

Five online safety messages for parents and carers of primary school students



Here are five image-sharing tips parents could use to help ensure their children grow with the knowledge that will keep them safe now and into the future.

1. Show your children what respect looks like:

- If you want to take pictures or videos of your children, ask them if it's OK first.
- Explain why you want to do it – for example, "I'm so proud of you riding your first scooter, I want to take a video and send it to Grandpa".
- Let your children pick the pictures or videos they like best.
- Don't post or share videos or pictures of your children if they don't want you to.
- If your children ask you to take down their pictures or videos, take them down – even if they originally agreed it was OK to post them.

2. Protect your children's privacy:

- Share pictures and videos of your children only with people you know and trust – e.g. via email, text or closed family messaging channels.
- Avoid posting photos or videos that might identify where your child lives or goes to school.
- Remember that pictures and videos posted online may never disappear completely, even if you delete them, as they may have been copied or shared by other people.

3. Talk with your children about what's safe and respectful and what's not:

- Explain that we must always get the other person's permission before we take their picture or share it with others.
- Praise your children for doing the right thing – e.g. "I was very pleased that you stopped and asked Layla's permission before you took her photo".
- Be clear about which images are safe to share, and which are not – e.g. "It's OK to share pictures of our new kitten, but I don't want you to share any pictures of yourself without asking me first".

- Explain that if your child sends a picture or video to one person, other people might end up seeing it.
- Explain that children shouldn't share pictures or videos of people with their clothes off or people kissing or touching each other, and that they should tell you at once if anyone sends them a picture like this.
- Caution your children to tell you at once if someone asks them to send a picture that makes them uncomfortable, if someone they haven't met in real life asks for their picture, or if someone asks them to take a picture and keep it a secret.
- Encourage your children to keep talking to you about what they're doing online, what pictures they are seeing and sharing, and how it makes them feel.

4. Encourage empathy for others:

- Explain that we must always think about the other person before we take and share their picture.
- Encourage your children to think about how pictures and videos affect other people – e.g. 'How would you feel if someone posted an embarrassing video of you on YouTube?'.
• Explain that we should never share pictures or videos that make someone else feel sad, embarrassed, angry or scared. If someone is upset about us taking a picture or video of them, we delete it and say sorry.

5. Think about what behaviour you're modelling:

- Do your children hear you making comments about how other people look in their posts or videos? Are your comments nice or derogatory?
- Do your children see you taking funny photos or videos of other people as a joke? Do you check that the other person feels OK about it and respect their wishes if they tell you not to?



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