



## Online Safeguarding

We live in a digital age where technology is developing at speed. It has long been recognised that the online environment presents a variety of challenges—particularly for children and young people. As a result, terms such as e-safety, online safety, digital safety and internet safety are commonly used. However, the safeguarding risks to children and young people in the online world are many and varied. So the term ‘online safeguarding’ is used to highlight these i.e. “a safeguarding incident involving the use of technology.”

In order to keep children and young people safeguarded online, parents/carers and those working with them must be able to recognise online risks and recognise the safeguarding issues at their core. Technology is a significant component of such issues as criminal and sexual exploitation and radicalisation and often provides the platform that facilitates harm.

We can no longer adequately consider the safeguarding or wellbeing of our children and young people without considering their relationship to technology.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three main areas of risk:

- ✚ Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material for example pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views.
- ✚ Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults.
- ✚ Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm; for example: making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.



Children and young people have access to an extensive range of online activities. The volume of use in just a single minute is significant!

**2019**  
*This is what happens  
in an internet minute!*



Young people are often perceived as having a greater knowledge and affinity with technology than adults. However, they don't have the wisdom or emotional maturity that adults develop through life experience. It is vital we encourage them to increase their understanding of the potential hazards technology presents; develop their resilience and teach them how to mitigate the risks to them (and others) through their behaviour. Parents/carers have a fundamental influence on their children's behaviour and a critical role in embedding what is acceptable/ unacceptable online (social media in particular) so developing parent/carer awareness and confidence around the online environment is a key priority.

Additional Resources:

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#) [Childnet International](#) [Think You Know](#)

[Get Safe Online](#) [HM Gov Teaching Online Safety in schools](#)

[Kirklees – Online Safety](#)