – one of the common complaints on Gransnet is that older people find it hard to make their voices heard, particularly to politicians and the media – but thousands of us complaining on the internet is a bit more difficult to ignore.

One of the most persistent debates on our forums has been about ageism in hospital and the lack of dignity with which older patients are treated. We managed to get both the Minister of State for Care Services, Paul Burstow and the Shadow Minister for Care and Older People, Liz Kendall in to address these concerns directly to gransnetters in live Web chats.

"Gransnet is the best Help button ever."

So, digital grandparenting has opened up a much broader range of interests for many of our members, who are, generally speaking, enjoying a phase of life that has never existed before: post-children but pre-old age and in a relatively long period of health and activity.

We hear a good deal about the ageing population, but what we're really seeing is an extended middle age, when it's perfectly possible to be a grandparent yet to be more connected to the rest of the world than you've ever been before.

From a starting point of wanting to connect with their grandchildren and follow what they're up to, grandparents are discovering a whole range of interests online. All of human life is on the internet and a fair bit of it is on Gransnet.

"I love this forum. Where else can you get advice about dentures?!" one member posted recently. "Gransnet is the best Help button ever," commented another. "Someone always seems to have the answer."

Including, I am glad to say, about knitting. ◢

You can find Gransnet at: www.gransnet.com

Children, internet, pornography – an explosive mix of words

EXPERT VIEW
Sonia Livingstone

Sonia Livingstone of the London School of Economics and Political Science is Director of the EU Kids Online network.

www.eukidsonline.net

Having spoken to thousands of parents and children for the EU Kids Online studies in recent years, Professor Sonia Livingstone highlights the growing concern about young people accessing sexual images online.

Children, internet, pornography – it's an explosive mix of words and it makes a lot of parents anxious. The newspaper headlines screaming about a porn-addicted generation doesn't help matters, especially when many parents feel out of their depth dealing with new and complex technologies that didn't exist when they were growing up. So what is really going on?

31%

of parents of 9 to 16-year-olds 'worry a lot' about their child seeing inappropriate content on the internet.

There's no doubt that pornography is easier to obtain than ever before, much of it is more graphic, and some of it is more violent or degrading. Comparisons with the 'top shelf' magazines or videos that used to be passed around in the playground don't really capture today's reality of being able to find explicit hard-core sexual or violent content at a single click on the internet, without having to ask anyone and without leaving a trace (if you know how to delete your history and cookies, which many children do).

But that doesn't mean kids are all looking at porn all the time. First, you do have to go looking for it – the days have mostly gone when sexual or violent content arrived unwanted in your email inbox, or from mistyping a search term, or as a pop-up on your screen when you're looking for something else. In response to considerable public disquiet and with some Government prompting, the industry seems to have sorted this out for the most part, at least on commonly used websites.

But kids will go looking for it. There will be a craze at school ("Have you seen this site?") and off they go. After all, children love exploring the internet (especially going where they are told not to go) and, once they are into their teenage years, we'd expect curiosity about sexual matters. Some of them, however, will find rather more than they bargained for; more too than their parents or welfare professionals think they should see.

So is there a problem? Parents are certainly concerned. The EU Kids Online survey of 1,000 British children and parents shows that 31% of parents of 9 to 16-year-olds 'worry a lot' about their child seeing inappropriate content on the internet. And about the same number (30%) of parents of teens worry about this as do parents of younger children (32%).

The children's survey responses document the extent of the problem clearly. Around one quarter of 9 to 16-year-olds said they had seen sexual images in the past year – although interestingly, 16% had seen them on TV, film or DVDs, while 11% had seen them on the internet, 10% in magazines, and 5% on mobile phones. So the internet is not the only source of pornography.

1/4

A quarter of 9 to 16-year-olds have seen sexual images in the past year – more so on TV and film than on the internet.

Among those who saw sexual images online, four in ten of their parents thought they had not, suggesting that parents may not recognise what's happening. When we asked the 11 to 16-year-olds just what they had seen, the results included 8% who said they had seen nudity online, 6% who had seen images of people having sex, 6% who had seen people's genitals and 2% who had seen violent sexual images. Interestingly, research suggests that pornography is more likely to be harmful if it is abusive or degrading to women. That makes sense – arguably, we should be more worried about violence or hostility on the internet than about sexual content.

Even so, risk is not the same as harm – indeed, risk refers to the probability of harm, and that probability may be low, depending on the child's circumstances. So being exposed to pornography may not always be harmful: among those who saw sexual images online, only a quarter said they were upset by this, for example. It's difficult to know if more have seen porn than admit to it and even harder to know whether more are upset or harmed in some way.

But even a minority of children is a lot of children. Also, the children who are more upset by seeing online pornography tend to be younger – suggesting they are too immature for, or unprepared for, such images – and are more likely to be girls, which hints at a deeper concern over sexual expectations, or even sexual pressure, to look and act in certain ways. It's also possible that the boys' bravado covers up an anxiety about social pressures on them – we just don't have the evidence for this yet.

So it seems reasonable for parents to expect the industry to do more to stop the most explicit or violent pornography being available to children (and remember that children may think that images of consensual sex are violent – certainly much pornography includes little, if any, context of sex in a respectful relationship). Pornography is not easily accessible to children in libraries, on television or pasted on bus stops – the public environment is managed by other means. But the internet is, in many ways, regarded and used as a public resource and pornography simply has no place in children's play and learning spaces.

1/2

Only around half of parents of 9 to 16-year-olds have installed filters or Parental Controls on their child's computer.

But it also seems reasonable that parents should do more to install filters or Parental Controls on their children's computer. My survey shows that only 54% of the parents of 9 to 16-year-olds do this already. Many parents say they don't know which filter is best, or how it works, or how to install and use it.

Much more work is needed on the part of industry to ensure all parents know about easy-to-use and effective filters. In fact, many think it would be far easier if these were pre-installed or included with virus and spam prevention tools – especially given the proliferation of devices by which children now go online.

Of course, some kids will still go looking for pornography, and some will find it by accident. But harm depends on the age and maturity of the child. So parents should be provided with effective tools if they wish to use them and they should make an active choice about the use of filters in the best interests of their child. ◢

EXPERT VIEW
Dr Linda Papadopoulos

Dr Linda Papadopoulos' 14-year career as a research scientist and practising psychologist has led to her work being published in some of the most well-regarded academic journals and given rise to a high profile media career.

Dr. Linda
www.drlinda.co.uk

How are young people affected by sexual images in the media?

Leading psychologist Dr Linda Papadopoulos highlights the consequences of the sexualisation of children and teenagers and suggests how they might learn to navigate our increasingly complex world.

I feel in many ways that I'm part of the 'lucky' generation when it comes to sexual politics. My mum went out to work but she didn't exactly burn her bra; I simply grew up surrounded by the belief that my worth was based on who I was, my talents and what I did with them.

I was aware of the media, of course, but even though it feels like yesterday, the internet didn't even exist, teenage magazines were in their innocent infancy and sex was a really big deal. We had our own version of the pressures all teenagers face – discovering our emerging selves while wanting to be liked, to be clever and to be popular, if at all possible – but I feel we had just that bit more time and space in which to find out who we were.

When I was asked by the Government to look at the relationship between sexualisation and growing violence towards women, I truly wasn't prepared for what I would find.

Why did it feel like we had taken so many steps backward in terms of sexual equality among young people and healthy sexuality? How had rape scenes become a normal part of video war games? Why were so many girls having breast enlargement surgery as teenagers and what possessed a girl to sell her virginity on eBay? Were teenagers just different today and growing up more quickly or was something else going on?

What is 'sexualisation'?

Many of us in the 'lucky' generation are now parents and it feels like we're just now starting to wake up to what is going on with our children and the impact of premature sexualisation.

Simply put, sexualisation is the imposition of adult sexuality on to children and young people before they are capable of dealing with it mentally, emotionally or physically.

While girls are valuing themselves in terms of how sexually desirable they are to boys, boys are feeling the pressure to be hyper masculine.

> **"There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that sexualisation is having a profound impact on our children's emotional development and how they develop their sense of identity."**

Kids are learning how to have sex from pornography and we live in a world that is more saturated by images than at any other time in our modern history.

Behind every image lies a message about expectations, values and ideals. Right now, those images more often than not present and perpetuate a world where women are revered and rewarded for their physical attributes. Gender stereotypes are back in fashion and to object is often to be accused of lacking a sense of humour or proportion.

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that sexualisation is having a profound impact on our children's emotional development and how they develop their sense of identity. Young people have a natural, healthy interest in sex. But when their developing sexuality is moulded to fit adult stereotypes, this can compromise that healthy developmental process.

Children no longer have the time and space to extend their own understanding as images and constructs are literally 'in their face' on a daily basis, often before their minds are ready to know how to interpret or process them. Instead of putting children in control of their sexuality, we are in danger of isolating them from it altogether.

What are the consequences?

The serious negative consequences associated with the sexualisation of children is becoming ever more clear in areas of body confidence, ambitions, low self-esteem, sexual harassment, abuse within teen relationships and views on sexual violence.

A study in America found a direct correlation between children's exposure to sexual content on television and teen pregnancy rates.

The World Health Organization estimates that 20% of girls and 11% of boys in the UK have been sexually assaulted. Homophobia is still a significant problem within schools.

These are the kinds of consequences that leave long-term effects, often resurfacing at vulnerable times during their adult life, affecting careers, relationships and, in turn, how they parent their own children.

What can we do to help young people?

It's unrealistic to assume that we can stop our children and young people from being exposed to unhealthy images but we can give them tools to navigate the world around them.

From digital citizenship to media literacy, equipping kids with tools to help them understand and interpret what they see without internalising all the negative messages can help them build their self-esteem and inner confidence so they feel secure in their own identity. Just as they are taught reading comprehension and, later, literary criticism, children can be taught how to critique the media they consume.

We may think our children are highly literate when it comes to media but it's just that they know how to *work* it, not how to interpret it. Where these classes are already happening in schools, the children are taking to it with relish and then starting to create their own forms of media and expression rather than simply sitting back and letting it all come to them.

With encouragement and guidance, children are incredibly creative and have the potential for amazing inner strength, resilience and individual thought. ◢

For more information about Dr Papadopoulos' review go to: www.drlinda.co.uk

How to…

set up Google SafeSearch™

Google's SafeSearch™ filters give parents the ability to change their browser setting to prevent adult content from appearing in their children's search results.

Searching online is a popular activity among young people. Whether they're looking for information to support their hobbies and interests, researching their homework or simply trying to find the answer to a question that's been niggling them, Google™ is often their first port of call.

As a parent, you need to be aware that your son or daughter might come across inappropriate content during their online search – even if they're searching on a seemingly harmless keyword or subject.

The good news is that Google™ offers a SafeSearch™ feature, which helps you to keep adult content out of search results. SafeSearch™ screens websites that contain sexually-explicit content and removes them from your search results.

Whilst no filter is 100% accurate, SafeSearch™ helps your children to avoid inappropriate content online.

Step 1

Go to www.google.com

Start typing a keyword in the search box and click 'Search'. The gear icon will appear on the right of the page. Click on the gear icon, then click on 'Search settings' in the drop down menu.

Alternatively, you can go to www.google.com/preferences to access Google SafeSearch™.
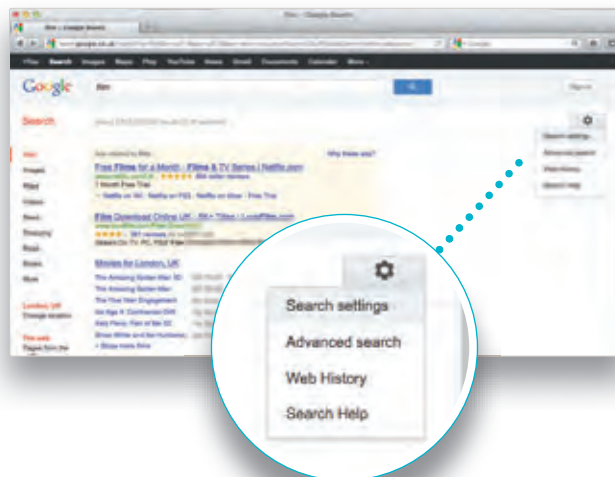
Step 2

Choose filter

On the 'Search Settings' page choose the level of filter you would like activated on your family's computer.

'Strict filtering' filters both explicit text and explicit images whilst 'Moderate filtering' filters explicit images only (NB: Moderate is the default filter setting on Google™).

Step 3

Lock SafeSearch™

If you have a Google™ account you can lock SafeSearch™ on your family's computer so that 'strict filtering' is always in place and no-one except you can change the settings.

If you're not already signed in to your Google™ account, you'll be asked to sign in. Once you're signed in, click on 'Lock SafeSearch'.

It might take a moment for the filters to be applied to all Google™ domains, then you'll see a confirmation page once the lock is engaged.

If you have more than one browser on your computer or if your family computer has more than one user profile, you'll need to set the lock on each one.

When SafeSearch™ is locked in place, you'll see a set of coloured balls at the top of all search pages. If the coloured balls aren't there, SafeSearch™ is no longer locked.

Please note:
Google™ does its best to keep SafeSearch™ as up-to-date and comprehensive as possible, but inappropriate sites do sometimes get through.

If you have SafeSearch™ activated on your computer and still find offensive content in your results, visit Google's Web page removal request page to let them know about the site or image you found.

www.google.com

Young people and pornography

EXPERT VIEW
Dr Heather Wood

Dr Heather Wood has worked in the NHS for over 30 years and now works as a therapist in a specialist NHS clinic, treating people who suffer from compulsive sexual behaviours, as well as teaching and training other staff.

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**

www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

Dr Heather Wood, a psychotherapist and psychologist specialising in the issue of compulsive sexual behaviour, explains how and why young people access internet pornography and offers concerned parents some practical advice.

Young people are naturally curious about sex. They seek out information to prepare for making adult relationships and to work out who they will be as a sexually-active adult, asking questions like "What do I find attractive and stimulating?" and "What will someone find attractive about me?"

Over the years, art, literature and pornography have all had a place in this self-education. Young people inform themselves and find pleasure and amusement in looking at images of naked bodies and sexual acts and sharing their discoveries with friends.

With the arrival of the Web and the availability of internet pornography, young people now have much easier access to a larger quantity of sexual materials. Whereas in the past, a curious teenager might have had to go to the local newsagent and overcome his embarrassment to buy a top shelf magazine – or get someone older to do so on his behalf – now, limitless amounts of pornography are available online via computers, mobile phones and other devices.

What is pornography?

Images, audio and written materials are considered to be pornographic if they are designed to arouse sexual feelings or portray sexual activities.

I work in a specialist NHS clinic that treats adults and young people with problems of compulsive sexual behaviour. Since 1997, when the first adult who had problems with internet pornography was referred to us, we have seen a steady increase in the number of adults, and more recently of young people, who are experiencing problems related to the internet and sex.

Adults and young people come for help because they are using internet pornography in a compulsive way or because they have been in trouble with the police for downloading illegal images of people under 18 or because they have got involved in taking or distributing illegal images.

Does exposure to pornography harm young people?

Many young people will have some exposure to internet pornography, find it amusing or boring or exciting, but then get on with the business of making real-life relationships with people their own age. But some young people may be exposed to images which they find disturbing or which skew their view of a 'normal' sexual relationship or a normal body.

A very small proportion of people who look at internet pornography get caught up in a cycle of compulsive use and spend more and more time looking at pornography and start to neglect work commitments, friends and family. They become very preoccupied with when they can next look at pornography and often feel less engaged and invested in their everyday lives.

For young people, there are particular dangers associated with looking at internet pornography. For example, while it is appropriate for a 15-year-old boy to be sexually interested in someone his own age, a sexual image of a 15-year-old is illegal, and it is a criminal act to download or distribute such an image in the UK.

Young people's sexuality is also still in the process of forming and taking shape. If they are exposed to images of extreme or violent sexual acts during this time, they may find it hard to get these images out of their minds when they come to have sex with a partner. Just as the fashion catwalks and media often present a picture of 'the perfect body' that makes some young people feel unhappy that their body does not match up to this ideal, so pornography can present an idealised image of sexual potency or sexual attractiveness and can leave people feeling bad about themselves when they inevitably fall short of this ideal.

Young people's views

In a survey of young people's attitudes to internet pornography that we undertook with BBC Radio 1 in 2011, we found that 71% of a sample of 18 to 24-year-olds thought it was too easy to access pornography on the internet; 50% thought looking at too much pornography can make you feel bad about yourself; and 63% thought that pornography can have a harmful effect on people's ideas about sex and sexuality.

This survey revealed that it is not just parents and teachers who are concerned – young people are also worried about the effects that viewing pornography can have on them and want it to be more difficult to access.

Those young adults who were using online pornography for more than 10 hours a week (who we called 'heavy users') were more likely to think it could do harm and were more concerned about themselves and what they were doing. It seems that more pornography does not mean more fun; for some young people, it can mean more worry.

What can you do?

There is a lot that you can do to limit your son's or daughter's exposure to pornography in your home.

First, and most importantly, stay engaged with them, encourage them to talk to you and support them in making real-life relationships.

Secondly, get some insight into how your child might be using digital technologies to explore sex and relationships – this is a natural part of growing up, it's just that the younger generation is doing it in different ways to how we did.

Useful websites

www.helpguide.org/mental/internet_cybersex_addiction.htm

www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/

Take action

1 INSTALL Parental Controls on your child's computer, mobile and other devices to help block inappropriate content, such as pornography – these kind of controls are especially useful for younger children

2 AVOID using the home computer to view pornography yourself so that it does not appear in your internet history when your kids log on

3 DISCOURAGE your teenager from withdrawing to spend hours alone in their bedroom online

4 REMEMBER that banning things or putting your foot down is not always helpful

5 TALK to your son or daughter about how pornography is regarded within their social circle and find out what they think about it

6 DISCUSS the fact that, while pornography might answer some of their questions about sex, it can also give a misleading picture of sex, bodies and adult relationships

7 ENSURE they understand the risks of exchanging sexual images (e.g. sexting) or exposing themselves to images that may be disturbing or even illegal

8 ENCOURAGE them to put off looking at sexual materials until they are older, when they will have clearer ideas about sex and relationships and are less likely to be influenced in a harmful way

9 IF your son or daughter is already looking at pornography compulsively, spending a lot of time on it and finding it difficult to stop, talk to them about how you can help them to reduce the amount of time they spend doing it

10 GO to your GP for advice or help if you are really worried – they might be a good place to start in finding what support is available to your child locally

Illegal content:
What is being done about it?

