Parent and Carer Guide to Staying Safe Online

Children and young adults are accessing the internet more than ever, using laptops, phones, tablets, computers, mobile devices, televisions, game consoles and more. The internet is very much part of modern-day life. For children and young adults the internet is a great way to connect with their friends and learn new things, <u>but it is very important to stay safe.</u> Just like in real life, children and young adults need their parents and carers help to stay safe online. Here are a few ways we feel that is important to make sure you and your children are not in danger when using the internet.

Boundaries
Be clear about when and where your child can use the internet and what they can and cannot do.

Communal Internet Use
Encourage your child to only use the internet in communal areas. If your child has a phone and uses the internet in their bedroom consider downloading an app i.e. SafeT Children Tracker, TeenSafe as one way to monitor what your child is doing online.

Screen time
Set rules for screen time and stick to them. At bedtime switch all phones and tablets off and ensure these are not in the bedroom.

Parental Controls
Set up parental controls on your home broadband and all internet-enabled devices your child uses. This will help to ensure your child does not access material that is not suitable for them.

Personal Information
Discuss with your child the type of information they can share online and what they shouldn't share. This is very important, Your child should never give any personal information online such as name, school name, where they live, their age etc. **Never give out passwords.**

There forever
Ensure your child understands that once a picture or a video has been posted online most people can see it and may be able to download it, it's not just yours anymore.

Search engines
Make sure your child is using child-safe search engines, such as Swiggle or KidzSearch. On other search engines, for example Google and Youtube, switch on the 'safe search' setting.

Cyberbullying
Talk to your child about being a good friend online, and how our words and actions will hurt even if we cannot see a person's reaction to them.

Age Restrictions
Do your research – check the age ratings on apps, games and social network websites. If you would not let your child watch a 15 certificate film, you should not let them play a game with the same rating.

<u>Feeling safe</u>
Tell your child that if something online makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or worried to leave the website and tell an adult straight away.