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| |  | | --- | | Safer Internet Day  Tips for encouraging open discussion about digital life | | Make your interest clear  Ask to see your child’s favourite games and apps which will help you spot issues  Be open and honest, appropriate to their age  When answering questions about puberty, relationships, etc.  Remind your child they can always talk to you  Even when they view harmful content, talking about it openly will help  Discuss that not everything we see online is real  Use examples from your own online world, like posts that show perfect houses  Try to remain calm  Your initial reaction could stop a child from speaking openly about what they’ve seen  Create a family agreement  About device use including when to use devices, parental controls and why it’s good to talk  Keep talking | | **HiPal**  HiPal is a trending social media app which turns phones into walkie-talkies, allowing people to have voice conversations with friends or strangers. 2 account options are available, under 12 (which limits contact with strangers) and over 12 (which allows adding strangers, sharing videos and pictures publicly and enabling voice chat with strangers).    What are the risks? No age verification Users are initially given a choice of over or under 12 profile but this is not verified. There is no moderation on content available. There is also a report button that doesn’t seem to be followed up on. Intrusive features The app offers Boom messages to be sent which are highly distracting and can take over the entire phone screen briefly, not allowing access to the phone until the message fades. Need for validation Some users post photos to get positive reactions. Suggestive images tend to get more positive feedback encouraging them to post more. Receiving unkind comments can also impact a young person’s confidence and self-worth. Sexting and suggestive pics As soon as you join, you can get private messages from strangers either asking for explicit pictures or sharing their own with you. Even in browse mode, some of the pictures showing up can be explicit. |

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| |  | | --- | | Staying safe online  Advice to share with your child  **Tell a trusted adult if something upsets you**  **Take breaks from being online**  **Don’t chat with strangers**  **Ask permission before downloading anything**  **Avoid sharing private photos**  **Don’t give away personal information**  **Double check your news sources**  **Take notice of age restrictions**  **Stick to trusted apps**  **Be suspicious of new information**  **Show respect to others**  **Be honest with parents and carers** | | World of WarCraft World of WarCraft just launched their newest iteration, Dragonflight, which has attracted a lot of young users to jump into this type of role-playing games for the first time.   Advice for parents and carers The age rating for the game is 12+ due to the mild violence and occasional use of offensive language, so you may need to explain this to your younger children if they wish to play.  Warcraft can be addictive but playing it together can also be a great way of spending time with your child. Consider using the game as a reward for completing their tasks. Voice and text chat The game provides the players with the option to use voice or text chat while playing. This could put the players at increased risk of being trolled or receiving spam through the game’s messaging system. In-game purchases The game is available for a monthly subscription of £9.99. There are also many items which can be purchased from the in-game store that players can buy to enhance the look of their characters. Simulated violence The game has some violent battle scenes, although they are more of a cartoonish quality so are not overly gory or scary. Potential for addiction The game can trigger a powerful ‘just one more time’ mentality in players, especially younger ones. It pushes the players to always be rushing to earn the next weapon or item or level up their character. |
| Starting a conversation about life online  Be positive and open-minded about the internet  Talk early and often  Make conversations about the internet part of your daily routine  Create a safe space for conversations  Talking face to face can sometimes be difficult, so talking while walking alongside or while in a car might be easier. Make sure there are no distractions  Keep it relevant  The way your child uses the internet will change as they grow older. So, ask open-ended questions to let your child lead the conversations you have to get a feel of the challenges and experiences they face online  Be proactive  Create an agreement together on how the internet will be used, including time spend online, who your child can communicate with, appropriate apps and games and safety tools to report and block harmful content | Safer Internet DayStaying safe on TikTokTikTok is a free social media app that allows users to create and share short videos. It has more than 1 billion active users and is most popular with the under-16 age range.There are several obvious risks with using TikTok such as contact with strangers, addictive nature of the app, age-inappropriate content and dangerous challenges that children watch and then try to participate in. That is why we thought of sharing some ways to minimise these risks with young people:Make accounts private to stop strangers being able to view your child’s video (this is set by default for under-16s but is also quite easy to get around).Enable family pairing which allows you to link your account with your child’s and control their settings remotely. Children are not able to change these settings without parental approval.Discuss the dangers with your child. For example, ensure they do not share any identifying personal information in their videos.Safer Internet Day was celebrated on February 7th. The aim of the day is to call on people from around the world to work together to make the Internet a safer and more positive place for everyone, but especially for young people. The annual campaign run by the UK Safer Internet Centre influences governments, police forces, charities and tech companies to focus on making online users safe.The theme of Safer Internet Day this year is “Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online”. This is to ensure that children and young people’s voices are heard and that they are encouraged to shape the online safety support they receive. That is why we are asking parents and carers to take time to listen to children and young people to make positive change together.Find out more about the day and access resources that will help you with these conversations here:[Safer Internet Day 2023 - UK Safer Internet Centre](https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2023) |