Digital Parenting looks into the problem of criminal online content and finds out what action is being taken around the world to combat it.

While the Web gives young people access to a wealth of information, some content does break the law. As a parent, you might be concerned that your son or daughter could stumble across illegal activity or illegal content online and you might be wondering: Is anybody doing anything about it?

As Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda, declared in 2011, "It simply cannot be tolerated that internet users would accidentally be exposed to such horrific images." She was highlighting the work of the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) in reducing the availability of child sexual abuse images online.

What is considered illegal online?

It's a common misconception that laws don't apply to the internet; that when you log on, you enter some kind of lawless frontier-land. In fact, as a simple rule of thumb, anything that would be illegal in the real world is illegal in the online world. The global nature of the internet makes it more complicated than that, however – what might be illegal in one country might not be illegal in another.

In terms of what is illegal online, it's useful to split it into illegal 'activity' and illegal 'content'. Although it depends on local laws, illegal activity includes identity theft, fraud, online grooming and harassment while illegal content refers to things like images of child sexual abuse and criminally obscene adult content.

As technology advances ever faster, criminals are finding new ways to misuse the internet and mobile devices to disseminate illegal materials and make money from them. File hosting websites, social networking platforms and e-payment systems are being increasingly exploited, for example.

So, who is policing the internet and what can you do to help protect yourself and your children?

What action is being taken?

The internet and mobile industries, governments, law enforcement agencies and other organisations take illegal online content very seriously and are involved in a number of initiatives to combat it. Two important lines of defence are INHOPE and the Mobile Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Content.

Sexting and the law

By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under the age of 18 on to someone else, young people in the UK could be breaking the law. Read our article about sexting on page 94 so that you can give your son or daughter guidance on this sensitive issue.

**INHOPE
(the International Association of Internet Hotlines)
www.inhope.org**

Established in 1999 by the European Commission, there are now 42 INHOPE hotlines in 36 countries to which members of the public can report internet material, including child sexual abuse material, that they suspect to be illegal using a simple online reporting form. Working closely with industry and the police, the hotlines are focused on the swift removal of illegal content, bringing those responsible to justice and rescuing children from sexual exploitation.

The UK hotline, run by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), has helped to virtually eradicate child sexual abuse content hosted online in the UK in recent years. In 2011, it processed more than 40,000 reports of suspected criminal content from the public.

You can report suspected criminal online content to the IWF at **www.iwf.org.uk** – reports are confidential and can be submitted anonymously.

INHOPE has developed a mobile app for Windows Phone 7, Android, iPhone, iPad, Nokia and BlackBerry devices. Using a simple interface, the app allows the user to anonymously report any online content he or she finds on the internet and suspects to be illegal. The report will then be forwarded to the hosting country's hotline, which will further investigate the case according to national legislation and, where appropriate, law enforcement agencies will be informed and the content will be removed.

**Mobile Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Content
www.gsmworld.com/mobilealliance**

Set up by the GSMA (the global trade association for mobile providers), the Mobile Alliance helps to prevent mobile internet services being misused to disseminate and access child sexual abuse content.

Commenting ahead of the launch of the Mobile Alliance in 2008, the GSMA said that it was "…determined that our industry makes it as difficult as possible for criminals to use the mobile medium to consume or profit from the sexual exploitation of children."

Members of the alliance, which includes Vodafone, support and promote reporting hotlines for members of the public who come across illegal content; implement technical mechanisms to prevent access to websites identified by an appropriate agency as hosting child sexual abuse images; and work with law enforcement bodies and other organisations to take action against the perpetrators. The GSMA works with each Mobile Alliance member to monitor progress.

For more information about illegal content, go to: www.vodafone.com/parents/illegal

Online sexual grooming

Zoe Hilton of CEOP, the UK's lead police agency for protecting children from sexual abuse, talks to Digital Parenting.

EXPERT VIEW
Zoe Hilton

Zoe Hilton is Head of Safeguarding and Child Protection at the UK's Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre, the lead police agency dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children. CEOP tracks and brings offenders to account either directly or in partnership with local and international police forces.

www.ceop.police.uk

Vodafone asked the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre to share their advice on how parents can protect their children online. As young people's lives become increasingly digital, they sometimes forget to take the same precautions they would in real life. They might accept friend requests from strangers on social networking websites or start chatting to someone they don't know while playing a multi-player game. And, with webcams built into many laptops and cameras now available on most mobiles, they might even exchange photos and videos with people they have never met.

One of the concerns you might have as a parent is that someone could make contact with your son or daughter with the motive of preparing them for sexual abuse. While it's unlikely that your child will be approached in this way, online sexual grooming does happen. Here Zoe Hilton offers insight into this sensitive issue.

Every day at CEOP, we sadly see the devastating effects on the lives of young people and their families when things go wrong online.

While the internet creates wonderful opportunities for children and teenagers and plays an increasingly significant role in their lives, there are real risks that parents should be aware of.

In early 2012, reports to CEOP stood at around 1,000 a month and related to online grooming, online sexual abuse, making arrangements to meet a child online, or a child being in immediate danger.

Young people now access the internet in an increasingly diverse number of ways – from their laptops, games consoles or smartphones. They share videos and photos and post comments online – on the move, in an instant and sometimes without thinking about the consequences of their actions. Some make friends with people they don't know in real life.

Research by EU Kids Online shows that just under a third of children in the UK have had contact online with people they had not met before.

Befriending strangers, posting provocative, naked or sexual photos and videos, or giving away too much personal information could expose them to the risk of grooming.

What is online grooming?

Grooming is a highly manipulative process and adults with a sexual interest in children may use online environments to gain access to young people. The techniques used to start contact can be quite sophisticated and may seek to exploit any apparent vulnerability in the child.

Online grooming and the law

In the UK, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 defines online grooming as 'A course of conduct enacted by a suspected paedophile, which would give a reasonable person cause for concern that any meeting with a child arising from the conduct would be for unlawful purposes.'

A young person may be made to feel special and loved by an offender, who can pretend online to be of a similar age or have similar interests to the child they are targeting. Alternatively, an offender may use bribes or threats.

Through the grooming process, an offender's aim could be to get sexual photos or videos of young people or to arrange to meet them to abuse them in the real world.

What action can parents take?

Parents can play a pivotal role in protecting their children online, just as they do in protecting them in the real world. Understanding and playing a part in your child's online life is one of the best ways to protect them so they can safely enjoy all that the internet offers. Here's a checklist to get you started.

Parents' checklist

✓ We regularly discuss the kind of websites that my child uses, how to set safety features and how to report concerns

✓ I have advised my child to set their social network profile settings to private

✓ I have asked my child about their online friends and warned them that some people create fake online identities

✓ I have set appropriate Parental Controls on my child's computer, mobile and games console

✓ My child has agreed to tell me if they are worried about something online

✓ I know where to get help if I'm concerned about my child or another child

Useful CEOP websites

You can find further information and guidance on the Thinkuknow website at **www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents** and in the CEOP Safety Centre at **www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre**, including a new online show called 'The Parents' and Carers' Guide to the Internet'.

If you're concerned that an adult has made inappropriate contact with your child, you can report this directly to CEOP. Go to **www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre** and click on the red 'Make a CEOP report' button or click on the ClickCEOP button available on many websites, including Facebook.

Reporting
online concerns

Things can go wrong online as well as offline. Your son or daughter might be upset by an abusive message on Facebook or they might want to stop subscribing to a premium rate text message service. Maybe they have come across an inappropriate website during a Google search or they're worried about the way another player is treating them when they're on their games console. So it's important to know how you can report any specific concerns you might have to your child's mobile, social networking or games provider, search engines, websites, the police and other authorities.

As with any parental concerns, you'll have your own way of dealing with them of course. If your son is being bullied by a fellow pupil during an online game, you might decide to speak to his school about it or if you find out that your teenage daughter and her friends have been using sexual language on a social networking site, your first step might be to discuss it with her so you can find out what's really going on.

While it can be difficult to know what to report and what not to report – a young person might not even consider abusive online comments to be bullying (they might just see it as 'drama') and digital flirting might just be considered part of growing up, for example – it's important that you report any serious concerns about things like harassment, child sexual abuse images and grooming to the relevant technology providers and other organisations (including the police, if necessary) so that they can take action.

How to ...
report online concerns to service providers

Google
www.google.com

Google screens websites that contain sexually-explicit content and removes explicit images from your search results ('Moderate filtering' is the default setting). If you would like to also filter out explicit text, you can use Google SafeSearch to set 'Strict filtering'.

No filter is 100% accurate, however, so if you have SafeSearch activated and still find websites containing inappropriate content in your results, report it to Google at **www.google.com/webmasters/tools/ safesearch** and they will investigate.

Facebook
www.facebook.com

The best way to report abusive or offensive content on Facebook, such as bullying, pornography, graphic violence and discussions about self-harm or suicide, is by using the 'Report' link that appears near the content itself. To report a photo or video, for example, click the gear menu in the top right of your child's profile or timeline and select 'Report this photo' or 'Report this video' (see screen shot below).

If your child uses Facebook from their mobile, they can now report it directly from there.

While reporting content doesn't guarantee that it will be removed, Facebook reviews reports to see if they violate the Facebook Terms and takes the appropriate action.

In addition, all Facebook users in the UK have access to an advice and reporting centre run by the police. Called ClickCEOP, it's an app that gives them advice about online safety as well as a dedicated facility for reporting instances of suspected grooming or inappropriate sexual behaviour (see screen shot below).

Facebook also offers 'Social Reporting', which enables users to report problematic content to their friends and ask them for help resolving the issue. For example, if your child believes that someone has posted a photo to harass or embarrass them, they can forward it to a trusted friend who might be able to offer advice or assistance.

For more information, go to:
www.google.com/goodtoknow/ familysafety/

For more information, go to:
www.facebook.com/safety

opriate & illegal content...
bullying...grooming...
privacy breaches

By making a formal report, you could help to improve the experience for all users of that service and also help to protect other young people from worry and harm. For example, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) processed more than 40,000 reports of suspected criminal content from the public in 2011, helping it to reduce the availability of child sexual abuse content on the internet.

Digital Parenting highlights how you can report inappropriate and potentially illegal content and behaviour to some of the digital services that young people enjoy, as well as to the police and other authorities. If you sense that your child or another child might be in immediate danger, call 999 or contact your local police.

vodafone

Vodafone
www.vodafone.co.uk

To report inappropriate content or conduct related to your child's Vodafone mobile, go to **www. vodafone.co.uk** and click on 'Contact Us' at the bottom of the page (see screen shot below).

You can report the issue to Vodafone by your preferred method:

a) Call Customer Care directly from your Vodafone mobile on 191 (or use callback)

b) Call from a landline – 08700 700191 (Pay monthly customers) or 08700 776655 (Pay as you go customers)

c) Contact a Vodafone Advisor online from the Contact Us page (Chat)

d) Send an email using the online form on the Contact Us page (900 characters max.)

For more information, go to:
www.vodafone.co.uk

You Tube

YouTube
www.youtube.com

As well as professional TV and film footage, YouTube contains thousands of videos created by people on home video cameras and mobiles (called 'user-generated content').

If you find a video on YouTube that you think violates the company's guidelines (if it contains pornography or graphic violence, for example), you can flag it as inappropriate and it will be submitted to YouTube for review.

To report a video, simply click the 'Flag' button that is located below it on its watch page (see screen shot below).

After you report the video with your selected reason, YouTube will review it and, if the video is found to be in violation of the company's Terms of Use, it will be removed from the site. Users who continually violate YouTube's Terms of Use will have their accounts penalised or possibly banned from the site permanently.

For more information, go to:
http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/ request.py?contact_type=abuse

XBOX 360

Xbox LIVE
www.xbox.com

If your son or daughter is worried about something that has happened while playing against other people online on Xbox LIVE (such as being harassed by another player during a game), you can report it to Xbox in a number of ways:

a) Connect directly with an Xbox support agent (chat)

b) Request a call from an Xbox support agent

c) Get help from an Xbox support agent via email

d) Tweet the Xbox Support Team @XboxSupport

For more information, go to:
http://support.xbox.com/en-GB

Club Penguin
www.clubpenguin.com

Disney's Club Penguin employs over 200 safety staff who monitor player behaviour. These moderators also approve all new penguin names, review chat logs and the list of words and phrases able to pass through the site's chat filters. By working in conjunction with technological features the team ensures that personal information and inappropriate language is not shared in the game.

Kids are also empowered to control their experience on Club Penguin. Should they wish to, they can ignore another player by clicking on that player's penguin, followed by the 'ignore player' button so they no longer see them in the game and vice versa. Kids can also report another penguin to the moderation team by clicking on the 'M' icon on the top right of the screen or by clicking on the player's penguin, followed by the 'report player' button.

Club Penguin's community support team can also be contacted by email, support@ clubpenguin.com, and Twitter @SupportAtCP

For more information, go to:
www.clubpenguin.com/parents/
player_safety.htm

CBBC
www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc

To make a complaint about something on the CBBC website, go to **www.bbc.co.uk/ complaints/** and follow the 'Make a complaint' prompts.

You'll be asked for some key information to help the BBC handle and report your complaint, including the exact address of the relevant Web page (see screen shot below).

All user-generated content on CBBC is pre-moderated, but if you see something on the message boards that you believe should not be there, you can report it via the 'Report Message' link present on every post. The message will be hidden immediately and referred back to a moderator for action.

For more information, go to:
www.bbc.co.uk/complaints

Moshi Monsters
www.moshimonsters.com

Moshi Monsters filters all postings to block inappropriate content and provides red 'M' buttons on pinboard messages so that users can report potentially disagreeable content, such as bullying messages (see screen shot below).
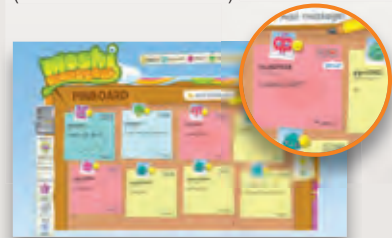
The company's moderators will review any reports they receive and take the appropriate action.

For more information, go to:
www.moshimonsters.com/parents

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre
www.ceop.police.uk

CEOP is the UK's lead law enforcement agency for protecting children from sexual abuse.

If someone has acted inappropriately online towards your child or another young person you know, report it to CEOP. It may be sexual chat, being asked to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable (such as sharing intimate photos or webcam footage), or someone being insistent on meeting up.

Go to **www.ceop.police.uk**, click the 'Click CEOP' button in the right hand corner (see screen shot below), then click the red 'Make a CEOP report' button on the next page and follow the steps outlined.

If you need immediate help or have a real emergency, call 999 or contact your local police.

The ClickCEOP button is also available on various websites including Facebook and Habbo Hotel.

For more information, go to:
www.ceop.police.uk

IWF
www.iwf.org.uk

If anyone in your family comes across child sexual abuse content (often referred to as child pornography) or criminally obscene adult content on the internet, report it to the UK Hotline run by the Internet Watch Foundation. Reports are confidential and can be made anonymously.

Go to the IWF website at **www.iwf.org.uk**, click 'Report criminal content here' (see screen shot below), and follow the steps outlined.

Your report to the Hotline may help to trace and rescue a young victim from further abuse.

For more information, go to:
www.iwf.org.uk

Stardoll
www.stardoll.com

Stardoll staff moderate the website and have several filters in place to avoid things like name-calling and the use of bad language.

The robust team of highly trained Stardoll moderators and customer service staff can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week via an easily accessible Report button (see screen shot below).
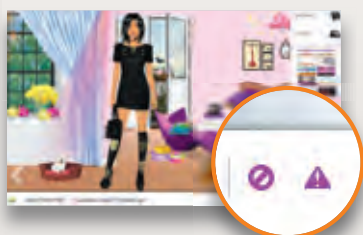
The report button is featured prominently across all social features on Stardoll. The customer service staff also moderates Chats and Parties to ensure there are no offensive words or activities being carried out.

Stardoll also has a comprehensive help section for parents and guardians wishing to learn about online safety as well as a KidSafe feature which presents parents with a child under the age of 13 full control of their account.

For more information, go to:
www.stardoll.com/en/help/parents

Twitter
www.twitter.com

You can report potential violations of the Twitter Rules and Terms of Service, such as breaches of privacy (e.g. someone posting a personal phone number), harassment, pornography, copyright infringement and child abuse images to the Twitter Trust & Safety team.

Click on 'Help' at the bottom of the Twitter homepage at **www.twitter.com**, then go to 'Report Abuse or Policy Violations' and choose which policy page is the most appropriate for your issue. You'll then be given more information and the option to submit a support ticket request (see screen shot below).

When you file a report, you'll need to provide the Twitter Username to which your report refers (i.e. your child's Twitter Username), a detailed description of the issue you are reporting and direct links to any Tweets you would like reviewed.

For more information, go to:
http://support.twitter.com

Habbo Hotel
www.habbo.com

You or your child can report incidents, such as someone bullying them during the game, someone trying to get them to reveal their password or other confidential information or if they have witnessed sexually explicit behaviour or chat, to a Habbo Hotel moderator.

Trained safety moderators are available whenever Habbo Hotel is open and will investigate any reports made to them and take appropriate action.

To get help from a Moderator, click on 'Help' at the top right of your screen in Habbo (see screen shot below).

Moderators have the ability to monitor player chat and they report questionable behaviour to the police whenever necessary.

Habbo Hotel also contains the ClickCEOP button, so that young people can contact the police about serious matters, such as online grooming.

For more information, go to:
www.habbo.com/groups/ReportingAbuse

ParentPort
www.parentport.org.uk

A new website called ParentPort, which is run by the UK's media regulators, such as the Advertising Standards Authority and Ofcom, sets and enforces standards across the media to protect children from inappropriate material.

Have you seen or heard something unsuitable for children on TV, online, in a film, an advert, a video game or a magazine?

Go to the ParentPort website and click on 'Make a complaint'. You'll be taken through to the 'Make a complaint' page where you'll be asked what your concern is (see screen shot below).

Once you have answered a few simple questions, ParentPort will take you straight to the right part of the website for the regulator that will handle your complaint. For example, if you wish to complain about a game on a mobile phone, you'll be directed to the Video Standards Council website.

