AUTUMN 2025 |
PARENTS/CARERS

ONLINE SAFETY NEWSLETTER.

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE: CHANGES TO THE ONLINE SAFETY ACT EXPLAINED

The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology has published a press release outlining how the Online Safety Act aims to help keep children safe online. The press release sets out information on: data privacy; virtual private networks; legal adult content; and support for the Online Safety Act.

Keeping children safe online: changes to the Online Safety Act explained - GOV.UK

SUPPORTING YOUR TEEN ON SOCIAL MEDIA

As your teen steps into the digital world, knowing how to guide and support them can feel overwhelming. That's why Media Smart, in partnership with TikTok, has created **'Teens, Social Media and You'** a new film-led campaign with free resources to help parents and careers navigate discussion about online safety, digital wellbeing, and responsible social media use.

Download the free guide and watch the films today here

APP SAFETY SETTINGS

With the Online Safety Act now in force, there's been a lot of focus on how tech companies manage their safety features. While these settings aren't perfect, they do play an important part in helping to keep children safe online.

This is a good time to check the safety settings on the apps your child uses and make sure they're appropriate for their age. The **Internet Matters** website has clear, step-by-step guides for many popular apps, including Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and YouTube. You can find them here:

- Discord app settings - HERE.
- TikTok parental controls - HERE.
- Snapchat parental controls - HERE.
- Instagram parental controls - HERE.
- FaceTime privacy and safety settings - HERE.
- WhatsApp privacy guide - HERE.

TALK CHECKLIST: PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PARENTS

The Internet Watch Foundation's TALK Checklist offers vital guidance for parents and carers to protect children from online sexual abuse. The checklist encourages open conversations with children about online safety, setting clear digital ground rules, understanding the platforms and apps they use, and utilising available tools and settings to enhance online security. By following these steps, families can create a safer online environment and reduce the risk of exploitation. For comprehensive resources and support, visit the TALK Checklist at talk.iwf.org.uk.

PINTEREST PRIVACY AND SAFETY SETTINGS

Pinterest is a hugely popular platform where users share and discover ideas on everything from crafts and recipes to fashion and art. It can be a great source of inspiration, but because content is shared by users, some material may not be suitable for everyone. In 2022, during the inquest into the death of a 14-year-old, Pinterest itself acknowledged that the platform was not always safe.

Internet matters have an excellent page full of advice and guidance about filtering content, reporting tools and more which you can find HERE.

FALL GUYS PARENTAL CONTROLS

Fall Guys is a very popular game with children. It has a PEGI 3 rating and falls under the massive multiplayer battle royale genre of games, meaning there are things like chat, in-game spending, friends lists and more. It's important that games like this are set up correctly in accordance with the age of the child playing. For example over 13's have default access to party chat groups.

Internet Matters have a really good guide detailing all the parental features HERE and Wayne Denner has just published an article about a new voice reporting feature which is available within Fall Guys and also Rocket League, another really popular game with children. You can find Wayne's article HERE.

The information in the newsletter is given to help promote the safety of children and young people online.

Every care has been taken to ensure the information and any recommendations in the newsletter are accurate at the time of publishing. Schools must make their own judgements when sharing our recommendations with parents and carers and, where appropriate, always risk assess with their pupils and whole school community in mind.

This newsletter is brought to you by the HFL Education Wellbeing team as part of their online safety support for schools and settings in Hertfordshire. Contact the team at wellbeing@hfleducation.org or call 01438 544464.

HFL Education is a leading national provider of school improvement and business support services, training, and resources, which enable schools, educational settings, and multi-academy trusts to deliver a great education.

We support those we work with to achieve successful long-term outcomes for their children.

We believe that every young person, through access to a great education, should be able to realise their potential, regardless of where they live, their background or circumstances.

HFL Education

01438 544 464
Visit our website