A GUIDE TO KEEPING YOUR
CHILD SAFE ONLINE

west
sussex
county
council

West Sussex
Safeguarding
Children Board

SAFER
WEST SUSSEX
PARTNERSHIP

This guide has been designed to help you, as parents and carers, keep your children safe when they are online.

On one hand, the internet is an amazing resource enabling everyone to connect, communicate and be creative. On the other hand, the internet is a minefield and being able to keep up to date with your children's use of technology can be a challenge.

You may feel that your children have better technical skills than you do, however young people still need advice and protection when it comes to managing their lives online.

For a practical guide on how to check/change social media privacy settings and more visit www.westsussex.gov.uk/CSE.

Check out the apps and sites they are using.

You know your child best, make sure what they're using is suitable for them.

Talk about age ratings.

Online games, movies and some websites will have an age rating to keep children safe. Talk to your children about the purpose of age limits and any concerns you may have. Agree together the websites, apps and games they can use.

Make use of parental controls.

You know your child best, make sure what they're using is suitable for them.

Be proactive.

Use opportunities such as news, events or television storylines to start conversations about what your child would do.

Encourage your children to 'think before you post.'

Content posted privately online can be publicly shared by others, and may remain online forever. Remind them that their behaviour online should reflect their offline behaviour.

Report.

Encourage your child not to respond or retaliate to any form of bullying or inappropriate communication.

Instead, help them to report it and keep any evidence. If you think it's appropriate, contact their school to let them know about the incident.
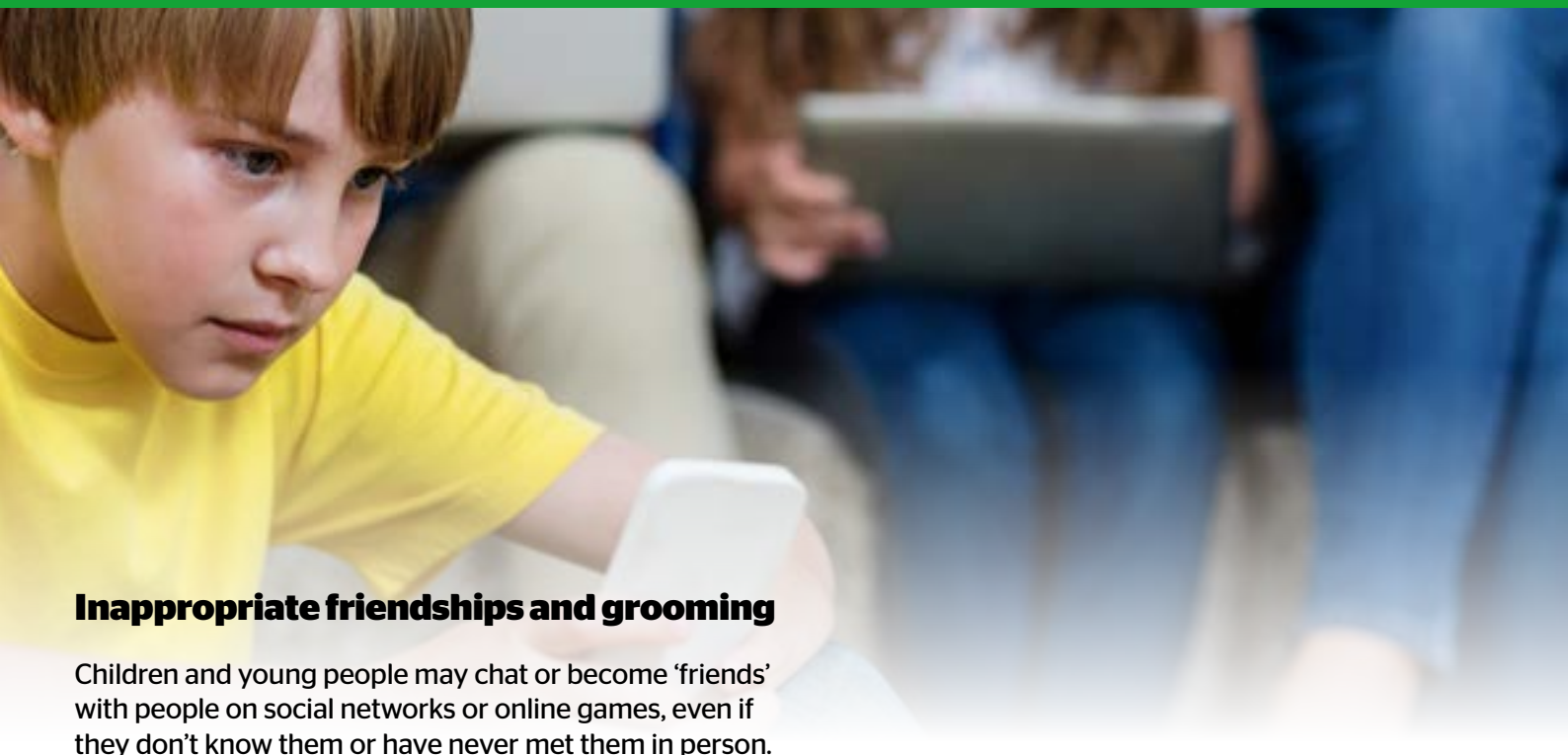
A CHILDREN'S ONLINE WORLD IN NUMBERS*

90% of children aged 5-15 years old are online young people.

40% of 5-15 year olds have their own tablet.

76% of 12-15 year olds have a social networking profile.

Inappropriate friendships and grooming

Children and young people may chat or become 'friends' with people on social networks or online games, even if they don't know them or have never met them in person.

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. This can be easier online because people hide their age, gender and identity.

Children are often unaware they're being groomed, and think they're simply talking to a child of the same age. But remember, children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers.

Children don't always meet up with online 'friends' and get abused. Children can also be exploited and abused online, by being persuaded or forced to:

- have sexual conversations by text or online
- send or post sexually explicit images
- take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone.

The internet, in particular social media, is increasingly being used as a channel to recruit and radicalise young people into extremism. The threat comes from a variety of groups; including but not limited to Da'ish (also known as ISIS) and 'far right' groups. It often involves the glorification of violence and a manipulation of a common need to belong or have a sense of identity.

THE CHILD EXPLOITATION AND ONLINE PROTECTION CENTRE (CEOP) HELPS KEEP CHILDREN SAFE FROM ONLINE GROOMING & SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

www.ceop.police.uk

USEFUL RESOURCES

Netaware

An online guide which provides parents with up-to-date information about the sites most commonly used by young people.

Information it provides includes:

- What the app/site is
- Children's views about it
- Signing up info
- How to report concerns
- Privacy settings info

www.net-aware.org.uk

Safer Internet Centre

Providing information about how to report online concerns.

www.saferinternet.org.uk/need-help

O2 and NSPCC online safety helpline

For technical advice, from setting up privacy settings or parental controls, call the O2 and NSPCC online safety helpline on 0808 800 5002

CONTACTS

If you are concerned about your child and want to speak to someone, please contact **Sussex Police** on 101.

For further support please contact the **West Sussex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on 01403 229 900 (out of hours Mon-Fri 5pm-8am, weekends & bank holidays on 0330 222 6664).

www.westsussex.gov.uk/CSE