For more information, go to:
www.parentport.org.uk

The Parent Zone
www.theparentzone.co.uk

The Parent Zone runs a help service to assist with parenting dilemmas and queries, including those about technology. If you are not sure what to do or where to go for information or support, contact them.

You can email them at:
help@theparentzone.co.uk

How to...
report online child sexual abuse content to the IWF

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) provides the UK Hotline for the public and IT professionals to report potentially criminal online content in a secure and confidential way. You can anonymously report:

→ Child sexual abuse images and videos hosted anywhere in the world

→ Criminally obscene adult content hosted in the UK. This is adult pornography of an extreme and criminal nature, such as rape or torture

→ Non-photographic child sexual abuse images hosted in the UK, such as computer-generated or hand drawn images of children being sexually abused

The IWF works closely with the online industry to ensure that child sexual abuse images and videos are removed from the internet quickly and that access to these websites is prevented while the take-down is in progress.

At the same time, the IWF keeps close relationships with law enforcement agencies to ensure that the necessary evidence is preserved so that law enforcement can investigate the people who produce and distribute the content.

To report criminal content, go to **www.iwf.org.uk** and click on the 'report criminal content here' button. This will take you through the reporting process which only takes a couple of minutes.

Step 1

Indicate the type of content

The IWF specifically deals with child sexual abuse content hosted anywhere in the world and criminally obscene adult content and non-photographic child sexual abuse images hosted in the UK. You are asked to indicate which of these three types of content you think you are reporting.

Step 2

Indicate where you found the content

Simply tick the box indicating where you found the content (websites, newsgroups, emails with links…)

Step 3

Provide the URL

Provide the link or URL of the website where you have encountered the content. You can also leave additional comments should you wish.

Step 4

Choose reporting method

You can choose whether to report anonymously or to leave your contact details. If you request feedback, the IWF will keep you informed about the progress of the assessment and the possible removal of the content.

Step 5

Report confirmation

You will receive a message indicating your report has been submitted to the IWF.

In 2011, the IWF processed a total of 41,877 reports and was able to take action on 12,966 URLs as they were considered to contain potentially criminal child sexual abuse content.

www.iwf.org.uk

Reg Bailey is the Chief Executive of Mothers' Union, an international charity with over four million members in 83 countries. He led the Independent Review into the Commercialisation and Sexualisation of Childhood.

Mothers'UNION
Christian care for families

www.themothersunion.org

"It's about core parenting skills – online and offline"

Reg Bailey, Chief Executive of Mothers' Union, explains why parents shouldn't shy away from conversations about technology.

"I couldn't possibly talk to the kids about that. They know far more than I do." I hear those few sentences almost more than any other when I speak to parents about their children and teenagers in Mothers' Union parenting groups. It used to be said in the context of sex education 30 years ago; today it is much more likely to be about the digital world.

Many of us can relate to the scene in the BBC comedy programme 'Outnumbered' where mum is screaming with frustration at the laptop and eventually hands it over to her young son and suggests he installs the Parental Controls as she simply cannot do it.

The sad thing is that the refusal to talk to children about sex and relationships was certainly nothing to do with young people knowing more than their parents. Now, our nervousness about talking about the digital world betrays a similar lack of confidence when it comes to engaging with our children about areas of life that may be complicated and, perhaps, embarrassing.

Communication is key

Most parents talk to their children about road safety – certainly, we see it as a prime responsibility before we allow our children to go out into the physical world on their own. Yet technology offers a huge opportunity for young people to travel far and wide in the virtual world and sometimes we do not take the same common sense precautions, perhaps because we feel uncomfortable with where the conversation may lead.

In 2011, I carried out a review into the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood at the request of the Prime Minister. I was asked to look into this issue because so many parents are concerned that their children are coming under pressure to become consumers and that the world they live in is increasingly sexualised.

The internet plays a major part in this and, in my report, called 'Letting Children be Children', I argued – with a lot of support from parents and young people – that Parental Controls should be made easier to set up and that any Web-enabled device or service should require the user to answer the question 'Would you like to set up filters to screen out inappropriate material?' at the point of purchase.

> **"It's important that parents and carers are nudged into having a conversation with their children about online safety and privacy."**

I always knew that some people would be able to circumvent those filters if they wanted and I did not want parents to have a false sense of security. What seemed to me to be most important was that parents and carers be nudged into having a conversation with their children about personal safety, about privacy, and about some of the less attractive material available on the internet, such as violence, hardcore pornography and self-harming websites. That conversation goes a long way in helping make our young people more aware and more resilient.

I am also keen to see age ratings applied to currently exempted videos, particularly music videos, which received strong criticism in our Call for Evidence.

A year on from my Review, progress has been slow, but the Department for Culture, Media and Sport has launched a public consultation on Exemptions to the Video Recordings Act to ask what changes should be made in order to address this issue.

ParentPort

Following my recommendation that there should be one single website where parents can complain about any TV programme, advert, website, product or service if they feel it is not appropriate for children, ParentPort (**www.parentport.org.uk**) was launched in late 2011. Run by the UK's media regulators, including the Advertising Standards Authority and Ofcom, ParentPort aims to help protect children from unsuitable material on TV, in films, on the internet and in other media.

Since its launch, ParentPort has done much to address the issue of making parents' concerns heard but I am disappointed that research published by the Chartered Institute of Marketing in June 2012 showed that 85% of parents remained unaware of ParentPort. More needs to be done to raise the awareness of this important tool for parents.

PARENT PORT WORKING TOGETHER FOR MEDIA STANDARDS

What children need

As digital technology plays an increasingly important role in our lives, core parenting skills are still important. Giving a child a sense of belonging, teaching them about interdependence as well as independence, and having the confidence to offer a sense of meaning to their lives remain crucial.

Over the years, I have seen those parents who get this and who have the joy of seeing their children develop a sense of emotional resilience and wellbeing to deal, not just with the virtual world, but also the real world in which we still spend most of our time.

For more information about the 'Letting Children Be Children' report, go to: www.education.gov.uk

In a letter to Reg Bailey following the publication of his report, Prime Minister David Cameron said:

"In dealing with this problem, I very much agree with the central approach you set out.

As you say, we should not try and wrap children up in cotton wool or simply throw our hands up and accept the world as it is.

Instead, we should look to put 'the brakes on an unthinking drift towards ever greater commercialisation and sexualisation.'"

Source: www.number10.gov.uk

Above: David Cameron with Children's Minister Sarah Teather and Mothers' Union Chief Executive Reg Bailey at 10 Downing Street in London. 6 June 2011; PA copyright.

Sexting: Fact or fiction?

Some teenagers are known to be sharing provocative or naked images but it's proving difficult to determine how widespread so-called sexting is. Digital Parenting looks at the latest research and advice.

Pop stars, footballers, actors… barely a day goes by without some scandal hitting the headlines about a celebrity sending a sexually-explicit photo or video that has got into the wrong hands. Is it any surprise that, surrounded by this 'wallpaper' of sexualisation, children and teenagers are also tempted to do the same?

Indeed, a study by the University of Melbourne reveals that young people believe a media culture that bombards them with sexualised images creates pressure to engage in what is commonly known as sexting. The umbrella term 'sexting' is used to describe a range of behaviours whereby young people use technology to explore sex and relationships – from sending flirtatious picture texts to exchanging hardcore sexual videos. Young people might not realise that they could be breaking the law by sending, receiving or forwarding on sexual photos and videos of under-18s.

What is proving difficult, however, is understanding the scale of the issue. The results of a number of studies into sexting among young people are so varied that it is difficult to determine the true prevalence of the problem.

→ **A 2008 survey in the US by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and CosmoGirl.com found that 37% of teenage girls and 40% of teenage boys were sending or posting sexually suggestive messages**

→ **A study by the University of New Hampshire Crimes against Children Research Center in late 2011 revealed that only 2.5% of 10 to 17-year-olds had participated in sexting in the last year**

→ **Beatbullying's 2009 research in the UK indicated that over a third (38%) of under-18s have received an offensive or distressing sexual image via text or email**

→ **The Pew Internet & American Life Project (December 2009) found that 4% of mobile phone owners aged 12 to 17 in the US have sent sexually suggestive images of themselves by phone and 15% have received 'sexts' containing images of someone they know**

→ **In a report for UK charity the NSPCC (May 2012), researchers at the Institute of Education, King's College London, London School of Economics and Open University stated that statistics for young people involved in sexting range between 15% and 40%, depending on their age and the way sexting is measured**

As many researchers acknowledge, it's normal for adolescent boys and girls to explore sex and relationships. And, with the explosion in digital devices giving them 24/7 access to the internet and their friends, it's no surprise that young people are using communication technologies like laptops, smartphones and webcams as part of their exploration.

"The desire for risk-taking and sexual exploration during the teenage years combined with a constant connection via mobile devices creates a 'perfect storm' for sexting," comments Amanda Lenhart of Pew Internet. "Teenagers have always grappled with issues around sex and relationships, but their coming-of-age mistakes and transgressions have never been so easily transmitted and archived for others to see."

It's certainly a complex area – especially as many young people are grappling with issues like fitting in, feeling attractive and being popular – and it's difficult to determine the various causes and effects of sexting. Often, teenage boys and girls are pressured by others into taking and passing on provocative or naked images of themselves – it might involve taking a photo of an intimate part of their body with someone's name written on it in marker pen to show it's the 'property' of that person or sharing videos of 'daggering' (an explicit dance), for example.

In early 2012, a small scale study for the NSPCC (the researchers spoke to 35, 13 to 15-year-olds at two London schools) revealed that girls, in particular, face increasing pressure to provide sexually explicit pictures of themselves.

As Jessica Ringrose from the Institute of Education, who led the NSPCC research, explains: "Girls are being pressured by text and on BlackBerry Messenger to send 'special photos' and perform sexual services for boys from an early age. In some cases they are as young as 11… Some of them found ingenious ways to fend off the demands but still the pressures are immense and the younger girls in particular wanted help."

Key findings from NSPCC study

1 Threat comes mostly from peers

2 Sexting is often coercive

3 Girls are the most adversely affected

4 Technology amplifies the problem

5 Sexting reveals wider sexual pressures

6 Ever younger children are affected

7 Sexting practices are culturally specific

Source: A Qualitative Study of Children, Young People and Sexting for the NSPCC, May 2012

"What's most striking about this research is that many young people seem to accept all this as just part of life. But it can be another layer of sexual abuse and, although most children will not be aware, it is illegal," comments Jon Brown, Head of the Sexual Abuse Programme at the NSPCC.

The 'wallpaper' of sexualisation that surrounds children and teenagers is clearly having an impact. But, with such mixed findings in academic research and other studies, it remains difficult to determine the prevalence of sexting among adolescents.

What is known is that young people in the UK could be breaking the law if they have in their possession, or distribute, indecent images of a person under the age of 18 on to someone else. So parents would be wise to keep their eyes, ears and the lines of communication well and truly open.

Q&A

Q What is sexting?

A Sexting (a combination of the terms sex and texting) is the act of creating, posting or receiving sexual photos or videos via mobiles or the internet. These images could involve young people removing their clothes, masturbating and performing sexual acts.

> **"Boys usually ask for them… and I felt like if I didn't do it, they wouldn't continue to talk to me."**
> (High school student interviewed by Pew Internet)

Often, teenagers consent to exchanging these images – they might choose to share them with a current boyfriend or girlfriend, with someone they know and would like to date, or even with someone they have only met online. They might even simply exchange 'rude' photos or videos with friends for a laugh. In some cases, however, the sender is pressured into taking and sharing the image.

> **Mum's the word**
> In a 2011 survey by the UK charity Family Lives, 67% of parents felt they were best placed to talk to their children about sexting. Only 57% of dads were prepared to discuss the issue compared to 75% of mums, however.
> Source: Family Lives Parents' Week survey, October 2011

> **Watch CEOP's short film, called 'Exposed', to see how a 15-year-old girl deals with the consequences of an inappropriate photo she has sent**
> **www.youtube.com/ceop**

☞ Turn to page 76 for a series of articles about the sexualisation of young people.
For more information and advice about sexting, go to:
www.vodafone.com/parents/sexting

Q Why do young people sext?

A Exploring relationships and sex is a normal part of adolescence – the digital world simply offers teenagers another way to investigate this part of growing up.

With young people now so used to documenting their lives online, they might not always think before they post. They happily post photos, videos and status messages and exchange texts about the minutiae of their days and, if they are involved in a relationship (or would like to be), they don't treat that any differently.

They might exchange sexual messages and images as a way of flirting, proving commitment, showing off, or even just as a joke. And they might not even consider what they send to be 'sexting'.

"Sexually-suggestive images have become a form of relationship currency…" explains Amanda Lenhart, the author of a report by Pew Internet on 'Teens and Sexting'. "These images are shared as a part of or instead of sexual activity, or as a way of starting or maintaining a relationship with a significant other. And they're also passed along to friends for their entertainment value, as a joke or for fun."

Sometimes, it might not even be about relationships or sex. Kids and teens might simply think it's funny to send a friend a picture of an intimate body part.

family lives

Q What are the consequences?

A Often, young people sext for fun or as a romantic gesture and don't consider the potential ramifications – both for the sender and the recipient. In the digital world, images can be copied, manipulated, posted online or sent to others in a matter of seconds and the creator can soon lose control of their extremely personal photo or video.

There are a number of consequences when a sext is shared. In her report about sexting for the Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI), Nancy V. Gifford relates the impact of sexting to the three forms of online safety identified by Anne Collier of Netfamilynews.org

1 Physical impact
Bullying might occur if sexual images are shared with other people, often without the subject's permission. In some cases, bullying might lead to tragic consequences, such as self-harm or suicide.

2 Psychological impact
Young people might feel that trust has been broken (i.e. if a boyfriend or girlfriend forwards on a private image) and they could also become the target of bullies.

3 Reputational and legal impact
Once an image has been shared, it cannot be retrieved and the subject might not know who it has been passed on to. Schools might take disciplinary action, for example, and study and employment opportunities could be affected. Crucially, the sender and recipient could be breaking the law.

Furthermore, the police are concerned that sex offenders who search for sexual images of young people on the Web might make contact, pass the image on to others or blackmail the person in the image into committing indecent acts.

Sexting and the law
By having in their possession, or distributing, indecent images of a person under the age of 18 on to someone else, young people in the UK could be breaking the law.

Take action

1 TALK about sexting as part of wider discussions about relationships, sex, growing up and respecting others. Don't panic and don't worry if you find it embarrassing – the important thing is to open up the dialogue and begin guiding your child

2 BEAR IN MIND that young people don't necessarily label things in the same way adults might – your son or daughter might not consider something to be 'sexting' even if you do, so choose your language carefully when speaking to them

3 DISCUSS with your child what could happen if they share a sexual image of themselves (like it being seen by someone they don't want to see it, spread around school or even broadcast on Facebook or BlackBerry Messenger). Once they share an image on the internet or on a text, it can end up anywhere and they won't be able to get it back

4 REASSURE them that you understand there's a lot of pressure to send revealing photos or videos and work together to come up with ways to try and resist the pressure

5 EXPLAIN that it's illegal to take, hold or share indecent images of under-18s in the UK

6 ENCOURAGE them not to pass other people's sexts on, as it could be part of a bullying campaign and they could be breaking the law

7 CHECK whether sharing sexual messages and images online and on mobiles is covered as part of your child's sex education classes at school and how their teachers would handle sexting incidents

Useful websites
www.ceop.police.uk
www.commonsensemedia.org
www.familylives.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.thatsnotcool.com
www.netfamilynews.org
www.pewinternet.org

Jon Henley of The Guardian investigates
Teenagers and technology

Text, text, text, that's all they think about: but are all those hours on the phone and Facebook turning teenagers into screen-enslaved social inadequates?

By Jon Henley of The Guardian*

"I'd rather," deadpans Philippa Grogan, 16, "give up, like, a kidney than my phone. How did you manage before? Carrier pigeons? Letters? Going round each others' houses on BIKES?" Cameron Kirk, 14, reckons he spends "an hour, hour-and-a-half on school days" hanging out with his 450-odd Facebook friends; maybe twice that at weekends. "It's actually very practical if you forget what that day's homework is. Unfortunately, one of my best friends doesn't have Facebook. But it's OK; we talk on our PlayStations."

Emily Hooley, 16, recalls a Very Dark Moment: "We went to Wales for a week at half term to revise. There was no mobile, no TV, no broadband. We had to drive into town just to

get a signal. It was really hard, knowing people were texting you, writing on your Wall, and you couldn't respond. Loads of my friends said they'd just never do that."

Teens, eh? Not how they were when I was young. Nor the way they talk to each other. Let's frighten ourselves, first: for a decade, the Pew Internet & American Life Project has been the world's largest and most authoritative provider of data on the internet's impact on the lives of 21st-century citizens. Since 2007, it has been chronicling the use teenagers make of the net, in particular their mass adoption of social networking sites. It has been studying the way teens use mobile phones, including text messages, since 2006.

"Mobile phones and social networking sites make the things teens have always done... a whole lot easier."

This is what the Project says about the way US teens (and, by extension, teenagers in much of western Europe: the exact figures may sometimes differ by a percentage point or two, but the patterns are the same) communicate in an age of Facebook Chat, instant messaging and unlimited texts. Ready?

First, 75% of all teenagers (and 58% of 12-year-olds) now have a mobile phone. Almost 90% of phone-owning teens send and receive texts, most of them daily. Half send 50

or more texts a day; one in three send 100. In fact, in barely four years, texting has established itself as comfortably "the preferred channel of basic communication between teens and their friends".

But phones do more than simply text, of course. More than 80% of phone-owning teens also use them to take pictures (and 64% to share those pictures with others). Sixty per cent listen to music on them, 46% play games, 32% swap videos and 23% access social networking sites. The mobile phone, in short, is now "the favoured communication hub for the majority of teens".

As if texting, swapping, hanging and generally spending their waking hours welded to their phones wasn't enough, 73% use social

75%
of all teenagers (and 58% of 12-year-olds) now have a mobile phone.

networking sites, mostly Facebook – 50% more than three years ago. Digital communication is not just prevalent in teenagers' lives. It IS teenagers' lives.

There's a very straightforward reason, says Amanda Lenhart, a Pew senior research specialist. "Simply, these technologies meet teens' developmental needs," she says. "Mobile phones and social networking sites

make the things teens have always done – defining their own identity, establishing themselves as independent of their parents, looking cool, impressing members of the opposite sex – a whole lot easier."

