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In this edition

www.esafety-adviser.com

Hi there, I'm Alan Mackenzie.

I'm an independent consultant specialising in online safety, specifically within education to children, young people, staff, charities and other organisations.

I'm a strong believer that technology, for the most part, is neutral; behaviour is the most important aspect.

To understand behaviour, we have to be a part of children's lives in order to understand what they're doing with technology and why.

We have to be curious and guide them to realise the wonderful opportunities that the online world gives to all of us, and be there to support them when they need it.

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Foreword from
Alan Mackenzie

Where did 2021 go? I seem to be saying that more often as I get older. "Where did this week go?" is a common one right now.

But here we are, December 2021, so what has changed in the last year? A lot but not a lot. Confused? A lot has got worse, much worse, but not a lot has changed from the government or technology companies perspective, although to be fair there is some forward movement. Quite how that will pan out remains to be seen. Lots of talk doesn't always culminate in positive action.

I'll briefly talk about this at the beginning of this edition and then, for the rest, I want to go through some of the basics of online safety again. Especially at this time of year when children may be getting new technology, I think it's important that we remind ourselves of some of those basic principles which can often get lost in the confusing and fast-moving area of technology.

I have tried to include something for everyone so I hope you enjoy this edition and, until next year, I wish you and your family a wonderful, relaxing break.

Alan

ONLINE SAFETY

Reflecting on 2021

It's often said that online safety is an ever-evolving, fast-moving area, and 2021 would definitely support that. There's no doubt that lockdown and the various restrictions had a huge negative effect on some serious issues such as child sexual exploitation, so I would like to have a quick reflection over the year to briefly see what has been going on and, what is (hopefully) being done to curb much of this. I'm not covering everything, just the aspects which give me the greatest concern and I have included some links (in **teal** colour) if you would like to read more.

Of particular concern is the sexual aspect and this takes many different forms, e.g.:

- Children and young people (particularly girls) being sent sexual content or individuals requesting sexual content.
- Artificial intelligence which is being used to 'nudify' women.
- Algorithms which show sexual content.
- Self-generated sexual content, including self-generated where a person has been groomed/coerced into taking and sharing.

With all of these and more we are seeing the statistics getting bigger. In early December a report was released showing that young people are unlikely to report receiving or being asked to take/share sexual content for a number of reasons, including the fact that they don't think

anything will be done about it (more on this later in the magazine).

Meanwhile the use of artificial intelligence technology continues to grow and much of this is good, but where there's good there is always bad, where AI is being used to nudify women. **Deepfakes** have been around for some time now and they're getting better, but so too is technology which is being used to change an image of a fully-clothed person and **turn it into a nude**. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to work out that the vast majority of these images are of females which are then shared online.

Harassment against girls and violence against women is on the rise, much of this being fuelled online. Most people will be aware of the **Everyone's Invited** website and at the time of writing this article there were over 54,000 testimonies.

