

## Meeting an online friend

Like people from previous generations wanted to meet penpals, children may want to meet up with an online friend, especially as they get older and start to change their social groups.

Although there is risk in meeting up with strangers, risk is greatly reduced if a parent or carer is informed, aware and present.

Encourage your child to be careful with new friends and tell you about their plans.



## Instant Expert!

**UK Safer Internet Centre** has information, advice and resources on all online topics:  
[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

**Parentport** helps you report unsuitable online content, including advertising and games.  
[www.parentport.org.uk](http://www.parentport.org.uk)

**Know the Net** for advice, quizzes, tests, online etiquette, password advice, and more  
[www.knowthenet.org.uk](http://www.knowthenet.org.uk)

**CEOP** is where adults or children can report actual or attempted abuse online:  
[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)



### INTERVENTION SERVICE

Youth Engagement and Opportunities  
County Hall 3rd Floor  
Oxford OX1 1ND  
☎ 01865 328460  
✉ [opportunities@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:opportunities@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

# Supporting young people online



[oxme.info/anti-bullying](http://oxme.info/anti-bullying)

# How parents and carers can help the children and young people in their care stay safe online



The internet is a positive and important force in modern life. It helps young people study, learn, find work, meet new friends and more.

There are risks. These are the main types:

**Content** risks include content that is not age appropriate, that might disturb or upset, that is biased or untrue

**Commercial** risks include advertising, in-game spending, gathering personal data, spam and scam emails and more.

**Conduct** risks include cyberbullying, risky or illegal behavior, and posting inappropriate content online.

**Contact** describes someone targeting another person online in order to commit a crime/abuse that person.



## Starting the conversation

**Parents tell us that starting the conversation can be the hardest thing...**

### Content

What websites do you like to visit? Do you know what to do if you see bad content on them?

### Commercial

Do you keep your personal information safe? What is personal information? Can you tell me?



### Conduct

Do you know what sort of things are illegal if you do them online? Have you done the quiz to see if you are an Accidental Outlaw?

### Contact

How do you know your friends online are real friends? If you wanted to meet up with someone, what would you need to do first?



## How to help the children in your care stay safe

### Talk about the internet with your child.

Say what your concerns are, and listen to their worries. Take them seriously.

### Use filtering software, but don't rely on it.

Turn on filters and blocks but also explain why they are there and why they matter.

### Make rules together and agree to them.

Everyone in the family has a part to play in keeping the household safe online.

### Make sure your child knows what to do.

For example: turn off the screen, tell an adult they trust and use online reporting facilities.

**Make sure you know what to do.** Online risks can happen at any age! Make sure YOU know what to do if things go wrong online.