Flirting, boasting, gossiping, teasing, hanging out, confessing: all that classic teen stuff has always happened, Lenhart says. It's just that it used to happen behind the bike sheds, or via tightly folded notes pressed urgently into sweating hands in the corridor between lessons. Social networking sites and mobile phones have simply facilitated the whole business, a gadzillion times over.

For Professor Patti Valkenburg, of the University of Amsterdam's internationally respected Centre for Research on Children,

Adolescents and the Media, "contemporary communications tools" help resolve one of the fundamental conflicts that rages within every adolescent. Adolescence, she says, is characterised by "an enhanced need for self-presentation, or communicating your identity to others, and also self-disclosure – discussing intimate topics. Both are essential in developing teenagers' identities, allowing them to validate their opinions and determine the appropriateness of their attitudes and behaviours."

But, as we all recall, adolescence is also a period of excruciating shyness and aching self-consciousness – which can make all that self-presentation and self-disclosure something of a perilous, not to say agonising, business. So the big plus of texting, instant messaging and social networking is that it allows the crucial identity-establishing behaviour, without the accompanying embarrassment. "These technologies give their users a sense of increased controllability," Valkenburg says. "That, in turn, allows them to feel secure about their communication, and thus freer in their interpersonal relations."

"There's an awful lot of flirting goes on, of course. Or it's, 'OMG, what's biology homework?'"

"Controllability", she explains, is about three things: being able to say what you want without fear of the message not getting through because of that humungous spot on your chin or your tendency to blush; having the power to reflect on and change what you write before you send it (in contrast to face-to-face communication); and being able to stay in touch with untold hordes of friends at times, and in places, where your predecessors were essentially incommunicado.

But what do teenagers make of this newfound freedom to communicate? Philippa reckons she sends "probably about 30" text messages every day, and receives as many. "They're about meeting up – where are you, see you in ten, that kind of thing," she says. "There's an awful lot of flirting goes on, of course. Or it's, 'OMG, what's biology homework?'. And, 'I'm babysitting and I'm SOOOO bored.'" (Boredom appears to be the key factor in the initiation of many teen communications.)

Like most of her peers, Philippa wouldn't dream of using her phone to actually phone anyone, except perhaps her parents – to placate them if she's not where she should be, or ask them to come and pick her up if she is. Calls are expensive, and you can't make them in class (you shouldn't text in class either, but "lots of people do").

Philippa also has 639 Facebook friends, and claims to know "the vast majority" (though some, she admits, are "quite far down the food chain"). "I don't want to be big-headed or anything, but I am quite popular," she says. "Only because I don't have a social life outside my bedroom, though." When I call her, 129 of her friends are online.

Facebook rush-hour is straight after school, and around nine or ten in the evening. "You can have about ten chats open at a time, then it gets a bit slow and you have to start deleting

people," Philippa says. The topics? "General banter, light-hearted abuse. Lots of talk about parties and about photos of parties." Cred-wise, it's important to have a good, active Facebook profile: lots of updates, lots of photos of you tagged.

Sometimes, though, it ends in tears. Everyone has witnessed cyber-bullying, but the worst thing that happened to Philippa was when someone posted "a really dreadful picture of me, with an awful double chin", then refused to take it down. "She kept saying, 'No way, it's upped my profile views 400%,'" says Philippa. It's quite easy, she thinks, for people to feel "belittled, isolated" on Facebook.

45%

A 2009 survey found up to 45% of US companies are now checking job applicants' activity on social networking sites.

There are other downsides. Following huge recent publicity, teens are increasingly aware of the dangers of online predators. "Privacy's a real issue," says Emily. "I get 'friend' requests from people I don't know and have never heard of; I ignore them. I have a private profile. I'm very careful about that."

A 2009 survey found up to 45% of US companies are now checking job applicants' activity on social networking sites, and 35% reported rejecting people because of what they found. Universities and colleges, similarly, are starting to look online. "You need to be careful," says Cameron Kirk, astute and aware even at 14. "Stuff can very easily get misunderstood." Emily agrees, but adds: "Personally, I love the idea that it's up there for ever. It'll be lovely to go back, later, and see all those emotions and relations."

Pew's Lenhart says research (by Danah Boyd of Microsoft Research) has revealed a class distinction in many teens' attitudes to online privacy. "Teens from college-focused, upper-middle-class familes tend to be much more aware of their online profiles, what they say about them, future consequences for jobs and education," she says. "With others, there's a tendency to share as much as they can, because that's their chance for fame, their possibility of a ticket out."

"It's terribly easy to say really horrible things. I'm permanently worrying – will this seem heartless, how many kisses should I add, can I say that?"

The question that concerns most parents, though, is whether such an unprecedented, near-immeasurable surge in non face-to-face communication is somehow changing our teenagers – diminishing their ability to conduct more traditional relationships, turning them into screen-enslaved, socially challenged adults. Yet teens, on the whole, seem pretty sensible about this. Callum O'Connor, 16, says there's a big difference between chatting online and face-to-face. "Face-to-face is so much clearer,"

he says. "Facebook and instant messaging are such detached forms of communication. It's so easy to be misinterpreted, or to misinterpret what someone says. It's terribly easy to say really horrible things. I'm permanently worrying – will this seem heartless, how many kisses should I add, can I say that?"

He's certain that what goes on online "isn't completely real. Some people clearly think it is, but I feel the difference. It's really not the same." Emily agrees: "It's weird. If I have a massive fight on Facebook, it's always, like, the next day, did it actually matter? Was it important? I always go up to the person afterwards and talk to them face-to-face, to see their emotions and their expressions. Otherwise you never know. It's complicated."

Emily is fairly confident that social networking and texting aren't changing who she is. "I'm the same online and in person. All this is an extension to real life, not a replacement." Olivia Stamp, 16 and equally self-aware, says she thinks social networking actually helps her to be more herself. "I think of myself as quite a shy person," she says. "So it's actually easier to be myself on Facebook because you can edit what you want to say, take your time; you don't feel awkward. I definitely feel more confident online – more like the self I know I really am, beneath the shyness."

These new communications technologies, Olivia says, are "an enhancement, an enrichment actually. They bring people even closer, in fact, without replacing anything. We're not socially abnormal. Look at us!" And the experts seem to back that up. Valkenburg says: "Our research gives no reason at present for concern about the social consequences of online communication – but it's early days. What if the constant self-confirmation teens experience online turns into excessive self-esteem, or narcissism? We don't know yet."

Lenhart puts it another way. "Our research shows face-to-face time between teenagers hasn't changed over the past five years. Technology has simply added another layer on top. Yes, you can find studies that suggest online networking can be bad for you. But there are just as many that show the opposite."

We should, she suggests, "Step back. The telephone, the car, the television – they all, in their time, changed the way teens relate to each other, and to other people, quite radically. And how did their parents respond? With the same kind of wailing and gnashing of teeth we're doing now. These technologies change lives, absolutely. But it's a generational thing."

Tagged:

The explosion in digital photos

Click, tag, share. With smartphones, photo-sharing websites, photography apps and social networking services, it's never been so easy to take and share photos with your family and friends... but it's still crucial to think before you post.

Remember the days when your photos were consigned to dusty albums that no-one ever looked at? Not any more. Digital technologies have given photography a new lease of life, encouraging us to share our favourite moments with other people at the click of a button.

For teenagers in particular, sharing photos online and via their mobile has become an important social activity. Armed with only their phone, they can take a picture of their friends (perhaps using Instagram or Facebook's Camera app), upload it to their Facebook or Twitter profile, or pass it on by text, in a matter of seconds.

As one teenage boy explains, "My group of friends usually put all our photos up (on the internet). Most of us have a camera, especially on our phones. We take loads of photos at parties, that sort of thing.

Posting a lot of personal information and pictures online might seem like a good idea at the time, but some young people don't consider the potential ramifications of having such a broad digital footprint.

Could their photos be found via a search engine and be seen by anyone? Might a friend be offended if they post a photo of them without asking their permission? What if someone they know posts an embarrassing photo of them? Could a stranger discover their whereabouts if they tag their location in an online photo or include identifying information, such as their school uniform? Is it really wise to text a sexually-suggestive photo to their boyfriend or girlfriend?

For parents too, it's vital to consider your own digital footprint. If you regularly publish photos of your children on the Web and tag the location, could you be putting your family at risk?

Tagging

Photo-sharing websites like Flickr and Picasa started the trend for tagging pictures (i.e. assigning them with a person's name or location) but it is Facebook that has taken tagging to a whole new level. By the end of 2010, Facebook users were adding more than 100 million tags to photos every day.

As Facebook engineer Justin Mitchell explains on the company's blog, "They do it because it's an easy way to share photos and memories. Unlike photos that get forgotten in a camera or an unshared album, tagged photos help you and your friends relive everything from that life-altering skydiving trip to a birthday dinner where the laughter never stopped. Tags make photos one of the most popular features on Facebook."

As the author of Common Sense Media's 'Social Media, Social Life' study points out, however, digital photos can be both fun and nerve-wracking at the same time.

Tagging is second nature to many young people but, as any adult who has watched in horror as unflattering photos have appeared on Facebook would admit, it sometimes feels like the control is being taken out of the subject's hands.

Your son or daughter might feel uncomfortable if 100s of photos of the party they went to at the weekend or a snap of them being silly at school appeared online with their name tagged. At the same time, they might feel left out if they see photos of their friends together and they weren't invited or they might worry about their popularity if they don't get any 'Likes' or comments about photos they post online.

With tagging now an automated process on some websites – facial recognition software means your son or daughter might be tagged in friends' photos every time they appear in one – it's even more important that your child sets some tagging boundaries.

What is facial recognition software?

It's a computer application that automatically identifies a person from a digital image – e.g. by comparing facial features with those in images already stored on a database.

Fortunately, there are ways to stay in control of the photos we're tagged in online by using built-in privacy controls. For example, Facebook offers a 'tag review' feature so that users can approve or reject photos that they have been tagged in before they go on their profile or timeline. Users also have various options for taking action once they have been tagged in a picture.

How to control being tagged in photos on Facebook

If your son or daughter doesn't like a tag that someone adds to a photo of them on Facebook, they can:

→ **Remove the photo from their profile**

→ **Remove the tag – the post will still be on Facebook but it will no longer link to their profile or timeline**

→ **Send the owner of the photo a message asking them to remove it**

→ **Report the photo to Facebook – if it contravenes Facebook's terms of service, it will be removed**

→ **Block the owner of the photo – all tags from this person will be removed and your child will no longer be able to see or interact with them on Facebook**

☞ **You can find more information about photo tagging on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/about/tagging and in our 'How to set up Facebook privacy controls' article on page 106.**

Common Sense Media 'Social Media, Social Life' study (USA)
June 2012

Among the 75% of 13 to 17-year-olds who currently have a profile on a social networking website, the table below shows the percentage who agree strongly or somewhat that they:

Love posting photos of themselves online	Sometimes feel left out after seeing photos of others	Worry about people posting ugly photos of them	Get stressed about how they look when posting photos
59%	43%	35%	27%
75%[a]	57%[a]	45%[a]	35%[a]
42%[b]	28%[b]	24%[b]	19%[b]

Feel bad if they don't get a lot of 'likes' for photos	Have edited photos of themselves before posting[+]	Feel pressured to post photos of themselves online	
22%	17%	12%	All
29%[a]	28%[a]	10%[a]	Girls
15%[b]	9%[b]	14%[b]	Boys

[+]Among social network users, percent saying 'yes'.
Note: Items with different superscripts differ significantly at the level of p<.05.

Source: 'Social Media, Social Life: How Teens View Their Digital Lives' study by Common Sense Media, June 2012 – www.commonsensemedia.org

common sense media

Location services

The proliferation of GPS and Wi-Fi services on mobile devices, such as smartphones like the iPhone and BlackBerry and tablets like the iPad and Samsung Galaxy Tab, have made it easy to assign a location to a photo before sharing it with online networks.

"People are increasingly comfortable with sharing more and more information in their digital spaces. For many, it's a no-brainer to include a location tag on a picture so that their contacts know where they are," says Annie Mullins OBE of Vodafone. "But they might not have considered exactly who will be able to see their location and whether it might put them – or the people they're with – at risk in any way."

Teenagers are already huge fans of these kind of location (geo-tagging) services. As a study by the internet security firm McAfee reveals, around three-quarters of 13 to 17-year-olds have included their physical location in their social networking status. Innovative new apps, such as Color (which lets your friends see exactly what you see live through your phone), are also capturing young people's imagination.

Mullins adds: "Broadcasting where you are to all your friends online could be risky, especially for young people. They're putting their trust in their online social networks, which might be made up of 100s or even 1,000s of people – some of whom they might not even know in real life."

If a young person posts photos regularly from the same location, it might not take long for someone to work out where they live or go to school, for example.

Facebook has taken steps to help protect young people when it comes to location tagging. If a young person chooses to add their location to posts, only their friends will see it. Furthermore, the location sharing option for teens is defaulted to 'off' – they have to turn it on by clicking the location icon button.

As with any part of their digital lives, parents are encouraged to talk to their children about the potential risks of location services and to also bear them in mind if they decide to geo-tag a photo of their child themselves.

Sexting

Whilst most digital photos exchanged by children and teenagers are perfectly harmless, research shows that some young people are sending and receiving nude and sexually-suggestive photos and videos, known as 'sexting'.

"Sexually-suggestive images have become a form of relationship currency," explains Amanda Lenhart, author of a major report on sexting by US research firm Pew Internet. "These images are shared as a part of or instead of sexual activity, or as a way of starting or maintaining a relationship with a significant other. And they're also passed along to friends for their entertainment value, as a joke or for fun."

What starts off as a private exchange between two people can escalate out of control and the consequences can be extremely serious. Anyone from a complete stranger to a potential employer might see the image and the police are also concerned that sex offenders who search the internet for sexual images of young people might make contact.

Furthermore, the sender and recipient could be breaking the law by taking, holding or sharing indecent images of a minor.

It's crucial that parents talk to their children about sexting now, as part of a wider discussion about sex and relationships – even if your son or daughter isn't participating in it themselves, they might know other young people who are.

Managing online reputation

As photos become an increasingly large part of your child's digital footprint, they can't be ignored.

"I would encourage young people to really think about what they post today and understand that it can last a long time," comments Lord Richard Allan of Facebook. "Even if they decide they want to take something down, others could have copied it or saved it."

Marsali Hancock of the Internet Keep Safe Coalition adds: "Everything a young person does online contributes to their digital reputation."

This point about digital reputation is crucial. Photos that are posted now could be there forever and for anyone to see. Would your child – and you – be comfortable with that?

In addition to using the privacy tools offered by many online and mobile services, the 'think before you post' mantra still stands. With their parents' guidance, young people will hopefully bear this in mind the next time they click, tag and share. ◪
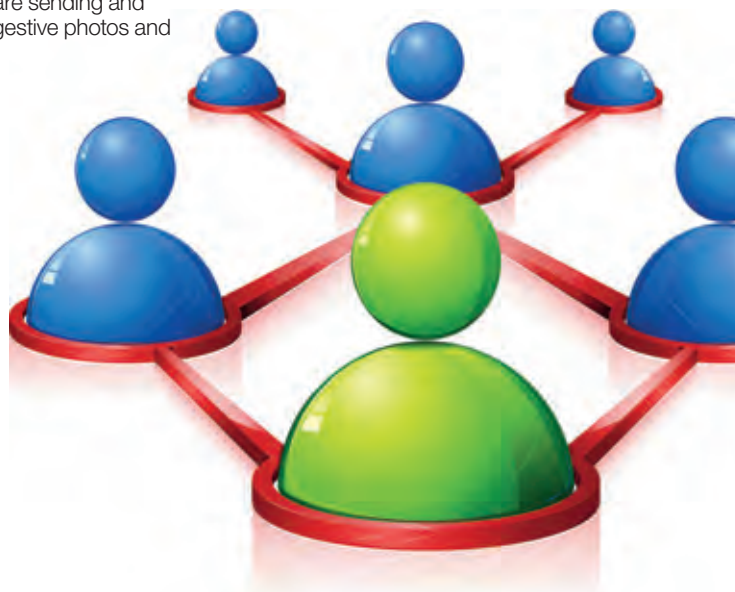
Take action

1 TALK to your child about how they can protect their privacy online and show them how to make the most of built-in privacy controls on services like Facebook

2 REMIND them that anything they post online can be seen, copied, changed and forwarded on to other people and could be available forever

3 DISCUSS responsible online behaviour – if your child wouldn't want embarrassing photos of themselves posted online, they shouldn't post embarrassing photos of other people

4 ENCOURAGE them to ask for their friends' permission before tagging them in photos

5 EXPLAIN how facial recognition software could mean they are automatically tagged in friends' photos

6 SHOW them how to review and report tags on Facebook

7 ADVISE your son or daughter to turn off the location feature on their mobile, especially if they upload photos from it – and do the same yourself

8 ENCOURAGE them to not include any identifying information in their photos, such as their address or school name

9 DISCUSS sexting as part of a wider chat about sex and relationships – it might be embarrassing for both you and your kids but it's crucial that you address this

Useful websites

www.commonsensemedia.org

www.cybersmart.gov.au/

www.facebook.com/safety

www.instagram.com

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

It's all about the
drama

When does gossip and being mean online tip over into bullying?

Name calling, spreading rumours, arguing…
the digital world has given teenagers a new stage
for their social dramas. But what if a throwaway comment
is misconstrued or a joke gets out of hand?
And at what point could teasing, gossiping and being
mean be considered something more serious,
like bullying? Digital Parenting looks at some
of the latest research and offers pointers for parents.

"**W**hy does she look so worried?" you ask yourself, as you catch your teenage daughter's eye across the living room. She's been glued to her mobile for the last hour with only an occasional glance up at the TV and something seems to be bothering her.

The truth could be quite complex. With places like Facebook and BlackBerry Messenger ('BBM') now such important social hubs for young people, they are often

navigating them without the kind of parental guidance they would get in other areas of their life. Just like in the real world, they come across a broad spectrum of personalities and behaviour online and they are developing their own coping mechanisms, often in line with what is considered to be 'the norm' within their own community.

Against this backdrop, research reveals that many children and teenagers are not even using the same language as adults would to describe negative online behaviour – referring to it as 'drama' rather than 'bullying'.