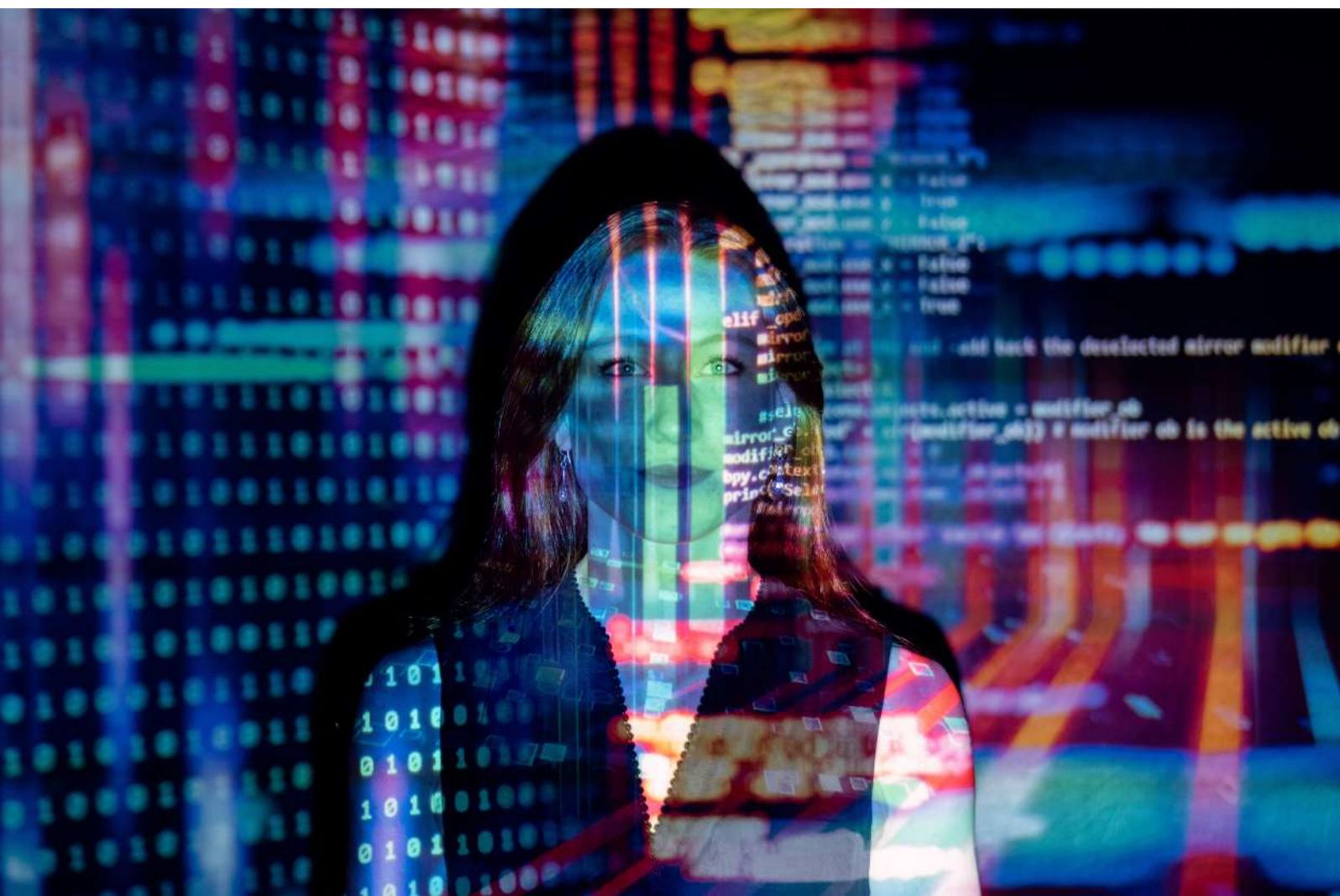A couple of months ago the organization 5Rights Foundation released **new research** which showed that children are being targeted with sexual and other concerning content. To test the experiences of children the researchers created social media accounts based on a real child and reflected the behaviour of a child. The outcomes of this research revealed some stark results, e.g.:

• Within hours, the accounts were targeted with direct messages from adults offering pornography.
• The algorithms were serving suicide, self-harm, eating disorder and sexual content.

Within the research there is a statement which hammers home an important point:

"A child that tells their true age, however young, is offered content and experiences that in almost any other context would be illegal."

We know that misinformation and disinformation is increasing, not just related to Covid-19 but many other areas. We also know that scams, fraud and identity theft are on the increase as

organised crime gangs use technology for their own illegal gains.

As I'm writing this article, at certain points I have stopped and had to think about what I put in and what I leave out. It might have been easier for me to write a brief paragraph and stated, "Everything has and is increasing." It's no wonder parents, schools and the children themselves are having difficulty, but there's only so much we can do, it sometimes feels that were just applying sticking plasters and that the whole responsibility, even as victims, lies with ourselves. At some point technology companies and governments around the world need to take meaningful action, not endless spin and meaningless policy statements. Are we starting to see light at the end of the tunnel?

The Online Safety Bill

I have written about this bill in past magazines, it has been under intense scrutiny by a joint parliamentary committee for several months in the latter part of this year and the bill is potentially groundbreaking, however there is concern from many that it is so big and so far reaching it could be significantly watered down once it reaches parliament. But there are also concerns from others that the bill doesn't go far enough.

What is the bill designed to do?

Briefly the bill mainly targets tech companies and imposes a legal duty of care. There are 3 main aspects:

- To prevent the spread of illegal content and activity, e.g. child abuse images, hate crimes.
- To protect children from harmful material.
- To protect adults from legal but harmful content.

Whilst those 3 points sound quite simple, they're really complex. For example, what is meant by harmful? Moving aside what is legal/illegal, how do you determine what is appropriate and

inappropriate? Something which may be appropriate for a 14 year old may not be appropriate for a 9 year old. A definition of what is legal but harmful is a tricky one and as yet I have not seen a clear definition.

The bill is largely aimed at tech companies who, in the past, have been woefully poor at self-regulation, promising much but delivering little in terms of safety and wellbeing. To be fair to the tech companies, it isn't their fault that we are seeing many of the issues, but it is their platform which delivers and exacerbates the issues and therefore have a moral and ethical duty of care to all users.

The new Secretary of State, Nadine Dorries, wants the bill to go much further, including introducing an option within the bill for technology executives to face prison if they fail to act. Quite how that would be enforced is anybody's guess but the fact that she is focussed and fighting is very positive.

