Online Safety for you and your family

Information for parents/Cares

Introduction

Supporting Safe and Healthy Online Habits This Summer

At Overley Hall School, we're committed to helping you and your family stay safe online. As part of this term's newsletter, we're focusing on **managing screen time during the summer holidays**—a time when technology often plays a big role in our young people's lives.

With **Artificial Intelligence becoming a part of everyday life**, it's more important than ever to stay informed. This edition includes helpful guidance from **Internet Matters**, specially shared with us for parents and carers.

Apps for the Summer

We want to help you keep the entertained whilst maintaining positive mental health, build their skills and for them to be active. Internet matters have collated information on Apps to help balance screen time this summer.

You can find apps to help your child:

- build skills
- stay active
- manage their wellbeing.

Scan the QR code to access Internet Matters information on apps for the summer or visit:

Top apps for kids over the summer | Internet Matters

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Special points of interest

- Healthy online habits this summer
- Information about AI
- Sources of Information
- Poster—Managing digital wellbeing

Is your child chatting to a real friend - or an AI chatbot?

AI Chatbots are built into platforms children are using every day on their phones and other devices. Research from Internet Matters**, shows that two-thirds of children are using AI chatbots** like ChatGPT, Snapchat's My AI, character ai and others, and they're being used for schoolwork, to seek advice and even for companionship*.

Chatbots interact in a human-like way, they are always available, are friendly and non-judgemental, and use empathetic language - which can make children feel acknowledged and understood. However, this makes it harder for children to recognise that they're interacting with a tool rather than a real person. Chatbots are not real and their responses cannot always be trusted.

Also, they're **often not designed with children in mind** - most lack safety settings or parental controls. So if children ask for advice on sensitive topics, the lack of age checks plus inconsistent filtering mean they may be presented with responses that are inappropriate for their age.

To help you get to grips with what AI chatbots are, and for advice and tips on how you can help your children use them safely, **check out Internet Matters new AI information hub.**

4 steps to manage children's digital wellbeing

internet matters.org

Get advice to help children develop critical thinking, self control and coping strategies to deal with online risks.

Step 1
Understanding the online risks

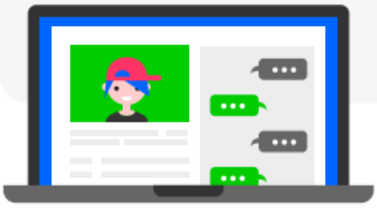
Help children get to grips with the types of risks they might be exposed to based on the website, apps and devices they use. For example if they're on social media having a conversation about issues around managing relationship online, cyberbullying and sexting will **help them to know what to look out for** and take appropriate action.

Step 2
Knowing where to go for help

Equip your child with the knowledge of where to get support. Whether it's a helpline like Childline, reporting tools on apps or a supportive network of friends and family, it's important they know that if they can't talk to you about something **there are a number of places that can support them.**

Step 3
Learning from experiences

Encourage children to explore the digital world in an age-appropriate way, so they can learn to **manage challenges** and develop good judgement. It is not possible to teach them self-control, risk management or **how to take advantage of online opportunities** if they are not given the chance to practice online.



Step 4
Recovering from experiences with the right support

Even with the best intentions there may be times that children are affected by something they experience online. **To support them assess the situation and find ways to deal with it together.** Depending on the situation seek advice from specialist organisations or your GP to give them the **best chance to recover and regain their confidence.**