"Discovering new interests, building friendships and testing boundaries is all part of growing up," comments Annie Mullins OBE of Vodafone. "A lot of this is now done through social networks and smartphones and young people are developing increasingly sophisticated ways of creating and managing their digital persona. For some children and teenagers, the internet and other technologies give them a sense of freedom and perceived anonymity so they might behave very differently online to how

they do in real life – that can be difficult for parents to understand."

While much of what young people see and experience in the digital world is positive (teens comment that social networking sites help them to strengthen friendships and feel good about themselves, for example), it is not without its challenges. Just like in the real world, your child might come across meanness, cruelty and bullying online and when this kind of behaviour takes place in front of an audience of hundreds of other teenagers on Facebook or via text message, it can be particularly hard to handle.

As Amanda Lenhart of the Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project explains, "Social networking sites have created new spaces for teens to interact and they witness a mixture of altruism and cruelty on those sites. For most teens, these are exciting and rewarding spaces. But the majority have also seen a darker side. And for a subset of teens, the world of social media isn't a pretty place because it presents a climate of drama and mean behaviour."

Meanness (be it someone being mean to your own child or your child being mean to someone else) can be a difficult pill to swallow for any parent. Throw in the 'digital factor' and even the most savvy mums and dads might find it difficult to know how to help their son and daughter stay in control. What advice should you give them about dealing with things like name calling on Facebook or a rumour being rapidly spread by text message? When does online meanness become bullying? What practical steps can your child take to help protect themselves?

Positive and negative behaviour online

The good news is that positive behaviour is prominent on places like Facebook. In a 2011 study of teens by Pew Internet in partnership with the Family Online Safety Institute ('FOSI'), Lenhart and her colleagues found that more than two-thirds of young people who use social networking websites say their peers are mostly kind to one another on such sites.
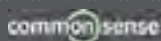
Useful websites

Beatbullying
www.beatbullying.org

ChildLine
www.childline.org.uk

Cybermentors
www.cybermentors.org.uk

Common Sense Media
www.commonsensemedia.org

On the other hand, 88% of these teens said they have witnessed people being mean and cruel to other people on these sites and 15% reported that they have personally been the target of mean or cruel behaviour.

"While teenage conflict is nothing new, today's gossip, jokes and arguments often play out through social media like Formspring, Twitter and Facebook," point out Dr Danah Boyd and Dr Alice Marwick, who have spoken to hundreds of teenagers about their online lives as part of their research for Microsoft.

So, how are teens dealing with this kind of negative behaviour? Do they stand up for themselves and others? Or do they sometimes join in?

According to the Pew Internet research, most teens who witness online cruelty choose to ignore it but nearly a quarter have joined in the harassment of others on a social networking site. 80% have stepped in and defended a victim of meanness, however.

When does online meanness tip over into bullying?

For young people and parents alike, it can be difficult to determine when meanness becomes something more serious, like bullying.

The UK charity Cybermentors defines cyberbullying as '…when someone uses technology, like the internet or a mobile phone, to deliberately hurt, humiliate, harass, intimidate or threaten someone else' and points out that bullying is something that is done on purpose and is a repeated action.

9% of teens who spoke to Pew Internet said that they had been bullied by text message in the last 12 months and 8% had been bullied online (via email, a social networking site or instant messaging).

Bullying – whether offline or online – can undermine a young person's confidence, self-esteem and sense of security and also affect their school attendance and performance. In the most serious cases, the victim might harm themselves or even feel that their life isn't worth living any more.

Even if your child has never bullied anyone in real life, they might act differently in the digital world. They might perceive that they are anonymous online or they might not realise that teasing and being mean to people via text or on Facebook is just as bad as saying it in person. In fact, writing and publishing a comment can have a much greater impact that saying something to someone's face when it can be shrugged off and a child may hesitate or think twice to say it all.

Teen talk

Understanding meanness and bullying has never been easy for parents but new research has revealed an added complication – adults and teens simply don't view these issues in the same way and they don't even use the same language to refer to them.

A new study by Boyd and Marwick investigates what teens like to call 'drama'. According to the authors, dramas on social networking sites like Facebook include posting inappropriate photos and videos, private conflicts that become public standoffs, cries for attention and relationship breakups, make-ups and jealousies.

Reflecting what teens see on soap operas and reality TV, these dramas take place in front of a captive online audience. Those watching on their laptop or mobile can even get involved themselves – by posting a message of support on someone's Facebook wall, for example.

While adults who witness this kind of behaviour might regard it as bullying, Boyd and Marwick ask whether teens refer to these interpersonal conflicts that are played out online as 'drama' as a way of defending themselves against the realities of aggression, gossip and bullying. In other words, do they call it 'drama' to save face and not take on the mantle of either bully or victim?

Parents matter

It certainly seems that the boundaries between meanness, drama and bullying are somewhat blurred in the digital world. What remains clear, however, is that families should have regular conversations about the kind of experiences their kids are having online and should also discuss why it's so important to behave responsibly and respectfully, just as you would expect them to in the real world. For, even if adults and young people seem to speak a different language at times, good digital manners can still be a common goal. ◾

Take action

1 TALK to your child regularly about their online friendships as well as their offline friendships

2 REASSURE them that they can come to you if they have any concerns about people being mean to them online

3 BEAR in mind that what you, as an adult, might consider to be bullying might simply be seen as gossip or drama to your child – be sensitive to how they want to handle matters

4 LOOK OUT for behaviour changes that could be a sign that your son or daughter is being bullied or is bullying someone else

5 MAKE THE MOST OF tools like Parental Controls on your child's computer, mobile and games console, privacy settings and 'Report/Block' options on social networking websites like Facebook

6 OFFER practical as well as emotional support if your child tells you they're being bullied – help them to save emails or texts as evidence, take screen shots of websites, and contact their internet or mobile provider

7 RESIST the temptation to approach the bully yourself, even if it's someone you or your child knows – if it's a fellow student, speak to their teacher so that the school can take the appropriate action as part of its anti-bullying policy

8 ENCOURAGE them to tell you, or a teacher, if they witness any meanness or bullying

The four digital bullying roles

1 THE BULLY – the person who uses digital media tools to deliberately upset or harass their target

2 THE TARGET – the person who is being bullied

3 THE BYSTANDERS – the kids who are aware that something cruel is going on but who stay on the sidelines. In some cases, they might participate in the bullying themselves by commenting on a post or sharing a text

4 THE UPSTANDERS – those who take action by sticking up for the target, addressing the bully, or reporting the incident

Source: Common Sense Media

For more information and advice about bullying, go to: **www.vodafone.com/parents/cyberbullying**

Carrie Longton founded the parenting website Mumsnet with Justine Roberts in 2000. Mumsnet has more than 2.5 million unique visitors each month and its discussion boards attract 35,000+ posts each day.

www.mumsnet.com

Setting boundaries

Carrie Longton, Co-Founder of Mumsnet, asks how parents' technology habits can influence their children and reveals how she tackled the great Facebook debate.

"**W**hy should I get off my iPhone – you're always on yours?" I'm guessing that's a familiar refrain in kitchens across the country if mine is anything to go by.

As adults, we're using technology all the time… so how do we set boundaries for our children about its safe and appropriate use?

Tech boundaries (and yes, that means for mum and dad too)

I'm currently doing some work with Drinkaware (the alcohol awareness people) and one of the reasons parents give for not being too hard line on early teenage drinking is they don't want to lose their adult right to a nightly tipple.

I think there are some parallels with technology here. As we become increasingly addicted to our tablets/smartphones/laptops, we lose the moral high ground when it comes to trying to limit our children's use of theirs.

Never mind that we're not actually playing BrickBreaker on our BlackBerry all day (which is what my six-year-old once accused her father of doing!) If you're checking your texts or emails at the table, it makes it a lot harder to challenge your teenager when they're skimming through Tumblr over the fish fingers.

So here's the deal. You have to set some family boundaries about when and how we use technology – and that includes you.

> **"Our family internet charter… made us sit down and think as a family what we all wanted from technology."**

But, those boundaries for use and timing will be different for each family because of course there are no hard and fast rules (though I'm sure Mumsnetters could suggest a few).

One of the most useful things we did as a family, following a school internet safety evening, was to write a family internet charter. Drawn up by my then 12-year-old, it contained what she thought she/we could get away with/manage.

To be honest, I'm not sure we've stuck to everything. The computer is mostly kept in the family room, but not always; we don't have mobiles at the dinner table (unless dad's expecting a big call); the kids do ask if they want to go on the computer, but don't always listen when I say no – but it opened a dialogue. It made us sit down and think as a family what we all wanted from technology. It didn't make us all agree, but it helped us see where we didn't.

The great Facebook debate

One huge area of contention in our family was what was referred to in our house as 'holding the line' on not joining Facebook until the legal age of 13.

When my eldest was 11, I thought I'd already had this conversation. I'd done some work with Facebook and was something of an internet safety champion through my work at Mumsnet, so I'd said in no uncertain terms that I didn't want her on Facebook until she was 13. She got the perks of my job – an advance copy of 'Sister, Missing' and, the chance, once, to meet Gok Wan – so she needed to cope with the downsides too, which included having a mum with an inside knowledge of what was acceptable on a social network and what was not.

I was blithely boasting about her FB abstinence at a friend's house when, on my friend's daughter's Facebook page, up popped my darling under-age daughter (name cleverly disguised but with pictures) advertising the fact that we were about to go on holiday. To say I reacted badly was an understatement. All I could say was "… but I bought you a dog!" I then banned her from all technology for a month and sent a message via Facebook to all her friends saying I knew who they were and would tell their parents they were on Facebook if they didn't know already. Harsh some might call it – and she did.

Part of my reaction I'm sure was injured pride that my top parenting skills had actually counted for nothing – she'd just chosen to ignore me – but actually her privacy settings were a joke and I passionately believe that wonderful as Facebook can be, it's not ideal for under 13s.

> **"I'd said in no uncertain terms that I didn't want my daughter on Facebook until she was 13."**

My daughter and I eventually made up and moved on and for her 13th birthday she got a cake in the shape of a Facebook 'Like' and membership of the club she'd wanted to join for so long.

So would I hold the line again? I have two younger children so this is a question as much for myself as for this article. Yes, I hope I will, but I guess I'll have to cross that bridge when it comes. But it would also have helped if my daughter's school had addressed it earlier. Our first session on this was year 7 – by then, 75% of the pupils in her year were already on Facebook (I know this because the school surveyed them!)

Mumsnet is full of great advice on internet safety both from other parents and from experts and our talk boards and dedicated information area is well visited, but on this subject, as on many teen issues, it also helps if the peer group your child mixes with (and their parents) are getting the same message at the same time. I would have liked my daughter's school to have made a bigger deal about underage Facebooking with parents earlier – more parents might have 'held the line' and made each other's lives (well mine at least) a lot easier then.

This isn't about bashing Facebook. I am my daughter's 'friend' on Facebook (part of the deal) and when, during one of our 'full and frank discussions', I cheekily suggested that if she didn't do as she was told I would shame her by asking her FB friends to be mine, a bunch of the ones I knew well anyway ended up 'friending' me… which makes for entertaining updates.

Facebook is now something we still fight about occasionally (though I can't really argue about how long she spends on there given the average time I and other people spend on Mumsnet) but we try and enjoy it together – even if she does accuse me of stalking on occasions.

Rather embarrassingly, when my daughter did join Facebook, she was appalled by my privacy settings and has been able to advise me on my social networking (note the casual use of Tumblr earlier – natch). Not something you would expect the co-founder of the biggest social network for parents to need help with, but there you go… we can always learn from our children.

Jargonbuster

tumblr.

A free blogging tool that lets users post and share text, photos, videos and other content. There are than 60 million Tumblr blogs online.
www.tumblr.com

How to...
set up Facebook privacy controls

Facebook's privacy controls enable users to share their posts, photos, tags and other content with the people they want.

Facebook is one of the most popular websites in the world, with more than 900 million active users. It has a minimum age limit of 13.

Its privacy controls enable users to decide which people can see their information. These controls can now be found right next to the things they share, so it's clear who sees their stuff.

Facebook maintains added protections and security settings for 13 to 17-year-olds. So, if your child has registered on Facebook as being under 18, they don't have public search listings created for them (e.g. their full Facebook profile or timeline won't come up in a search on Google™) and their information is limited to friends, friends of friends and networks (like the school they attend), even if they have chosen to make it available to everyone. Their name, profile picture, gender and networks are visible to everyone, however.

In this tutorial, we show you how your child can further customise their privacy controls on Facebook.
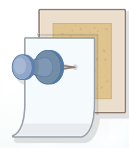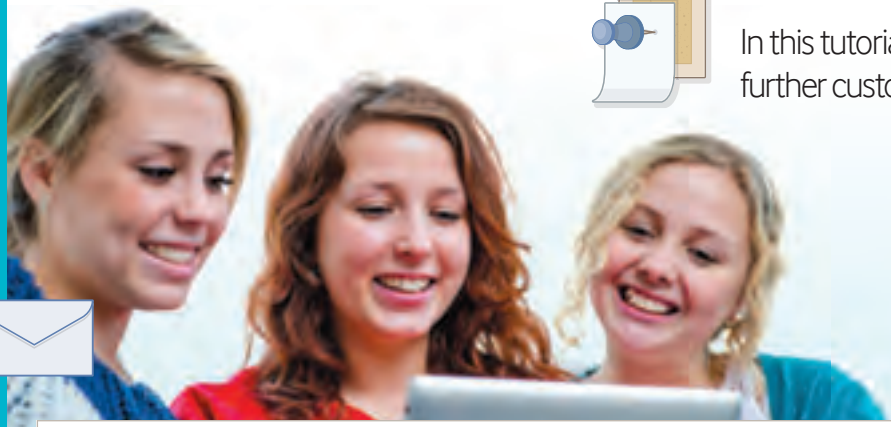
Step 1

How sharing works on Facebook

If your child has registered on Facebook as being under-18, they can share their posts with a maximum of 'friends of their friends'.

Tag who they're with

Your child can click this button to add tags of their friends or friends of friends. Adding a tag instantly creates a link to the person's profile (timeline) and may share their post with their friends.

Say where they are

Your son or daughter can share what city or neighbourhood they're in with every post they make, or share a particular place, like a park or café. If they have registered on Facebook as being under-18, they can share their location with a maximum of 'friends of their friends'.

Manage privacy right where they post

They can choose who sees their status updates, photos and profile (timeline) info using the inline audience selector — at the time they share or afterwards.

Step 2

How can they control each post?

If your child has registered on Facebook as being under-18, they can share their posts with a maximum of 'friends of their friends'.

Whenever your child posts content (like a status update, photo or check-in), they can select a specific audience or even customise their audience. To do this, they simply need to click on the sharing icon and choose whether they want the post to be seen by 'Friends' or a 'Custom' audience, for example.

If your child does not change their audience selection, their information will be shared with the last audience they selected.

If your son or daughter tags someone on Facebook (e.g. assigns a name to someone in a photo and links the photo to the person's Facebook profile or timeline) or approves a tag added by someone else, that person and their friends can see their post no matter what audience they selected.

Step 3

How can they control their profile?

If your child has registered on Facebook as being under-18, they can share their posts with a maximum of 'friends of their friends'.

Whenever your child tags things in their profile (timeline), they can select a specific audience or even customise their audience.

To do this, they simply need to choose who can see it (Friends

of Friends, Friends, Specific People or Lists or Only Me).

When they select an audience for their friend list, they are only controlling who can see it on their profile (timeline).

When someone tags your child in a post, they can choose whether they want that post to appear on their profile (timeline). They can either approve the post individually or approve all posts by their friends.
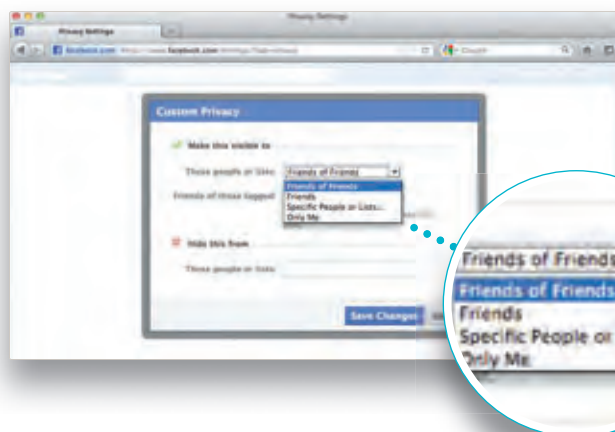
Step 4

How can they control what their friends share about them?

If your child has registered on Facebook as being under-18, they can share their posts with a maximum of 'friends of their friends'.

If they are tagged in a post (such as a photo or status update), that post will contain a link to their profile (timeline). If someone clicks on the link, they will see their public information and anything else they let them see.

If your child has registered on Facebook as being under-18, friends and friends of friends can tag your child in anything. If your

child wants more control over other people's posts in which they feature, including photos, they can enable the tagging review option on Facebook. This allows them to approve or reject posts tagged with their name before they go on their profile (timeline). They might also want to ask their friends not to tag them as a general rule.

If your child doesn't like a tagged post after it has appeared on Facebook, they can choose to (a) remove it from their profile (timeline), (b) send a message asking the person who posted it to remove it, (c) report it to Facebook or (d) block the owner of the post.

For further information, go to:
www.facebook.com/help/safety and **www.facebook.com/help/privacy**

www.facebook.com

Location, location, location

Take action

1 BE AWARE of the kind of devices that location services feature on, such as smartphones and games consoles

2 TALK to your son or daughter about the kind of personal information they share online, including their address, school name and day-to-day locations

3 DISCUSS the potential pitfalls of location services and apps, such as strangers being able to find out where they live or go to school and businesses targeting them with advertising

4 ENCOURAGE them to respect minimum age limits on location services and apps (many are 13+) – if your son or daughter isn't honest about their age when they register, built-in safety and privacy mechanisms aimed at helping young people won't apply

5 EXPLAIN why it's useful to check how their personal data might be used by service/app providers (this should be in the small print) and to use privacy settings on social networking services and apps

6 SUGGEST that they switch off the location feature on their smartphone and other devices – on the iPhone, this can be done in Settings/General/Location Services; on Android phones, go to Settings/Location

7 REMIND them that their friends might not want to be geo-tagged in their photos or status updates

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If you've replaced your battered old roadmap with a Sat Nav device, you're already using location services. Or maybe you've really embraced them, checking into Foursquare as you grab lunch at your local café, geo-tagging your photos on Instagram and tracking your morning jogs on RunKeeper.