But even now there are some glaring omissions which thankfully have been picked up by the scrutiny committee and reported to Parliament:

- Cyberflashing - where unsolicited sexual images and videos are sent to someone, e.g. via AirDrop. This is obviously a really concerning one as the image/video is often sent by someone who is in the immediate vicinity, which can cause emotional distress.Scam adverts which cause very significant financial and emotional harm to many individuals.
- Pornography and age verification. This is a particular concern given the free and easy access, and the fact that many (boys in particular) are using pornography as a means of sex education. Proper age verification was supposed to have been legally implemented a few years ago but it was dropped a couple of days before the Act was due to come into force due to 'administrative errors.' Since then, government has repeatedly stated it will be coming back in.

In the past few weeks, Germany has decided that pornography websites that do not apply effective age verification can be blocked. However this (as in the UK) relates to commercial pornography, in other words the content that has to be paid for to access. But there is a glimmer of hope in relation to freely available content not only on websites but on social media too. Because this content could be classed as 'user generated' it will (or should) fall within the scope of the Online Safety Bill. Fingers crossed!

- Anonymous abuse - where offenders hide behind anonymity in order to abuse others in a variety of ways.

The bill has a long way to go yet. Despite government promises it's unlikely we're going to see this new law coming out before 2023 but, remaining positive, at least action is finally being taken.

I've only scratched the surface, I didn't want this article to turn out to be some sort of doom and gloom scaremongering piece, but as you can see there is so much going on. I haven't even touched on other areas such as:
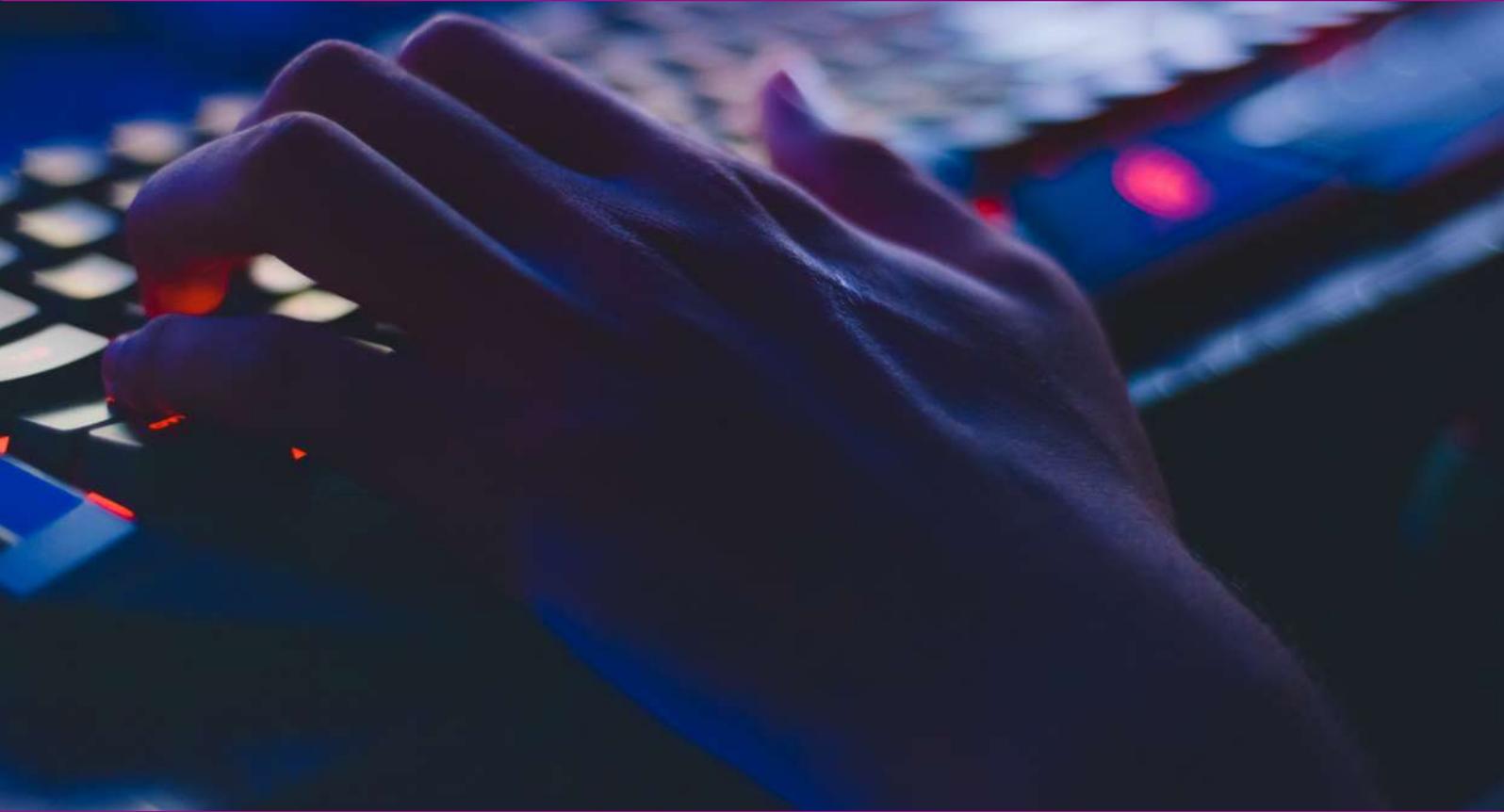
- The **Age Appropriate Design Code** which is a really positive legal step forward relating to how apps and online services are designed, as long as it is enforced properly..
- The Facebook whistleblower **Frances Haugen** who has revealed hugely concerning issues about the practices within Facebook and their related apps.
- And so much more.

