

What if something goes wrong?

If your child comes to you with a concern, try to remain calm and curious, rather than furious. Avoid blame or criticism, as this may close down the conversation if your child feels they have done something wrong or they are in trouble. Instead, remain non-judgmental, acknowledge the challenges they have overcome, and thank them for telling you.

If you find out your child is dealing with a worrying situation online, but is unwilling to speak about it, reassure them you want to help make things better. Avoid pressuring them to speak before they are ready. Gently try some broad questions to open up a dialogue, and give them plenty of time to answer.

It's okay if you are unsure what to do next, the important thing is to let your child know you are there for them. There is a lot of further support out there to help you decide on your next steps.



For more information go to childnet.com/parents-help

10 Key messages to share with your child

However and wherever you have a conversation with your child, here are 10 top tips you can share to support them in staying safe online.

1. **"You can always come to me if you need help."** This is the most important thing to let your child know, and a way to give them confidence to speak to you when they need support.
2. **"What would you do if this happened...?"** Give your child strategies to deal with upsetting experiences online.
3. **"Remember that not everyone is who they say they are online."** Remind your child to always tell an adult if anyone they only know online makes them feel uncomfortable, or asks to meet up or share personal information or images.
4. **"Keep your personal information safe, and other people's too."** This includes full names, contact details, and real-time locations.
5. **"Be respectful to others online."** Remind them if it's not okay offline...
6. **"Think before you post."** Help your child to be aware that their online actions can have consequences for themselves and others.
7. **"Remember to ask if it's okay."** Asking for, and receiving permission from others online is important before sharing images, adding people into group chats, etc.
8. **"Remember not everything is true online."** Help your child to be a critical thinker to find accurate information.
9. **"The things other people post online might not always show what their life is really like."** Reassure your child that nobody's life is as perfect as it may seem online, and judging yourself against other's online lives isn't a fair comparison.
10. **"Recognise how going online makes you feel and take a break when you need to."** Your child may need support in doing this, such as timers and reminders.