Whether you're an aficionado of location services and apps or a complete newbie, your kids might well be using them, so you need to understand how they work and what the potential pitfalls might be.

Put simply, GPS and Wi-Fi on your child's laptop, smartphone and other portable devices, such as games consoles and tablets, can determine your son or daughter's geographical location so that they can receive local information (like where the nearest Starbucks is) or share their own location with friends (e.g. on Twitter).

But, while the benefits are obvious, young people also need to think carefully about how and with whom they share their location using these services.

If they broadcast their location to their online social network, it might not just be their friends who see it. If they use a location app on their phone, they might start receiving adverts for, or offers from, local businesses on their mobile. And if they regularly 'tag' themselves in the same locations (i.e. assign their location to their online status updates or photos), it might not take long for someone to work out their daily routine.

We've put together some advice to help you navigate this area and we've also asked Facebook to explain a bit more about their built-in location features and the tools they've put in place to help protect younger users.

Jargonbuster

Geo-tagging
Geo-tagging is where geographical identification data is added to things like photos or online messages. It can be done on any GPS device, such as a smartphone.

In recent years, there has been a boom in location apps for smartphones and other mobile devices (many of which are free to download) and location features within social networking sites like Facebook. Although some of these services and apps (like the OKCupid dating app) have minimum age limits of 17 or 18, others (like the Star Chart astronomy app) can be used by teenagers.

With young people's offline and digital worlds blending more and more, it's easy to see why they love location services and apps. From letting their friends know they're at that must-see gig to getting discounts by 'checking in' at a particular shop, it's all about sharing, socialising and saving money.

Did you know?
Around two-thirds of 13 to 17-year-olds have included their physical location in their social networking status
(Source: McAfee's 'The Secret Life of Teens' study, June 2010)

Jargonbuster

Foursquare
Over 20 million people around the world use Foursquare to keep up with their friends, discover what's nearby, save money and unlock deals from their phone.
www.foursquare.com

Instagram
Just snap a picture, choose a filter to transform its look and feel, post it to Instagram and share it on Facebook, Twitter or Tumblr.
www.instagram.com

RunKeeper
RunKeeper makes tracking your workouts fun, social and easy to understand so that you can improve the quality of your fitness.
www.runkeeper.com

For more information about location services, go to:
www.vodafone.com/parents/locationservices

SOCIAL LANDMARKS AROUND THE WORLD

People everywhere use Facebook to check in to places and share what they're doing with friends. Based on this activity, here are some of the most social cities and their most popular landmarks.

facebook

Simon Milner is Facebook's first UK and Ireland Policy Director, responsible for issues such as privacy, safety and advertising policy. He joined the company in January 2012 having previously held senior roles at BT and the BBC.

facebook

www.facebook.com

Location services on Facebook

Simon Milner, Director of Policy at Facebook, explains how Facebook is helping to protect younger users.

A lot of parents don't know that the experience 13 to 17-year-olds have on Facebook isn't the same as that of adults.

We work hard to make Facebook a safe place and proactively thinking about the best way young people can use Facebook is a big focus for us.

Facebook accounts registered to under 18s can't be found by an external search engine. For Facebook Search, under 18s can adjust the setting of "Who can search for me by name or contact info" from 'Everyone' to 'Friends' or 'Friends of Friends' by going to their privacy settings, clicking 'how you connect', and then adjusting the setting for who can search for them. Friends of Friends is also the widest possible audience for under 18s' photos or status updates or for exchanging messages.

Location services on Facebook

Facebook use on mobile devices is growing quickly and with many people using their mobiles to stay in touch wherever they are, we have built location tools into the heart of Facebook.

If you choose to share your location with friends on Facebook, the process is simple, quick and intuitive. Again, we apply protections to location sharing for under 18s – so if a young person chooses to add their location to posts, only their friends will see it.

The location sharing option for teens is defaulted to 'off' but they can turn it on by clicking the location icon button.

There are two ways in which they can choose to share their location on Facebook. They can add their specific location, such as a cinema or a café, as a 'tag' to their posts by clicking the location icon or by using the 'check in' button in Facebook mobile applications.

Secondly, they can also choose to add a more general location to all of their posts, by hovering over the 'near: town name' text under the update. This adds the broader area they are posting from to their updates.

Because location is shared with a teen's friends, we encourage parents to help their children understand that it's important to take care over who is on their Facebook friends list.

Get talking

You don't need to be a technology expert to ask questions and begin an ongoing discussion with teens about online safety. In fact, as more and more of our world becomes digital, online safety is a life skill we all need to learn. As a father of three kids (aged 14, 12 and 9), I know this only too well.

Having conversations about safety and technology early and often should be something that we all do, in the same way that we talk with our children about being safe at school, in the park, on public transport or playing sport.

At Facebook, we've thought a lot about how we can all help each other start these conversations and have drawn up some pointers and advice in our Family Safety Centre at **www.facebook.com/ safety**

One good way to get your teen talking is to ask them to show you how they use Facebook or to ask for advice on what you as a parent can do on the site.

You can also find information about how our Social Reporting Tools work in the Family Safety Centre – they enable young people to send a copy of a report they make if they have had a problem on Facebook, such as bullying, to you so you'll know straight away if they need help.

All of the content was put together by our dedicated safety team, many of whom are parents themselves, to help parents, teenagers and teachers stay as safe as possible online – on Facebook and across the rest of the Web.

Sofia Karasinski

"I rely on Skype and Facebook to keep in touch"

18-year-old Sofia Karasinski loves how technology helps her to stay in touch with friends and family and discover new music.

I come from an international family. When people ask me what nationality I am, I hesitate, but I've settled on 'Polish-American-Londoner'. As a result, some of my oldest and best friends live overseas.

My mobile is the technology I use most but, for staying in touch with friends and family overseas, it's not ideal because of time differences and, more importantly, the cost. Instead, I rely on Skype and Facebook to keep in touch, which cost nothing. When I was in India during my gap year, Facebook, Skype and the addition of a blog were essential for reassuring my parents that I was safe and well and reminding my friends that I hadn't fallen off the planet!

A lot of my social life is organised through Facebook. It's how I find out about parties and keep an eye on what others are up to, but I have recently noticed that it has been taking a back seat.

It's no longer cool to share everything that you are doing and photo-document every social event you attend. I also recently deleted a lot of 'friends' as I was finding it difficult to post on my wall. The thought that someone I met three years ago for only a few minutes can view my profile and judge me unsettles me.

Music is very important to me. My iPod is with me at all times and I would have a breakdown if anything were to happen to my iTunes. I'm into music that is the opposite of mainstream so finding new bands can be a challenge.

Instead, I read music blogs, such as Pitchfork, to keep up and I go on YouTube and Soundcloud to actually sample the music.

I sometimes complain that digital technology is too integral to my life. Some of the most fun I have had is when technology is not available. At the same time, however, it is true that I am in contact with a lot more people as a result of technology, which makes for a more interesting and varied life.

Want to find out more about Sofia's favourite technology?

BlackBerry   www.blackberry.com

f   www.facebook.com

   www.pitchfork.com

skype   www.skype.com

SOUNDCLOUD   www.soundcloud.com

You Tube   www.youtube.com

Downloading and copyright

Apps, games, music, videos… they're all available to download in an instant online. But could your son or daughter be infringing copyright?

Take action

1 DOWNLOAD some content so that you know how it works – but make sure you use a legitimate service

2 TALK to your child about the kind of stuff they download and how much it costs

3 RECOMMEND that they only use legitimate download services like Google Play, GAME, iTunes, Netflix and Vodafone AppSelect

4 EXPLAIN that what they do online may not be anonymous – it might be traceable via their unique IP address

5 MAKE the most of Parental Controls and SafeSearch to protect your kids from inappropriate content – but remember they might not be 100% effective

6 SET a password and encryption on your home Wi-Fi connection to prevent unauthorised use and keep your anti-virus software and anti-spyware tools up-to-date

7 CHECK the browser history on your child's computer regularly

In today's digital world, young people are increasingly creating, downloading, distributing and publishing content. Many are using legitimate online services, but some could be infringing copyright if they have downloaded copyright material through peer-to-peer (P2P) networks (that allow two or more users to share files, such as music), cyberlockers (cloud storage that allows users to store and share files) and stream ripping apps (software that enables users to record streamed music from the internet – e.g. from internet radio – by saving the MP3 files on to their hard drive).

"But I can get stuff there for free..," your kids might argue, perhaps not realising how their actions could lead to demands for payment under copyright law and how they could also be compromising their own online privacy and security.

Digital Parenting helps you get up to speed on this key issue.

The facts

"If you make music, film or TV content available to others on a file-sharing network, download from an illegal site, or sell copies without the permission of those who own the copyright, you are breaking the law and could face serious penalties."
Source: Childnet Music, Film, TV and the Internet Guide

The risks

If your son or daughter downloads copyright content without permission from the copyright owner (e.g. a music company), that company might be able to get a court order that requires their Internet Service Provider (ISP) to identify them so that they can take legal action in the UK.

Using file-sharing programmes could expose your child to viruses, spyware, pornography, violent images, and contact from strangers.

Get advice

www.childnet.com/downloading

www.creativecommons.org

www.findanyfilm.com

www.ipo.gov.uk/types/copy.htm

www.isfe.eu

www.pro-music.org

www.copyrightaware.co.uk

www.whymusicmatters.org

www.ukie.info

For more information, go to: www.vodafone.com/parents/copyright

Children's charities:
Fighting your child's digital corner

EXPERT VIEW
John Carr OBE

John Carr OBE is one of the world's leading authorities on children's and young people's use of the internet and associated new technologies.

CHIS eNACSO

www.johncarrcv.blogspot.co.uk

www.chis.org.uk

www.enacso.eu

Online safety expert John Carr OBE reveals two key tech issues that are the focus for children's organisations across Europe.

Nothing stands still, least of all technology. For that reason, children's organisations are constantly monitoring (by that I really mean trying to monitor) how things are changing so that we can help parents and, of course, children themselves to understand the way the world is working now or will work tomorrow.

As part of the UK's Children's Charities' Coalition on Internet Safety (CHIS) and the European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online (eNACSO), I work with a number of children's organisations – including Barnardo's, the Children's Society and the NSPCC – that are fighting for safe and equal access to the internet and other digital technologies for children and young people everywhere.

With digital media convergence gathering pace, members of CHIS and eNACSO are taking an active interest in the increasing number of devices that can connect to the internet, as well as the different types of services that are available online. Two emerging issues are content filtering on Wi-Fi connections and online payments.

1 Sidestepping filters with Wi-Fi

Some time ago – in 2004, to be precise – the UK's mobile phone companies introduced filtering on to their networks to try to make sure that children and young people under the age of 18 could not access websites or services that were not meant for them (things like gambling and pornography).

On the whole, the system worked well. But in recent years, as smartphones have started to become the handsets of choice, so the old order has been challenged. All the newest smartphones have Wi-Fi, or wireless connectivity, built-in.

If you have Wi-Fi built into your mobile, it is simple to sidestep any filtering that your mobile provider has installed. Your son or daughter could do this by simply using their phone in any of the shops or cafés on the high street, or at railway stations and bus depots, that now provide free Wi-Fi access to anyone within reach of their signal who logs on to their network. They might even be taking advantage of your neighbours' wireless internet – if they have not made it secure it could be available for use in every room in your house.

So, whilst you think your child is protected by the filters that their mobile provider offers, they could actually be accessing a wide range of adult content while they're out and about… or even when they're just upstairs at home.

Several years ago, we began pressing the Wi-Fi providers to start copying the filtering policies that the mobile network operators had already put in place to help protect children and young people from adult content. For a while, little progress was made, but recently the Wi-Fi providers seem to be more interested, and we are hopeful of announcements in the UK in the near future.

2 Pocket money in the digital world

Another area that is in rapid flux is the world of online payments. With so much good stuff to buy on the internet, and usually at better prices, more and more parents, quite rightly, want to give their children their pocket money in a way that enables them to spend it online.

Parents also want to help their children to understand how to manage their money and not feel that they can just pick up mum or dad's credit card whenever they want to download something from iTunes, for example.

Yet there are few agreed standards governing children as economic agents online and there are even fewer controls to ensure that minors are not buying products or services (such as pornography or cigarettes) over the internet that they would never be able to buy in the shops because their appearance would give them away.

Both CHIS and eNACSO think that vendors of age restricted goods and services should introduce proper age verification tools. The UK's online gambling industry has been brilliantly successful in doing this. Almost no other sector has been.

So, despite many, many pleas, I'm afraid I have no good news to report on this front. We need the banks, the credit card companies and the big online retailers to go into a huddle and sort this out. In the meantime, parents need to keep a close eye on what their children are buying online – and that includes via apps on their mobiles.

Coupons
vouchers & deals

£10 instead of £30 for cinema trip for two!
One hour private family ski or snowboarding lesson for £85 (£225 value)!
Tuck into two courses for £16 instead of £40!

In the current economic climate, who can resist a bargain? For cash-strapped teens, the internet is often their first port of call for getting their hands on the latest products and services. From Amazon to Top Shop, iTunes to Ticketmaster, young people have embraced e-commerce.

And now, they're taking advantage of mobile commerce and 'social commerce', where coupons, vouchers and deals are available via their phone or online. Just as you might snip a '10% off' coupon for your local supermarket out of the newspaper, now you can find some great offers (often 50% off or more) in the digital world.

Some examples...

→ **Companies like Groupon and LivingSocial rely on large numbers of people taking advantage of their 'deals of the day', hence the term 'social commerce' or 'group buying'. You can search based on your location and deals are available in hundreds of cities around the world.**

→ **vouchercloud offers discounts, codes and vouchers for a wide range of high street shops, restaurants and more. It uses your smartphone's GPS system to locate discounting retailers nearest to you and downloads relevant vouchers to your smartphone screen so that you can redeem them in store.**

→ **Facebook Places Deals enables Facebook users to check into places like Alton Towers, Argos and Debenhams via their mobile phone to get discounts.**

What do you need to know about coupons, vouchers and deals?

Online shopping should be part of the ongoing conversation you have with your child about their safety and security in the digital world. Often promoted via social media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter, coupon or voucher offers can look particularly attractive to young people but there can be some pitfalls, such as:

→ Teenagers who have grown up with digital technologies are sometimes more blasé about entering their personal information on apps and websites than adults might be. They need to understand how their details, such as their email address, might be used by the company in question.

→ Some coupon, voucher and deal websites have minimum age limits. For example, LivingSocial's terms and conditions state that users must be '13 years of age or older' but '18 years of age or older to purchase any Deal'. These age limits are put in place to help protect younger internet users.

→ People often purchase coupons and deals on impulse – they see a '50% off' offer and a clock saying there's 30 minutes left for them to purchase it but then they don't use the coupon before the expiry date and their money has been wasted.

→ It's important to check the small print before signing up for a deal. What is the expiry date? Can the coupon or voucher be used in conjunction with other special offers? Are there any other limits in place?

→ Finally, if demand for a particular deal is particularly high, the merchant in question might not be able to keep up with it and you or your child could be left without the product or service you paid for.

Take action

1 SET UP Parental Controls and SafeSearch on your child's computer based on their age and maturity – but remember, they might not be 100% effective and they aren't a substitute for parental supervision

2 TAKE a look at some of the main coupon/voucher/deal websites, such as Facebook Places Deals, Groupon, LivingSocial and vouchercloud so that you understand how they work

3 CHECK whether the coupon/ voucher/deal website that your family uses has a minimum age limit and, if so, ensure that your son or daughter adheres to it

4 READ the privacy policy on the app or website in question, so that you know how the company will use your or your child's personal information

5 CHECK the small print before purchasing any coupons or vouchers

6 TALK to your child about the possible risks of buying coupons or vouchers online or getting deals via their mobile and encourage them to involve you in any purchases

7 IF your son or daughter asks to borrow your credit card to buy something online, it's better to make the purchase yourself rather than giving them your card details

EXPERT VIEW
Dr Rachel O'Connell

Dr Rachel O'Connell is an internet safety expert and principal author of a guide for online mental health providers entitled *Delivering Mental Health Services Online: Risk Awareness and Management Programme.* **Rachel advises the UK Government on the issue of online age verification for children and young people.**

ramp

Health and wellbeing Q&A

Dr Rachel O'Connell answers Digital Parenting's questions about health and wellbeing services online and highlights the importance of sifting good advice from bad.

Physical and emotional changes during childhood and adolescence can be confusing and difficult – for young people and their families alike.

As a parent, I understand how important it is to keep a close eye on a child's health and wellbeing and to be prepared for some tricky questions, as well as to be willing to offer proactive advice. And, as a professional specialising in social media and young people, I see first-hand the impact that the internet is having on teenagers when it comes to their emotional wellbeing – often positive, sometimes not.

For families of children with eating disorders, depression or other mental health problems, such as self-harm, it can be particularly challenging because many young people are turning to the Web for answers to extremely complex questions. While the internet provides a place where families can find lots of excellent guidance from health professionals and other people in similar circumstances, there is also a lot of unreliable and harmful information and advice published online.

Q What kind of websites are young people visiting to find answers to questions about their health and wellbeing?

A The internet can be a useful resource for teenagers wishing to better understand the physical and emotional changes that are taking place and niggling concerns about what is normal.

Young people often seek help, support and a feeling of community with other young people who are also coping with challenging issues. This may, for example, involve looking at videos about managing eating disorders on YouTube or chatting in an online forum about coping with feelings of distress and sadness.

Channel 4's Embarrassing Bodies series – particularly the programmes aimed at children and young people – are valuable online resources for both parents and teenagers (**http://embarrassingbodieskids.channel4.com/**).

With research findings indicating that one in ten young people in the UK has been diagnosed with a mental health disorder, it's important that parents are aware of the various mental health organisations that are accessible online, such as Big White Wall (**www.bigwhitewall.com**), Beat (**http://www.b-eat.co.uk/**), ChildLine (**www.childline.org.uk**) and Young Minds (**www.youngminds.org.uk/**).

Q What are the potential risks that children and teenagers might face if they go online for information and support about health and wellbeing issues?

A Mental health professionals express concerns about websites where, in the absence of trained professionals, children and young people interact in ways that may be harmful to a vulnerable person. For example, a teenager may be encouraged by others in an online group to post pictures that illustrate self-harming behaviours.