2021 has been an interesting year and it doesn't look as though 2022 will slow down at all. Many of the issues are out of our control so what's important for us, the ordinary you and me, is that we keep ourselves up to date as much as we can and we do the very best for our children, because realistically that's all we can do and that's the purpose of this magazine, to give a little help.

Alan

Online Safety - The Basics

When it comes to online safety one thing is certain, the basic principles rarely change. These principles serve as the cornerstone for everything else, regardless of the technology, the game, the app or anything else.

In this section I'm going to cover some of these basics which, if nothing else, serve as a timely reminder.

Much of the advice I see is based on a one-size-fits-all solution, but there are two things wrong with that advice: firstly one piece of advice doesn't fit everyone and secondly there's no such thing as a solution.

When I get invited to a school to speak to parents I describe a concept called **Safe**, **Smart** and **Social**. These are loosely tied to age and this concept allows me to explain things in an age-appropriate way, whilst also allowing me to advise options (not solutions). Why not solutions? Because everyone is different: every child is different, every family is different. One piece of advice may fit one family but not another.

Safe - this is for very young children, 1 to 6 years, we keep these young children as safe as possible, what we commonly call the walled-garden approach. To use a good analogy, e.g. swimming, when we take them swimming the first few times we're in the shallow end with them, there's a lifeguard, the child has armbands on, we're nurturing and showing them what to do whilst having fun at the same time. In other words, we are mitigating every possible risk as much as possible.

This transfers to the online world really well: we have safeguards in place such as internet filters, we only allow pre-approved apps and games, we check out those apps and games before the child

uses them. We play with them and show them what to do if/when something goes wrong.

Smart - as children are growing up we need to start loosening restrictions very gradually. Smart is for children roughly 7 to 11 years. Again the swimming pool analogy works well: we take off those armbands and see how they get on, they're still in the shallow end and we're in the pool with them. They're learning, becoming more confident and stronger and eventually we can leave them in the pool, whilst still keeping a watchful eye on them and what they're doing.

Again, this analogy transfers online really well. We can't keep an eye on our children 24/7, as much as we might like to. They have to be able to grow up, we have to allow them to take risks (in a managed way), to find out what works, what doesn't and what to do if something goes wrong.

Social - this is the most difficult one of all. The Social concept is for those children moving through adolescence, roughly 11 years onwards. They're unlikely to want you at the swimming pool, they would rather be there with their friends and having fun. They'll take risks and push more boundaries. They might meet other people their own age and form relationships, that's a natural part of growing up. At this stage restrictions need to be lifted even more as they get older, they need the freedom to explore, have privacy, take risks, push those boundaries, because if they can't they're unlikely to be able to build resilience, and resilience-building is fundamental to growing up.

In my talks with parents I go into more detail but hopefully you can see the basic principle. But there's one overriding point which I think is the most important of all:

Whatever freedoms a child has, it is at the comfort level of the parent, not the child, regardless of their age.

Children can appear to be tech-savvy but this is a smokescreen, tech-savvy does not mean risk aware. So what do we mean by risk?

It would be impossible to go through all the risks and there's no such thing as a list of all the risks. To simplify this we use what is commonly called the 4 C's: content, contact, conduct and commercialism.

These 4 C's are really useful for many reasons:

- They are simple to understand.
- You don't have to know every risk and issue.
- They allow you to consider and investigate the potential concerns.
- They can be used as conversation starters with children

CONTENT - if a child is allowed to play this game, download this app, use an online service, what can they see, what content are they subjected to? Are there filters we can use? Are there age restrictions?

