

Online safety tips for children in secondary school



What are teens doing online?

Teens spend most of their online time using video sharing platforms, using messaging sites or apps and going on social media. They also spend a lot of time watching TV or films online, playing online games and using livestreaming apps or sites.

Source: Ofcom Media Use and Attitudes 2022

Online safety issues that teens can come across:



Screen time



Misinformation



Cyberbullying



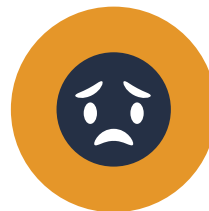
Online reputation and privacy



Inappropriate content and pornography



Sexting



Self-harm



Grooming and radicalisation



Learn about these issues and get support to help keep teens safe at internetmatters.org/issues

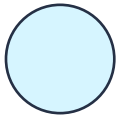
If your child has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), they may need extra support to stay safe online. These resources can help:

- Learn more about the harms they might face and how to support them at internetmatters.org/inclusive-digital-safety
- See how to help them face different online safety issues at internetmatters.org/connecting-safely-online

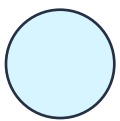
Stay safe checklist to support teens:



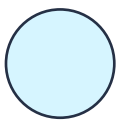
Talk about their online lives: this can help them open up to you if something goes wrong. Ask them which apps they're using, who they're talking to, what's trending and any problems they've run into (and how they handled them). Regular conversations can help you work together to keep them safe.



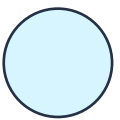
Agree on boundaries: older children may spend more time talking with friends outside of school or may speak with more strangers online. So, agree on what is and isn't appropriate along with when it's time to put devices away to focus on other things like dinner or sleep.



Set up safety settings: parental controls help you manage who can talk to your child online, what content they can see or how much time they spend online. For teens, it's important to review the parental controls you've set. You might take some of them off, but it's important they understand their online safety should come first. Work together to set up safety settings to help them.



Explore together: go online together. Create your own social media account and follow each other or connect your accounts. Play video games online together as well. They will like that you're interested, and you will learn more about their interests.



Encourage them to use safety features: to help them stay safe online, apps and platforms have different ways to stop online hate or inappropriate content. Get familiar with report, block and other features to help your teen stay in control of their online safety.



Learn how to set privacy controls and use safety features at internetmatters.org/parental-controls.

Other helpful resources:

- Learn more about social media at internetmatters.org/resources/social-media-advice-hub/
- Find where you can get support or report online safety issues at internetmatters.org/report-issue
- Learn more about the apps and platforms your child might use at internetmatters.org/apps
- Get advice sent to your email at internetmatters.org/digital-family-toolkit