Q How would you advise parents to start a conversation with their child about online peer support and the potential for being given unreliable information?

A It can be really challenging but it's important to have a balanced and considered response to your child's online activities, particularly during difficult times. Even if your instinct is to intervene immediately and try to stop them visiting websites you're worried about, that might not be the best plan of action.

Engaging in a discussion with your son or daughter about their online activities is usually a better way to go. It's important that you try not to start with the assumption that all online interactions with other young people about challenging issues are necessarily harmful. This is likely to cause additional tension within the family and could result in your child withdrawing from discussing things with you and being less open about their online and offline activities.

You can seek professional advice and guidance both from your GP and online, and encourage your child to be honest and open about both the positive and possibly negative things they have encountered on the internet.

Q Can parents and young people be confident that information they submit on self-help sites will remain confidential?

A To help protect the privacy and confidentiality of people seeking support online, a number of mental health providers offer avatars and pseudonyms so that users can be anonymous when interacting with others. You should review the Privacy Policy and Terms of Service on any website you use so that you know what privacy provisions are in place.

Q Does the NHS provide any online help for parents and young people?

A NHS Direct has a helpful 'symptom checker' (**www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/ CheckSymptoms/SATs/ aaRouterWeb.aspx**) to help you understand the nature of the issue you or your child could be facing. The NHS may advise you to contact your GP who may suggest that counselling could help your family.

Q Would you recommend any particular websites that parents could direct their child to if they need help with health and wellbeing issues?

A Youth Access (**www. youthaccess.org.uk**) is the largest provider of young people's advice and counselling services in the UK and you'll also find useful resources for teenagers on the Teen Issues website (**www.teenissues.co.uk**).

With respect to helping your child manage issues like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), anxiety, autism, behaviour problems, bullying, depression, eating disorders, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and substance misuse, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) website (**www.camh.org.uk**) is a good starting point.

Q Where can parents find information about therapists and counsellors?

A You can search for a therapist on the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy website (**www.bacp.co.uk/ict/ Therapy_Websites/site_ search.php**) or the New Savoy Partnership website (**www. newsavoydirectory.org/**).

An accreditation system for online mental health services is currently being developed and you should soon be able to identify reputable mental health providers by the RAMP logo.

Other useful websites

www.getconnected.org.uk

www.ie.reachout.com

www.samaritans.org

www.spunout.ie

www.thesite.org

For more advice and links to support organisations, go to:
www.vodafone.com/parents/wellbeing

NCMEC testifies to US Sentencing Commission

NATIONAL CENTER FOR **MISSING & EXPLOITED** C H I L D R E N

NEWS & VIEWS

In February 2012, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) testified to the United States Sentencing Commission on the topic of child pornography.

Of the identified child victims whose images were frequently submitted to NCMEC by law enforcement, about half of the victims are boys (43%) and half are girls (57%).

Of these images, 76% depict the abuse of pre-pubescent children, of which 10% are infants and toddlers, and 24% depict pubescent children. NCMEC continues to work with law enforcement to ensure that all child victims get the help and justice they deserve.

The full NCMEC testimony is available at:
http://www.missingkids.com/missingkids/ servlet/NewsEventServlet?LanguageCountry= en_US&PageId=4628

Games as a learning tool

Dawn Hallybone of Oakdale Junior School in Essex reveals how she uses games to engage her students and help them develop new skills.

Dawn Hallybone has been teaching for 17 years and has been using computer games in the classroom for the last four years. She was shortlisted for the 2012 TES ICT Visionary award.

"The most powerful learning tool ever created" is how Lord Puttnam described the video game. Certainly, the use of technology within the classroom has been gaining momentum over the last couple of years.

> **"Games and interactive software can help pupils acquire complicated skills and rigorous knowledge in an engaging and enjoyable way."**
> **Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP**
> UK Secretary of State for Education

There are a number of organisations looking to harness the power of games to both engage young people and enhance the curriculum. For example, Derek Robertson and the team at Consolarium, the Scottish Centre for Games and Learning, have been leading the way and their work is spreading throughout the country with games networks, such as the Redbridge Games Network (of which I am a member).

Consoles such as the DS, Kinect and Wii have been firm favourites in family homes over the last few years. Just as families enjoy playing together on them, these devices can also be used in the classroom to help young people learn, explore and have fun.

Games like Brain Training on the DS have an obvious educational context as players look to improve their mental maths skills. Within lessons, these skills can be built upon by using the game to begin asking questions and exploring the subject. Big Brain Academy on the Wii is another game that fits this genre, enabling children to investigate both mathematical and analytical skills.

It is, however, not just the obvious 'educational' games that work well in the classroom.

→ **Mario Kart (DS) can be used to look at work on decimals, as well as investigating forces within science**

→ **With Nintendogs (DS), children get the opportunity to 'look after' a virtual dog and gain an understanding of the cost of owning an animal**

→ **Endless Ocean and Wild Earth African Safari (Wii) enable children to 'leave' the classroom and explore the world virtually and can be used as a stimulus for creative writing, factual writing and science work on habitats**

→ **Younger children can connect with and learn about animals from their familiar nursery environment by playing Kinectimals (Kinect) or EyePet (PS3)**

Outside of games consoles, there has also been an explosion in educational apps for smartphones and tablets. These apps enable children to explore and discover with their parents and to build crucial numeracy, literacy and creative skills.

Children don't have to just be consumers of games – they can create them too. By using programs like Kodu and Scratch, both of which are free, students can be encouraged to explore creatively and make their own computer games that they can play and share with a global audience. This element of coding and creating is growing with support from the UK Government.

I see first-hand how games engage and enthuse children within the classroom. I've had a great response from my pupils to games like Mario Kart, Word Coach and Brain Training, for example.

As with all technology, however, games are not the only tool or the only answer – they should be used alongside other tools for learning, be used in moderation and be used as a way of exploring alongside children, not in isolation.

For me, using a game in the classroom is a way of reaching out and enabling all children to succeed and develop. It is alright to say "I don't know". It is alright to fail and to try again. In the words of Samuel Beckett: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better."

Useful websites

www.ltscotland.org.uk/usingglowandict/gamesbasedlearning/consolarium.asp

http://redbridgegamesnetwork.blogspot.com/

http://scratch.mit.edu/

http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/projects/kodu/

&Teachers & technology

Where can education professionals turn if they need support?

Teachers, headteachers, governors and other members of the school community play a vital role in helping young people to manage their digital spaces and develop their ICT, media literacy and social skills. This includes promoting the positive, responsible and safe use of digital technologies and providing guidance and support if anything goes wrong.

But what kind of digital issues and challenges could education professionals face themselves? How can they protect themselves and their reputation when it comes to things like bullying, inappropriate comments and breaches of privacy?

With a recent survey by the NASUWT, the largest teachers' union in the UK, revealing that more than four in ten teachers have experienced online abuse, education professionals are clearly dealing with some difficult issues.

As Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT, comments: "This survey shows that a significant minority of our members are being abused by their pupils and that in too many cases the action taken does not reflect the seriousness of the abuse. There is also a worrying lack of adequate procedures to protect teachers from this sort of cyberbullying in the first place."

Other problems encountered by teachers include students setting up fake social networking profiles in their name, filming them on their mobiles during class and posting comments about them on ratings websites.

So where can teachers turn for help? Fortunately, there are lots of useful resources available. Many of the local Grids for Learning provide excellent information and advice and the Teachtoday website (**www.teachtoday.eu**) is also a good starting point. Support is available from the UK Safer Internet Centre's Professionals Online Safety Helpline (**http://www. saferinternet.org.uk/helpline**) and there is also an active community of education professionals on Twitter (search on #esafety or #ukedtech).

Teachtoday
www.teachtoday.eu
TeachtodayUK on Facebook and Twitter

Teachtoday offers school employees a central place on the Web where they can find the answers to questions as varied as "How should I deal with offensive messages about me, a colleague or a student that a member of my class has posted online?" or "What can I teach my students about the legalities of downloading music?"

The Teachtoday website was launched in 2008 by a unique collaboration of ICT industry representatives, including Facebook, Google, Microsoft, Deutsche Telekom, Orange FT Group and Vodafone, and European Schoolnet (a network of 31 Ministries of Education across Europe).

"We wanted to help education professionals to make sense of the complexities of their students' – and their own – digital world," explains Annie Mullins OBE of Vodafone, a co-founder of Teachtoday. "The Teachtoday website can be a first port of call for information and advice before they speak to their manager or their union, for example."

Teachtoday has recently developed a presentation about digital technologies that teachers can give to parents and also has a presence on Facebook and Twitter to help teachers keep up with the latest news and views.
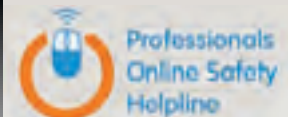
UK Safer Internet Centre – Professionals Online Safety Helpline
http://www.saferinternet. uk/helpline
Professionals Online Safety Helpline on Facebook

The UK Safer Internet Centre has been part funded by the European Commission 'Safer Internet Programme' to provide a Helpline for professionals who work with children and young people in the UK, specifically tackling the area of e-safety.

The Helpline provides support with all aspects of digital and online issues, such as social networking sites, cyberbullying, sexting, online gaming and child protection online. It aims to resolve issues that professionals face about themselves, such as protecting professional identity and reputation, as well as about young people in relation to online safety.

The Helpline provides signposting, advice and, where appropriate, mediation services. It has established and is still building excellent relationships with many industry partners, who provide direct contacts, which is essential where complex resolutions are required.

Laura Higgins, Manager of the Professionals Online Safety Helpline, comments: "We are very proud that a huge majority of issues are resolved and believe that our practical yet empathetic approach is helping to build a strong reputation among professionals. We hope to build on this and continue providing this much needed service."

You can reach the Helpline at **helpline@saferinternet.org.uk** or on 0844 381 4772.

The big picture

What are industry and government doing to help protect children and young people?

30%
More than 30% of children who go online do so from a mobile device and 26% via game consoles

38%
of 9 to 12-year-olds who are online say they have a social networking profile, in spite of age restrictions

You may be wondering how industry and policymakers are helping to protect the younger generation in their increasingly digital world. What are the mobile handset manufacturers, software providers, broadcasters, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), social networks and mobile operators doing? How are the European Commission and the UK Government involved?

While European legislation exists to protect young people when it comes to their personal data online (e.g. date of birth and email address), self-regulation is encouraged in many other areas of the digital agenda.

For, as the European Commission acknowledges on its website, "…technology is changing our societies so fast that it is difficult for legislators to keep up. The adoption of new rules takes time, especially when they have to be agreed by 27 countries. This is why, in the interest

of child online safety, the European Commission encourages those who create new interactive tools to adopt rules and principles themselves (self-regulation)."

"Working together we will be setting the pace for the whole industry and have a great basis for fully empowering children online."

Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda

To give you some insight into what's going on, here's an overview of three key pan-European initiatives and the work of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

ICT Principles

26 companies from across the information and communications technology (ICT) sector have come together to develop the ICT Principles for the Safer Use of Connected Devices and Online Services by Children and Young People in the EU.

As digital technologies evolve, many companies across the value chain have an important role to play in helping children and young people to obtain the benefits and avoid the challenges and risks in the digital world.

The founding members of the Coalition that developed these Principles include BT, Facebook, France Telecom-Orange, Google, LG Electronics, Nokia, RIM, Stardoll, TalkTalk and Vodafone.

The Principles, which were announced in January 2012, focus on four key areas, namely Parental Controls, dealing with abuse/misuse, child sexual abuse content or illegal contact, privacy and control and education and awareness. Members pledge to:

1 Develop innovative ways of enhancing online safety and encouraging responsible use of the internet and internet access devices by children and young people

2 Empower parents and carers to engage with and help protect their children

3 Provide easily accessible, clear and transparent information about online safety and behaviour

4 Raise awareness of how – and to whom – to report abuse and concerns

For further information, go to:
http://www.gsma.com/ publicpolicy/wp-content/ uploads/2012/03/ ictprinciples.pdf

The CEO Coalition

In December 2011, 28 leading technology and media companies responded to the call by Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda, for a new Coalition of CEO representatives to make a better and safer internet for children.

The Coalition members include companies such as Apple, BSkyB, BT, Dailymotion, Deutsche Telekom, Facebook, France Telecom-Orange, Google, LG Electronics, Microsoft, Nintendo, Nokia, RIM, Samsung, Stardoll and Vodafone.

Members of the Coalition committed to take positive action throughout 2012 in the following five areas:

1 Simple tools for users to report harmful content and contact

2 Age-appropriate privacy settings

3 Wider use of content classification

4 Wider availability and use of Parental Controls

5 Effective takedown of child abuse material

Commenting on the launch of the Coalition, Commissioner Kroes said: "This new Coalition should provide both children and parents with transparent and consistent protection tools to make the most of the online world. The founding Coalition members are already leaders in children's safety online. Working together we will be setting the pace for the whole industry and have a great basis for fully empowering children online."

Find out more at:
http://ec.europa.eu/ information_society/ activities/sip/self_reg/ index_en.html

7

On average, children in Europe now start going online when they are seven

Safer Social Networking Principles

In 2008, the European Commission set up a European Social Networking Task Force to discuss guidelines for the use of social networking sites by children. Representatives of Europe's major social networks, including Facebook and MySpace, as well as researchers and child welfare organisations, worked together to develop The Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU, which were voluntarily adopted by the industry in February 2009.

The Principles have been assessed over time, with researchers registering as under-18s on the member websites and testing various statements including 'I can find safety tips/information', 'I can block a friend/decline a contact request' and 'I am able to delete/remove postings/pictures from my profile'.

For more information, visit:
**http://ec.europa.eu/
information_society/activities/
social_networking/eu_action/
selfreg/index_en.html**

UKCCIS

UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS)
www.education.gov.uk/ukccis/

Chaired by Ministers from the Department for Education and the Home Office, UKCCIS brings together over 180 organisations and individuals from government, industry, law enforcement, academia and charities to work in partnership to help keep children and young people safe online.

Members include the BBC, CEOP, Childnet, Facebook, IWF, London School of Economics, Moshi Monsters, Ofcom, UK Safer Internet Centre, TalkTalk and Vodafone.

Key UKCCIS achievements since 2008 include:

→ **The four main fixed line Internet Service Providers (ISPs), BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin, published a code of practice in October 2011, which will see all new customers making an active choice about Parental Controls by October 2012**

→ **Ministers have chaired roundtables to help progress active choice for computer, mobile and tablet users, such as Parental Control apps and in-store promotions of e-safety messages**

→ **The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre has led on the creation of UKCCIS advice on child internet safety**

→ **There has been widespread support for Safer Internet Day every year**

NEWS & VIEWS

Young film-makers rewarded

Childnet announced the winners of its 2012 film competition at the British Film Institute in July 2012. Marwood School (Barnstaple) won the primary school category with its illustrated film about teaching grandma to shop online, while Sandbach High School's film about how technology connects the world led the secondary school entries.
http://childnet.com/film-winning/

Childnet International
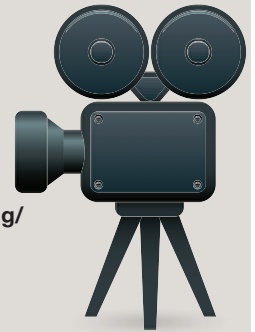
Google+

Launched in June 2011, more than 250 million people around the world now have access to Google+ to connect with friends and family. Google has since launched Google+ for tablets and Google+ Events.
www.google.com

Transforming learning through mobiles

The GSMA's Mobile Education initiative aims to accelerate the adoption of mobile education solutions, particularly mobile-enabled portable devices like e-Readers and tablets, in mainstream education settings.
**www.gsma.com/
connectedliving/meducation/**

GSMA

EUhackathon

Coding for child safety and creativity

Bath University student Tom Smith, who spent six months working at Vodafone, was in Brussels to witness the 24-hour hacking marathon.

Tom Smith

Above: The winning teams

Right: Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission, with Team SchoolpARTy

June 2012 saw the second EUhackathon take place in Brussels, drawing attention from the tech industry, politicians and gifted coders from 11 countries across the globe. Its purpose was simple: to encourage the development of tools, websites and applications that enhance a child's creativity or safety online and to involve young people in the process.

What is a hackathon?

A hackathon (a hacking marathon) is an event in which computer programmers work together intensively (e.g. non-stop for 24 hours) on the development of new software. Companies like Facebook, Foursquare and Google often run staff hackathons to encourage product innovation.

The event's tagline, 'hack4kids', resonated with the hackers, sponsors and organisers – with everyone acknowledging the importance of helping the younger generation to interact with technology in a positive way.

With the European Parliament just a few blocks away, the bringing together of the old guard – the parliamentarians and legislators – and the new guard – the coders and developers – was possible. A visit and speech of encouragement from Neelie Kroes, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda, and the incentive of a €5,000 prize spurred on the 39 coders to get their projects completed and presented to the jury within their 24-hour deadline.

> **"I'm so pleased you are hacking to make a better internet for kids. We are supporting you and I look forward to seeing your innovations."**
>
> **Neelie Kroes,** Vice President of the European Commission responsible for the Digital Agenda

24 hours and counting...

Event organiser Caroline de Cock kicked off the EUhackathon early on 20 June and the 11 teams and three individuals quickly set to work, clearly enjoying the spirit of the event. The competitors (aged between 18 and 42) were joined by 25, 12 to 15-year-olds, eager to test and critique the projects, and representatives from Vodafone, Orange, Google and Facebook were also on hand to give their expert advice and support.

Coders in the 'creativity' track came up with a range of ideas, from interactive games that encourage content creation through applications that enable kids to develop quizzes using Wikipedia data to an interactive projected piano that utilises Microsoft's Kinect hardware to encourage children to interact with technology. All the 'creativity' projects aimed to get children more engaged with the digital world by providing them with a firm foundation of knowledge and experience from an early age.

The 'safety' track was a fiercely-contested battle. Projects included a chat app that enables kids to converse confidentially and anonymously with counsellors via a Web browser, an app that uses Bluetooth to help parents control content for kids and a bullying application that enables teachers to analyse students' messages about their thoughts and feelings so that they can intervene with bullying issues early on.