CONTACT - when they are using their technology, playing games, using apps, who are they talking to? Are you happy with this? Can you turn chat off? Are there any block/report features?

CONDUCT - this describes the behaviour of the child. If allowed to use play this game, use this app, how will they behave?

COMMERCIALISM - the internet, all the apps, games and services are driven by commercialism. Many of these services are free, but they have to make money somehow. We're all used to ads and the fact our data is farmed in order to show us targeted and relevant ads, but commercialism also includes scams, identity theft, fraud etc.

New Devices for Xmas?

Many children and young people will be excited about getting new devices for Xmas.

The holidays are a time of joy and being together, and if your children are receiving new devices it's also a perfect time to talk to them about safe and appropriate use.

Whether it's a new device, a new game, a new app or anything else, the principles mentioned in the preceding pages are much the same.

Technology can often be used as a tool to protect children but technology is NEVER a solution, this is marketing spin which can lead to a false sense of security. Protective technology is just a tool, and like any other tool it can be manipulated and bypassed. This tool has to work in conjunction with other tools, for example:

- Education, at school and at home.
- Awareness and keeping up to date.
- Vigilance and curiosity.
- Talking with our children, which is the most important of all.

All of these tools have to work together in order to protect our children as much as possible. We have to remember that the internet, games, apps etc. are rarely designed with younger children in mind, and often not with older children in mind (even with the common age restriction being 13 years). Predominantly, they're designed to make money.

So what technology tools are available to us?

Technology Tools

There are so many different devices, features within apps and games, filters and much more, I don't want this section to go into detail, that would be impossible. Rather I want to point you in the right direction to what I believe are the best resources available to you so that you can make the right choices for your family and your household.

The best way to think about this is to think in stages - your house, the devices, apps and games.

House

There's a good chance that you have a broadband line coming into your house in which all the incoming and outgoing data passes. All broadband providers enable you to filter the content that comes in via a broadband (internet) filter. Modern filters are really good, allowing you to choose what is or is not appropriate and many allow you to set up profiles, so that you can have a different level of filtering (or no filtering at all) for particular persons in the house (e.g. adults and children) or even different devices. All the filters I know of are completely free and usually all you need to do is to log into your broadband account and enable the filter.

Devices

Different devices work in different ways and have different features. For example gaming stations, phones, tablets, PC's Macs, smart devices such as smart speakers and more. This can make it difficult if you're not used to finding your way around technology settings, particularly as some of them are not very user-friendly.

But the features that are available can be really useful, such as preventing in-game purchases, preventing downloading age-inappropriate games, allowing or disallowing chat and much more.

Apps and Games

This is often the difficult one. Some of the features that are available are quite similar, e.g. blocking and reporting. Some are completely different and in some apps and games they are non-existent. I have reviewed many hundreds of apps and games in my time and it is disappointingly rare to find good, effective parental controls. This is changing, very slowly, but there's still a long way to go.

The 4 C's

This is where the 4 C's really come into their own. Consider the technology that is within your home and who has access to that technology. Which devices does your child have access to and are there appropriate safeguards on that technology?

House - have you enabled the internet filter and set appropriate 4C restrictions in relation to the age of your child?
Devices - have you set device restrictions?
Apps and games - do you and your child know what features are available within the apps and games they are using? This could be inappropriate language filters, blocking and reporting features and other parental controls.

Where to go for more practical information.

As basic as this is, it can still get very confusing. Thankfully there is help at hand. On the Internet Matters page **HERE** there is a full guide which will take you through all the features that are available on all your devices and how to set them up. There is also a 'Safe Checklist' which is really useful.
For advice about the features in apps and games take a look at Common Sense Media **HERE** and search on that app/game.

REMEMBER - technology is just a tool, not a solution to protect children.

Internet Matters are continually putting out incredibly useful information and resources for parents, one of which is The Online Together Project.

A common concern is how do you strike up conversations about certain topics with children? It's a very understandable concern, particularly if you don't know a lot about a topic, and that's where The Online Together Project can help.

It is designed to help children (6+), parents and carers to develop their critical thinking skills, encouraging a positive and inclusive culture online by:

- Helping children to be prepared and respond to experiences they may encounter online.
- Encourage confidence using technology regardless of background.

The first phase of the project looks at tackling gender stereotype. It's an interactive tool can be used alone, together with their peers, in the classroom or at home with parents and carers.

Essentially the tool is a quiz, but it's more than that. You start by picking your age (6-10, 11-13, 14+), the number of players and whether you are playing with an adult. You then get to choose an avatar and start the quiz.

After each answered question you will be informed if the answer was correct, which is then followed by a 'What you need to know" section, advice for parents and carers and further questions to discuss.

