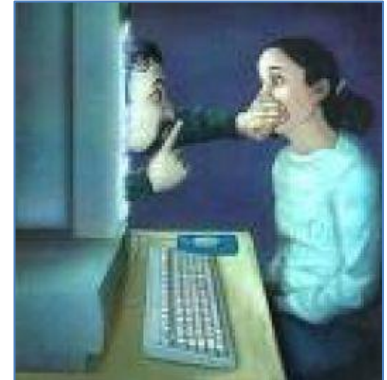


A Guide to Internet Safety (Cyber grooming/bullying)



The Internet can be a wonderful thing offering endless information and opportunities for exploration, connection with others in almost any part of the world and an invitation to join a fast paced and ever changing world. For children who have social communication difficulties it also offers a pseudo social life, 'friends', people to chat to and share thoughts with. It is something almost taken for granted now and children learn to use mobile devices often much more quickly than they learn other life skills.



It is sometimes easy as parents to take your eye off the ball occasionally, especially when your youngsters are seemingly happily occupied in an on line activity. There is no getting away from the fact that having a youngster with dyspraxia/DCD can be an exhausting business and parents and carers need to draw breath from time to time. It is easy and understandable to think that if they seem happy and quiet, all is well. We do though need to know what our children are doing and who they are speaking to when they are on-line. This was brought home to the Dyspraxia Foundation in such a dramatic and harrowing way when an article written by the mother of a 14 year old boy who was groomed on the internet and eventually murdered in 2014, was published.

A rather harrowing story can be found here:

https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/jan/23/breck-bednar-murder-online-grooming-gaming-lorin-lafave?CMP=fb_gu&utm_content=bufferffae&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer

When to be concerned

- If your child changes the screen of his computer every time you walk in.
- If he/she stops using a piece of equipment that has been previously enjoyed.
- If his/her behaviour changes. He/she become withdrawn or angry with you.
- If he/she doesn't want to go to school.
- If he 'alludes to bullying by saying things like. 'People are really dramatic in texts aren't they?' or 'I have no friends to be with'.
- If he/she won't read texts received while you are present.
- If your child goes to another area of the house to answer a call and whispers.

What to do if you are concerned/feel your child is vulnerable

- Talk to your child about cyberbullying and how to spot it and assure them that you won't remove the device if it happens to them.
- Give him/her an example of a bullying incident so that he/she can recognise it.
- Advise him/her to log off if anything untoward occurs it is always better to walk away than to get involved. Reinforce that he/she must STOP, BLOCK, TELL.
- Make it clear to your child that they should never say anything on-line' that they wouldn't say out loud in real life. (Remember that no one is allowed to upload anything which is threatening, abusive or which is defamatory.)
- If your child has a new phone or tablet and uses social media. Have an agreement. Say that you must be the administrator and whilst you don't want to pry you would like to check messages, or review his/her friends on Facebook from time to time.
- If you become aware that bullying is happening, access the device and make it clear to the other parties concerned that you have access to your child's accounts and have made a note of the names of people involved.
- If the bullying persists speak to your child's school representative and ask that the parents of other children involved are informed.
- Save/print out evidence of bullying. It is an offence and you may have to get the police involved if it persists.
- Let your child know that you will always be there for support but that if he is embarrassed or just feels unable to talk to you that he/she should turn to another trusted adult, or he/she can ring ChildLine's anti bullying service on 0800 1111

We have a responsibility to educate young people to use technology safely.

What follows is a list of websites accompanied by a short summary about each one to enable you are able to consider which ones are most relevant to you and your young people and possibly explore them together.

There is also information about a site where you can report a concern if you have one.

We do need to try and keep our children as safe as we can and one way of doing that is to allow them to explore the potential dangers in a friendly and interactive way. Let them be informed.

Information is power

http://safernet.org.uk/	<p>For advice in staying safe on line for people with learning disabilities and those who support them</p>
http://www.breckfoundation.org/	<p>A service set up in the name of a young person who was groomed on line (and murdered). This is a very friendly and interactive site for those 5 yrs. and above, with pages devoted to different age groups.</p>
http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/online-safety-and-support/#.Vqs97PmLS1t	<p>A site which explains how to keep yourself safe and look after your wellbeing when you use the internet for information or support for your mental health. It covers protecting your privacy, how to take relationships offline safely and how to address online bullying and abuse.</p>
https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/	<p>Advice for staying safe on Twitter... Find the latest information on the sites your children like to visit, mobiles and new technologies. This site is put together by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre and is part of the curriculum for computing used in schools.</p>
https://www.ceop.police.uk/	<p>If you want advice, support or to report something that is worrying you</p>
.http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/crime-threats/cyber-crime/cyber-crime-preventing-young-people-from-getting-involved	<p>More and more teenagers and young people are getting involved in cybercrime. Many do it for fun without realising the consequences of their actions – but the penalties can be severe. This website gives details to help</p>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Py4C67OUO1o	<p>A chilling real-time thriller starring Maisie Williams - from Game of Thrones - as a teenager battling with an anonymous cyber-stalker.</p>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kgCNGvL0g1g	<p>A Newsround special. 14 mins long, narrated by David tenant</p>
https://barnardos.charitycontent.org.uk/be-safe-guide.html?_ms=1047&_msai=ecapFB1	<p>A free guide to internet safety</p>
https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis	<p>The online world is a hugely important part of many children's lives and social media is a big aspect of this, with half (48%) of online 9-16s saying that they visit a social networking profile daily. On 22 December, UKCCIS published two new guides to support child safety online – these can be found at this website</p>

Encourage your child to find activities that build self-esteem and confidence, like martial arts, music, art or pony riding. Don't ban them from using the internet or their mobile – that is more likely to discourage them from talking openly to you about any problems.

The Dyspraxia Foundation is delighted to offer a safe and closely monitored closed group Face book site for 13-25 year olds.

This can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DyspraxiaFoundationYouth/>

We also have a website for young people aged 13-25 at <https://www.dfyouth.org.uk/>
This site has been set up to offer advice, support and links to useful information specifically for this age group.

Further information available from:

Dyspraxia Foundation, 8 West Alley Hitchin Herts SG5 1EG

Helpline tel: 01462 454986 (9 – 1, Mon – Fri)

Administration tel: 01462 455016

Fax: 01462 455052

Email: admin@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

Web: www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

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