At 13:30 on 21 June, the EUhackathon came to an end. Although not all the projects were fully developed, this was in no means due to a lack of effort and skill, rather it was a testament to the scale and ambition of the participants' ideas. Each team took to the stage for a five-minute pitch to the audience and jury, which was split into 'the experts' and 'the users'. The expert judges, including representatives from Vodafone, Orange, Facebook, Google, European Schoolnet, Insafe, Missing Children Europe and eNACSO, accounted for two-thirds of the overall score while the users' jury, made up of the 25 children in attendance throughout the competition and their teacher, accounted for the remaining third.

20-21 JUNE 2012
#h4k

Hacktastic!
The winners are revealed

Later, the event moved to the European Parliament for the awards ceremony, with the trophies and €5,000 prize being presented by MEP Sabine Verheyen, MEP Rózà Maria Gräfin von Thun und Hohenstein, MEP Sean Kelly and MEP Petru Luhan.

The 'creativity' track was won by Team Water, made up of Noora Vainio, Matti Nelimarkka and Nyyti Kinnunen from Finland, who decided to instil the foundations of programming in children from an early age. Their tool to make coding for kids easier in a browser-based setting was both positive and well-executed, utilising Waterbear, an existing toolkit for creating drag-and-drop programming languages. The team emphasised in their pitch to the jury that 'coding should be both easy and fun for kids'.

Team Bodoques from Spain and Italy triumphed in the 'safety' track. Luca Chiarandini, Diego Saez-Trumper and Eduardo Graells created a 'Red Eye Tool' that worked on two levels – as a browser plug-in to aid children in Web browsing and as a tool to classify content and analyse children's behaviour on the Web.

The idea focused on giving children a set time period to surf the Web with their allotted time increasing or decreasing depending on the sites they visited – visiting a 'bad' site would make their time tick away quicker, visiting a 'good' site, such as Wikipedia, would give them more time. The plug-in also promised crowdsourcing aspects, whereby parents' views and opinions about sites could be shared in an online community.

> **"We wanted to develop a system that enables kids to navigate the internet safely but not prohibit their usage."**
> **Team Bodoques**

Coding is our future

The message from the EUhackathon 2012 is clear: the issues of child creativity and safety online are important and the technology industry and policymakers want to see innovative technical solutions in these areas.

Involving young people in the judging process was particularly useful and, while the ideas developed at the event may not all be feasible, they can be considered a useful catalyst for further consideration and discussion. It was certainly a thought-provoking 24 hours in Brussels.

Jargonbuster

Bluetooth
A way of exchanging data over short distances between mobile devices.

Browser
Allows access to the Web (e.g. Google Chrome or Internet Explorer).

Crowdsourcing
A way of outsourcing tasks to a group of people online.

Drag and drop
Where a virtual object is selected and moved to a different location.

Plug-in
A set of software components that add capabilities to a larger software application (e.g. a video plug-in in a Web browser).

For more information, visit: http://2012.euhackathon.eu

EXPERT VIEW
Tony Neate

Following a 30-year police career, Tony Neate is now the CEO of Get Safe Online, the UK's leading source of information on protection against fraud, identity theft, viruses and many other problems encountered online.

www.getsafeonline.org

With nine out of ten children (91%) aged 5–15 living in a household with internet access and 41% of 12 to 15-year-olds now in possession of a smartphone, the need for young people to be aware of how to conduct themselves safely and securely online has never been greater.

Online viruses, hacking, spam emails and 'phishing' scams are just a few of the potential security threats that parents need to be aware of. While this may sound worrying, this shouldn't deter families from getting online and enjoying the many benefits the internet and other technologies offer.

Understanding the risks, spotting the warning signs and knowing how to act are the best ways to protect your child online.

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is a joint partnership between the UK Government, law enforcement, leading businesses and the public sector. It aims to provide computer users and small businesses with free, independent, user-friendly advice that will allow them to use the internet confidently, safely and securely.
www.getsafeonline.org

What are the potential risks for families and children?

Now that Web-enabled smartphones mean we can be online 24/7, we are spending more time and money on the Web. This, of course, attracts the attention of fraudsters and cyber-criminals who are constantly developing new ways to make money and target the vulnerable.

The potential risks for families are no different to that of any other Web user. Often, the main concern for parents is that they are not always as familiar with certain aspects of the Web as their children, making it difficult to understand what they do online or how best to protect them. Young people who have grown up with the internet are so comfortable with it they are sometimes a little too relaxed and open with what they share and how they behave online.

To this end, we all need to be savvy digital citizens – and if, as a parent, you can say this about yourself, you're most of the way there in being able to help your children to be the same.

The key online security risks include:

→ **Spyware infecting your computer so someone can steal your identity**

→ **Getting ripped off, having your identity stolen and falling for scams**

→ **Pop-ups and viruses messing up your computer**

→ **Someone taking over your computer and using it to target other people with things like spam and viruses**

→ **Being hit with spam and scam emails**

→ **Having your wireless network hacked**

→ **Someone using email or chat to bully, con or cheat you**

→ **Being conned into visiting fake websites and handing over personal information**

There's a lot at stake here – your family's privacy, time, money and even reputation – so it's better to pre-empt these issues rather than try to resolve them when it's too late.

What can I do?

Firstly, taking action to protect the computers, mobile phones and other devices used by your family can dramatically minimise the risk of you or your children falling victim to fraudsters. You can do this easily by:

→ **Installing anti-virus software, anti-spyware software and a firewall**

→ **Updating your operating system (e.g. Microsoft Windows or Apple OS)**

→ **Using up-to-date applications, such as your Web browser (e.g. Chrome or Safari)**

→ **Encrypting your wireless internet network**

→ **Not clicking on spam emails or text messages and blocking them if you can**

The Get Safe Online website at www.getsafeonline.org provides simple, step-by-step advice on each of these measures.

Secondly, it's important to talk to your child about being safe online, taking them through the potential risks and what they mean. This includes not just your home PC, but anywhere where internet access is involved, including mobile phones and games consoles. Be sure to listen to your child and answer any questions they may have – but don't be afraid to ask your own questions back to get a sense of what they are getting up to online and understand any potential risks.

Thirdly, your children need to be aware that what they do, share and how they behave online is just as important as having the latest security software. Increasingly, online criminals are relying on forms of 'social engineering' – in other words, using 'clever' tricks to encourage people to hand over personal or financial details for a seemingly legitimate reason.

Tony Neate of Get Safe Online explains the potential risks when it comes to your child's online and mobile security and outlines some simple steps your family can take to minimise them.

Online security

Being careful online involves things like:

→ **Using strong passwords (i.e. containing a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols such as # or *)**

→ **Not giving away too much personal information on blogs and social networking sites**

→ **Not opening email attachments or clicking on instant messages from people you don't know**

→ **Being aware of and knowing how to spot scams**

Simple measures – such as helping younger children to create a strong, but fun, password for their computer games – will go a long way in building the right attitude and sense of vigilance required to stay safe online.

Do smartphones bring any new risks?

As technology evolves, so do the methods cyber-criminals are using to target us. So, we always have to stay a step ahead.

Today, a growing threat is the increasing volume of malicious software (malware) being used by fraudsters to target smartphone users. More and more young people are using these mobile devices to access the internet – for social networking, downloading apps and games and, for older children, online banking or shopping.

Smartphones hold an abundance of personal and financial data so, in the event that it is lost or stolen, making sure your child secures their handset with a PIN or password is crucial.

Fraudsters have also begun using online app stores to lure smartphone users into downloading 'rogue apps' that can take control of phones, giving criminals free reign to make calls, send and intercept SMS and voicemail messages, and browse and download online content. This also gives them access to all personal and payment data stored on the phone. It's important to make

your child aware of the risks associated with 'rogue apps' and what checks they should make before downloading them.

Jargonbuster

Rogue app
A 'rogue app' is a piece of malicious software (malware) disguised as a mobile Web application (popularly known as an 'app'). Available via app stores, they might be disguised as 'free levels' to legitimate online games or even as security tools, but when you download the app, you also download the malware.

Take time out

The only way to protect your family is to take responsibility for your own security and empower your child to take responsibility for theirs. Although we may feel we don't have time for this, taking preventive measures today will save you a great deal of trouble or worry in the long term.

Get Safe Online Tips

WATCH

→ **…your child's website history and consider keeping the family computer in a common area so you can keep an eye on internet activity**

→ **…mobile phone bills and activity for your child's mobile phone – unexplained charges, rapid battery loss and unfamiliar applications can be warning signs of malicious software**

CHECK

→ **…your child's passwords are strong, containing a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols**

→ **…that phone bills are consistent with the agreed-upon monthly rate and do not include things like additional downloads**

DISCUSS

→ **…not giving out personal information to people or organisations they are not familiar with – just like they wouldn't in person**

→ **…how to surf smartly – for example, always checking reviews and ratings before downloading a new app on their mobile or buying goods from an online retailer**

Useful websites

www.actionfraud.org.uk

www.ceop.police.uk

www.childnet.com

www.getsafeonline.org

www.getsafeonline.org/media/
GetSafeOnline_RoughGuide.pdf

Mobiles and health

While having a mobile means young people can easily stay in touch and get help in emergencies, some parents are concerned about the potential health effects of mobile phones.

The majority of scientific opinion, supported by the World Health Organization (WHO), is that, from the research undertaken to date, there is no clear evidence that mobile phones or base stations present adverse risks to human health – and that there is no evidence that children are at special risk.

However, with the likelihood of today's younger population using mobile phones over a longer period, the WHO has identified further research into the use of mobiles by children of different ages as a priority and further research into use by children and long-term use is underway.

Vodafone closely monitors the results of such research and the views of organisations such as the WHO.

To help parents make an informed decision about their children's mobile use, Vodafone provides information and advice from the WHO and its linked organisations at **www.vodafone.com/sustainability**

You might also want to visit the WHO website at **www.who.int/en** where you'll find guidance about how to limit your exposure to radio frequency (RF) from mobiles, such as using a hands-free device, limiting the number or length of calls and texting rather than calling.

Did you know?
One in four teenage drivers in the US say they have texted while behind the wheel
(Source: Pew Internet November 2009)

Driving and phones

Is your son or daughter learning to drive? Perhaps they have already passed their test? If so, it's vital that they understand it's illegal to drive a vehicle or ride a motorbike while using a handheld mobile phone or other portable device.

Using a phone when driving increases the risk of having an accident. Research by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) shows that drivers who use a handheld or hands-free mobile phone are less aware of what's happening on the road around them, fail to see road signs and take longer to brake and stop.

If your child decides to use a hands-free mobile phone while they're driving, it's crucial that you remind them about the following:

→ **Even hands-free conversations cause distraction**

→ **The longer the call, the greater the distraction – keep calls short**

→ **Emotional or complex calls increase the risk of an accident**

→ **Let messages go through to voicemail**

→ **Never send or read text messages**

→ **Encourage friends to do the same**

Are you a professional involved in digital safety?

Vicki Shotbolt of The Parent Zone examines the reaction to the first issue of Digital Parenting and provides some insight into how 'turn to' professionals could use the new magazine to reach families.

When Vodafone launched Digital Parenting in late 2010, it took a bold step. A traditional magazine might seem an unusual medium considering the high-tech subject matter… but there was method to our madness. We knew that many parents still like to receive printed information and advice (they like the portability, ease of use and 'flickability') and we also wanted to produce free materials that teachers and other professionals could physically hand over to families. In addition, the magazine could be used to complement and drive traffic to the existing Vodafone parents' website (**www.vodafone.com/parents**).

Working with Vodafone to distribute the magazine to parents through 'turn to' professionals, we knew we'd hit a nerve when the initial print run of 10,000 ran out within days of publication. Following huge demand, we eventually distributed 250,000 copies of the magazine and this year, that figure will be even higher.

Little did we know back in 2010 that Digital Parenting would be used in so many different and creative ways by teachers, police officers, social workers and other professionals involved with digital safety. The magazine has been given out at school parents' evenings, training programmes for carers, e-safety workshops run by community liaison officers and doctors' surgeries, for example. One education department even organised a 'Digital Parenting Day' to get the message across to the wider community!

Shortly after the magazine was published, we surveyed over a thousand parents and a hundred professionals to gauge their reaction and assess its impact. The feedback was extremely positive and has helped to shape this second issue.

If you work with children and young people and are considering how you can make the most of Digital Parenting, here's a little inspiration from some previous recipients. We look forward to hearing about how you use the magazine this year!

What they said…

"It covers everything. It's thought-provoking for parents… and it's practical."
Representative of a Local Safeguarding Children's Board

"The magazine form is very appealing to parents… something they can pick up and flick through as well as read from cover to cover."
ICT and e-Learning Director

"What a brilliant piece of information. You have managed to cover nearly every angle of the digital world and I am sure that we will use much of the information enclosed."
Parent

"Really impressed… It's easy to read with many excellent pieces of advice."
Primary School Governor

The stats

93%
of parents and 98% of professionals would like to continue to receive the magazine

88%
of professionals thought it was better than other e-safety resources they had come across

80%
of parents had read all or part of Digital Parenting and most had also given it to others to read

79%
of parents reported being more knowledgeable as a result of reading the magazine

60%
of parents had done something as a result of reading the magazine, such as talking to their children and installing Parental Controls

Case studies

Discussion tool for student reviews

For Nick Edwards, deputy head of a secondary school in Hertfordshire, Digital Parenting provided an opportunity to engage with students and parents about e-safety issues as part of their bi-annual Academic Pastoral Review (APR). Tutors focused on the 'Digital Footprint' article during the review meetings – with tangible results. Every student has their own profile on the school network and, since discussing the magazine, the school has seen a decrease in certain activities (such as bullying and searching for inappropriate content) on school computers. One sixth former was even inspired to create his own version of Digital Parenting for younger students as part of his Extended Project Qualification (similar to AS-level).

Whole community involvement

Jon Tarrant, e-safety and e-learning manager at the Department of Education in Jersey, provided copies of Digital Parenting to all 37 schools on the island and, with Vodafone's permission, included selected articles in additional handouts for parents. Jersey's Department of Education also made sure that the magazine reached a wider audience by supplying it to local hairdressers, dentists and GP surgeries and even organised a 'Digital Parenting Day' in October 2011.

Resource for carers

As part of her role on a Safeguarding Board in the North West, Lynn Jackson trains practitioners in e-safety. She has used Digital Parenting extensively, including distributing it to Looked After Children residential services and providing copies as part of the induction programme for new foster carers. Lynn comments that the magazine helps to reinforce key e-safety messages and provokes parents and carers to think about how young people behave in the digital world.

Safer Internet Day collateral

Safer Internet Day was celebrated in Guernsey on 4 February 2012. Representatives of Facebook, Vodafone and the South West Grid for Learning were on hand at the event, which was supported by Airtel-Vodafone and Digital Parenting was given out to visitors.

We'd love to know how you use this second edition of Digital Parenting and hear any feedback you might have – please email us at: feedback@theparentzone.co.uk

Jargonbuster

Access control/filter
A bar that is put in place by e.g. an internet or mobile provider to prevent access to certain content

Application (app)
A piece of software, often designed to run on smartphones and other mobile devices

BBM (BlackBerry Messenger)
A free instant messaging app available on BlackBerry devices

Bluetooth
A way of exchanging data over short distances between mobile devices

Browser
Allows access to the Web (e.g. Google Chrome or Internet Explorer)

Cloud computing
Software services and applications that are provided via the internet rather than installed on your computer (e.g. iCloud)

Coding
Another word for computer programming

Cookie
A piece of text stored on your computer by a Web browser that remembers information about you, such as websites you've visited

Crowdsourcing
A way of outsourcing tasks to a group of people online

Cyberlocker
A third party service for storing and sharing files, such as documents or music

Digital footprint
The trail you leave from digital activities and interactions, such as Web searches and uploaded photos

Drag and drop
Where a virtual object is selected and moved to a different location

Geo-tagging
Where geographical identification data is added to things like photos or online messages via a GPS device, such as a smartphone

GPS (Global Positioning System)
A global navigation satellite system used for things like in-car navigation

Hackathon
A 'hacking marathon' during which computer programmers work together intensively (e.g. non-stop for 24 hours) on the development of new software

IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity)
A unique number on your mobile, usually printed inside the battery compartment
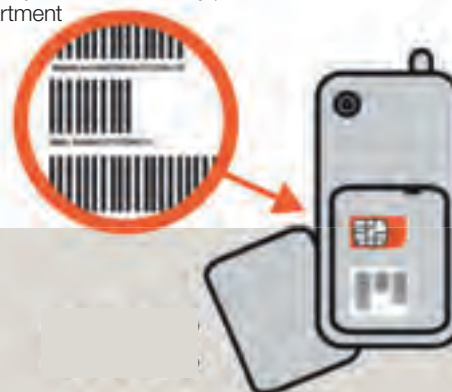
In-app purchase

Additional content and features available for purchase once you're using an app

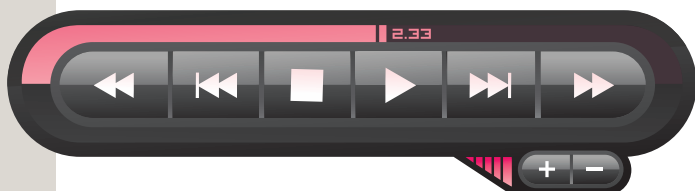### IP address (Internet Protocol address)

A unique number that identifies where you're accessing the internet from

Malware

Malicious software, such as viruses and worms, that infiltrates computers

MP3

MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 – a common format for digital music files

Peer-to-peer (P2P)

A network on which users can share files, such as music

Phishing

Unsolicited emails or texts sent in an attempt to get personal information (e.g. passwords and credit card details) from you

PIN (Personal Identification Number)

A way of locking your mobile and other devices

Plug-in

A set of software components that add capabilities to a larger software application (e.g. a video plug-in in a Web browser)

Premium rate (or phone-paid service)

A paid mobile service (e.g. ringtone downloads or competition entries)

Rogue app

A piece of malicious software disguised as a mobile Web application

Spam

Unsolicited email or text messages

Spyware

A type of malicious software that collects information about you without your knowledge

Stream ripping app

A way of saving MP3 files from streamed music on the internet on to a computer

Tablet

A mobile computer, such as the iPad or Samsung Galaxy Tab

Tag

A way of assigning a piece of information or an image to a particular person

Wi-Fi

Broadband without wires

Various sources, including: www.wikipedia.org.uk

For a more detailed jargonbuster, go to: www.vodafone.com/parents/jargonbuster

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vodafone

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