It's a wonderful addition by Internet Matters and I'm sure many parents will find it useful. I would also add that I think it could be really useful in the classroom to strike up conversations, discussion and debate.

https://www.internetmatters.org/the-online-together-project/

Online Sexual Harassment

Young people's rates of reporting online sexual harassment and abuse are 'shockingly low'.

At the beginning of December 2021, University College London (UCL) Institute of Education in collaboration with others released a new study which shows a concerning fact: young people aged 12 to 18 who receive or are asked to share sexual images are unlikely to report to their school, to parents or to social media platforms with many young people, particularly girls, reporting that the practice is 'normalised'.

Why don't they report? Because they don't think anything will be done, fear of victim blaming or that reporting will make matters worse.

The study involved 480 young people across the UK in which:

- 51% who received unwanted sexual content or had their image shared reported doing nothing about it.
- Of those who did do something, 25% told a friend, 17% report the matter to the social media platform, but only 5% reported to their parents and 2% to their school.

Quite often people think that this is older males who are harassing young girls but over the years things have changed significantly. It is entirely possible that this harassment is coming from known males, including males in the girls peer groups.

Within the report there are 5 key findings:

1. Social media enables much of this abuse, e.g. Snapchat and the use of shout-outs, streaks, score points, no age verification measures and Instagram through direct messages and group chat.
2. Sexual harassment overwhelmingly impacts girls. Girls feel under pressure, disgusted, embarrassed and confused.
3. Abuse is often influenced by gender norms. Boys are rewarded for sharing images of girls in some sort of masculinity status whereas girls are shamed and victim-blamed.
4. Young people will rarely report image-based abuse due to very little relevant and useful support.
5. There is a need for more effective and age-appropriate sex education. We're starting to see this with more updated PSHE, Relationships Education and Sex and Relationships Education in schools, but many of these areas are very new to teachers.

The fact that many girls are reporting this as 'normal' is concerning in itself and this is just a part of the wider concerns around the harassment and violence against women reporting that we're seeing.

Easy access to pornography, content-driven algorithms, marketing, lack of education around areas such as consent and respect, poorly designed apps and even worse reporting features where action is rarely taken. All of these and more have their part to play which makes this an enormously difficult challenge, but this challenge has to start at home where we help, guide and support our children, which includes those important conversations around what is right and what is wrong, even if those conversations are difficult ones to have.

Support and Guidance

Ensure your child (over 13) is aware of the Report Harmful Content service which you can find **HERE** and the Gurls Out Loud website **HERE**.

Use the AskTheAwkward resources from CEOP to strike up those difficult conversations **HERE**.

You can read more and download the full report from UCL **HERE**.

How can I......?

This section gives links to advice and guidance to common questions I am asked.

How can I find out what features are available to protect my child when playing Roblox?

Roblox is a wonderful world of adventure played by millions of children, young people and adults around the world and there are various features that can be enabled/disabled such as chat, privacy, reporting abuse etc.

There is a really useful parent guide, produced by the UK Safer Internet Centre **HERE**.

I know my teenage son/daughter won't always talk to me about things, how can I give them advice about reporting content?

There is a relatively new service available called 'Report Harmful Content' where a person (13-18) can report certain content and get help to have that content removed. Take a look yourself to see what can be reported and discuss the service with your teenager. You can find the RHC website **HERE**.

How can I talk to my child about personal information, what to share and what not to share online?

Personal information and being careful about what you share is one of the fundamental learning objectives for any child, young person and adult for a host of different reasons. There's a really useful little guide for you on the ThinkUKnow website **HERE**.

How can I make gaming safer for my child?

Gaming is hugely popular with children for many good reasons but as we all know, it comes with risks and issues. What are skins and loot boxes? Should my child be chatting with others? How do you know what is appropriate?

See **HERE** for a gaming guide and **HERE** for a guide to in-game chat.

How can I set up the new devices I have bought my child so that they are safer?

There are so many devices, each with individual settings it can be really hard for parents, but setting up devices before they are given to children is a really important step. You can see a guide to parental controls and help for setting up devices **HERE**.

How can I set up YouTube so that the content is appropriate for their age?

In the past there was only one level of filtering, called restricted mode. In 2021 YouTube introduced 3 levels of filtering which give parents further choice about what is appropriate for their child. Called 'Supervised Experience' you can see a useful guide **HERE** and don't forget YouTube Kids for younger children.

How can I.....?

How can I talk to my teenager about online relationships?

It can be difficult for many different reasons to talk to children and young people about their online activities. For many, online is where relationships start. The education team at CEOP have produced some great resources for parents called AskTheAwkward which will help, you can find them **HERE**.

My teenage daughter has been receiving requests for nude images. How can I help her?

This behaviour is abhorrent and sometimes very difficult to investigate for many reasons, such as anonymity from the sender. The Internet Watch Foundation and Childline have put together a handy website with some facts and tips which you can find **HERE**.

My son/daughter is spending too much time online. How can I get them to spend less time on their devices?

Whilst time is important, what they are doing is more important. Spending 5 hours watching cat videos isn't the same as spending 5 hours learning something new and socialising with their friends. For some handy screen time tips and advice take a look **HERE**.

I know the basics of online grooming but I would like to know more. How can I learn more about it and how can I protect my child?

Grooming is the act of establishing a relationship in order to form a trusting relationship. Often it is talked about in relation to sexual grooming but it's much more than that, it can also be other criminal activity such as drug mules etc. To find out more take a look **HERE**.

I have no interest in social media but my children do. How can I learn more?

Social media in particular is a fast-moving area with new apps coming out all the time. You don't need to keep updated with all the apps out there, but you do need to be aware of the ones your children are using. See **HERE** for more advice about safe use, benefits, concerns and much more.

I have no interest in gaming but my son is never off Fortnite. I would like to learn more so that I can be more aware, how can I do this?

Gaming is hugely popular and for many children it is a primary way of socialising and staying in touch with their friends. But it comes with risks, so it's good to increase your knowledge which you can do **HERE**.

FAMILY VIDEO GAME DATABASE

Andy Robertson is the editor of AskAboutGames and has written for national press and broadcast about video games and families for over 15 years. He has just published the Taming Gaming book with its Family Video Game Database.

Video games are often considered a distraction from education or something that parents and teachers need to minimise to avoid them getting out of hand. We hear lots of stories about children addicted to violent games and are understandably concerned.

However, video games are media. Like books and films and music, children need help finding an experience that is both appropriate and enjoyable to them.

Created by a small enthusiastic team of parents and carers The Family Video Game Database was set-up to help parents and teachers find games they actually want children to play. You can look up games like Grand Theft Auto or Call of Duty to check their ratings. But then get suggestions of younger rated games as an alternative for younger children.

The database also offers lists of useful games that you can filter by System, Age, Duration etc:
(Click on the yellow text to be taken straight to the web page).

- **Educational Games**
- **Walk in Someone Else's Shoes**
- **Solve a Mystery**
- **Find Calm**

The database is also backed by a hardback book **Taming Gaming** that is available on Amazon and elsewhere. Both have been created by journalist Andy Robertson who has worked with video games and families for over 15 years.

www.taminggaming.com

If you're not aware of Meta, essentially it's the new name given by Facebook and their family of other apps (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook Messenger) whilst they transition into the new 'meta age.' All this means is that they are getting more involved in virtual reality, they see this as the future, the 'metaverse'. Some readers may remember Second Life, it was much the same thing but never really went anywhere, but we're in a different time now and whenever Facebook does something they do it big.

But increasingly Facebook (Meta) have been under intense scrutiny, not least of which is because of the whistleblower **Frances Haugen** and the tens of thousands of documents she leaked showing hugely concerning practices at Facebook.
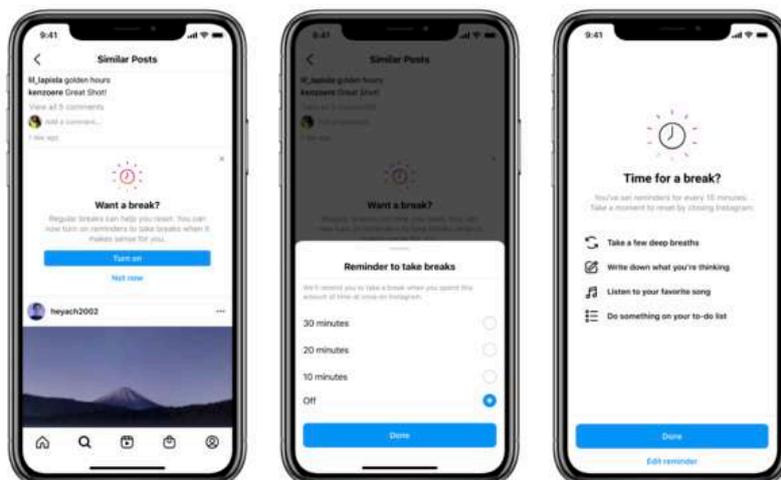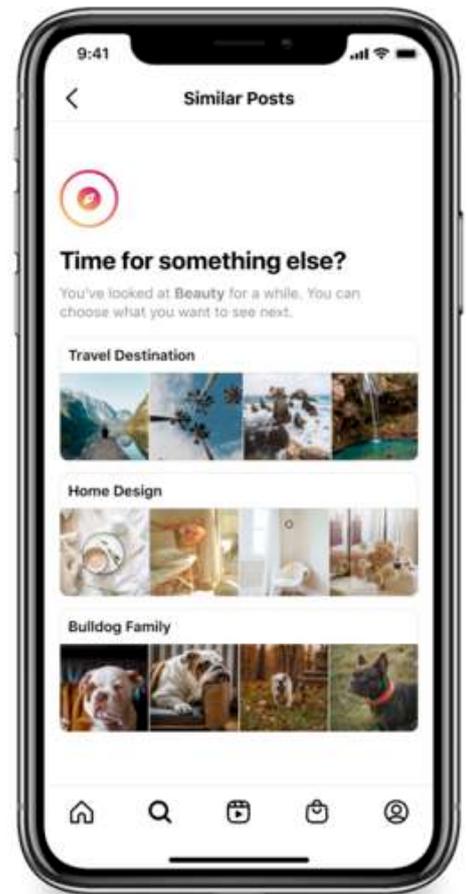
Equally, Meta and other technology companies are coming under increasing scrutiny and legislation in regards to their platforms, content, algorithms and more (see the Online Safety Bill)

Recently Meta has announced some significant changes that are coming to Instagram. Titled "Raising the Standard for Protecting Teens and Supporting Parents" where they state they will:

- Take a stricter approach to what is recommended to teens.
- They will stop people from tagging or mentioning teens that don't follow them.
- Teens will be 'nudged' towards different topics if they've been dwelling on one topic for a long time.
- They are launching a **'Take a Break'** feature.
- And they are launching tools for parents to see how much time their teens spend on Instagram and set time limits, plus a new educational hub for parents.

These changes are very welcome, my only disappointment is that it has taken so long and it will be interesting to see if other companies follow suit.

You can read more about the changes **HERE** which should be coming early 2022.

TikTok

Family Safety Mode and Screentime Management

TikTok is going from strength to strength, their user base doesn't seem to be slowing down at all and for most users it's a fun, interactive, social platform. But as with any user-to-user content-driven media it doesn't come without risks

Historically, social media platforms have been quite slow in their response to public concerns and, although there is still much they can do, TikTok do seem to be responding with new features quite quickly in order to make the platform more appropriate.

Account Privacy

By default, all new accounts for children under the age of 16 are set to private by default. This is a relatively new feature and only applies to new accounts, so it's worth checking the account your child uses to see whether it is public or private.

Suggest Your Account to Others

As with account privacy, this is turned off by default for under 16's, but again it is worth checking as it can be easily turned on.

Direct Messages

Private messaging is a feature of most social media but within TikTok you have to be over 16 to use DM's. As a parent you can turn this on/off through Family Pairing, which I will mention on the following page.

Family Pairing

Family Pairing allows parents to customise the safety settings according to the needs of the child and there are 8 features available.

Screen time management

This is where you can decide how long your child can spend on TikTok each day.

Restricted Mode

You can restrict content that may not be appropriate to the age of the user.

Search

You can either allow or disallow your child to search for content, people, hashtags or sounds.

Discoverability

This simply means whether the account is public or private, which you can manage. By default it is turned off for under 16's.

Suggest account to others

Decide whether your child's account can be recommended to others or not.

Liked Videos

You can decide who can view the videos your child liked

Comments

You can decide who can comment on your child's videos.

Direct messages

Otherwise known as private messaging, you can limit who can send messages to the connected account or turn DM's off completely. DM's are turned off by default for users under 16.

Linking Accounts

1. Tap Profile in the bottom right.
2. Tap the 3-line icon top right.
3. Go to Family Pairing.
4. Tap Parent or Teen.
5. Follow the instructions.

Family Pairing Controls

1. Tap Profile in the bottom right.
2. Tap the 3-line icon in the top right.
3. Go to Family Pairing.
4. Select the account you want to manage.
5. Update the controls.

TikTok has a number of useful guides for users and parents in their Resource Centre such as a wellbeing guide, new user guide, guardian's guide and more. Well worth a look if you're new to this:

http://bit.ly/tiksafety

Contribute to the magazine

I'm always on the lookout for great content to share with schools and parents, but I also know that people have their own individual stories to tell. This information can be hugely beneficial for everybody.

• Are you a parent who has experienced something with your child? What was it and what did you do? Has your child experienced something and would he/she like to share their advice with others?

• Are you a school that has experienced a series of incidents? How did you tackle this? Do you have an innovative way to engage with specific online safety topics in the school?

• Do you have an opinion or a thought-provoking idea?

Drop me an email and let me know your thoughts. Everything can be kept anonymous if you wish.

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