



Useful Contacts

Tonbridge and Malling Borough
Council Community Safety Unit
01732 876132

Police - in an emergency
999

Kent Police (non emergency)
01732 771055

Crimestoppers
(to report a crime anonymously)
0800 555 111

NCH
08457 626579
www.nch.org.uk

www.internetwatch.org.uk

www.stoptextbully.com

www.bullying.co.uk

For more information about the
Community Safety Partnership look at:

www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk



Internet Safety: Guide for Parents

In partnership with NCH

NCH says....

It's important for parents to talk to children about how they use the Internet and their mobile phone. It's possible to check where your children have been going when they go online. For more information go to: www.nch.org.uk/internetsafety

Children often know lots more than their parents about how to use the Internet and mobiles but they often lack worldly wisdom. That's where parents and carers come in. We think parents and carers need to know more about the Internet and mobile phones so they can keep up with their children and help them stay safe.

Some tips for keeping your child safe online:

New technology brings new freedom but it also brings risks. These can be kept to a minimum if you use your technology carefully.

- The Internet carries lots of information that most of us want to explore, but at the same time there is some information that you might not want your children to access. Parental Control is a software programme that helps protect your kids from accessing inappropriate sites. If they try to access one of these sites, a new page comes up that tells them the site is blocked.
- Children can get up to all sorts of things online...shopping, downloading images and music, deleting offline content. It's a good idea to know what your children are up to and remember it's important to supervise younger children when they're online.
- Talk to your kids about the Internet and tell them to let you know if they come across violent, upsetting or offensive material. If you come across something you think is illegal, you can then report it to the Internet Watch Foundation on www.internetwatch.org.uk
- Encourage your children to use sites you know are safe and fun and talk to them about what they look at, so you know which sites they visit. You can check which websites they've visited as well.
- Make sure you speak to your service provider and visit www.nch.org.uk/internetsafety if you have any doubts or need help.



Chat Room Safety

Chat-rooms can be a lot of fun for kids but you need to be careful that they are being used properly. Make sure your children never give out personal information such as their name or address to people they talk to in chat-rooms. They should treat anyone they meet online in the same way they would a stranger in the street.

It's really important to remember that not everyone in a chat-room is who they say they are. If your child wants to meet someone they have befriended in a chat-room, make sure you or another responsible adult goes with them. Before you let the kids use a chat-room, read these safety rules with them and make sure they stick to them.

- Be careful who you trust online and remember that online friends are really strangers. No matter how long you've been talking to them or how friendly they are, they may not be who they say they are.
- If you want to meet someone you've met online, you must tell a parent or guardian and take them with you - and meet in a public place in daytime.
- Stay in charge in chat. Keep your personal information secret (name, address, telephone number, mobile number, personal photos, school name or private email address) even if people ask for this. Giving out personal information can make you vulnerable.
- Get away from an unpleasant situation in a chat room by logging out (this only takes one click) or by changing your screen name.
- Use a nickname, not your real name, and a nickname that won't attract the wrong type of attention.
- Look out for your friends too and tell a responsible adult if you think they are at risk.
- Learn how to keep/save a copy of the conversation in chat-rooms - this may help if you wanted to report something.
- Check you know how to report something you feel uncomfortable about



Mobile and Cyber Bullying

Mobile phones and text messages are brilliant for keeping in contact and letting you know your kids are safe. Unfortunately, they can also be a tool for bullying. Abusive phone calls can be anything from swearing and shouting or making threats, to silent "breather" calls. Mobile bullying can also involve threats and abuse.

Encourage your kids to talk to you, a teacher or a responsible adult about these issues if you think they have a problem. Bullies may block their number or use someone else's phone to avoid being found out. Make sure your kids keep a record of all calls and save any messages. Make a note of the date, time and message of the text. Remember to tell them that if they don't reply to text messages, the bully may get bored. Two fantastic websites to visit and get more info and support on mobile bullying are www.nch.org.uk and www.stoptextbully.com

Remember that making threatening calls and sending abusive texts is a crime. Phone companies can trace the caller and the police can investigate. But beware that even if they stop bullying your kids, they might start on someone else, so don't let them get away with it. If your kids are having problems at school try www.bullying.co.uk which will give you and them some really useful advice and support.

You might have read about 'HAPPY SLAPPING' in the news and wondered what it is? Well let us tell you that it's definitely not happy and sometimes involves much more than slapping. 'Happy Slapping' normally involves a group of teens or young people that deliberately attack or mug unsuspecting victims, while they capture the assault on a camera or video phone to share with their mates.

If you think your kids may be at risk, get them to try and stay in safe areas of their school at break and lunchtime where there are plenty of other people. Bullies don't like witnesses.

If they are hurt at school, make sure they tell you, another responsible adult or a teacher immediately and ask for it to be written down.

If they regularly travel by bus, make sure they sit by other adults. If they have to walk part of the way, and might be afraid of being ambushed, then get them to vary their route. They could also try to leave home and school a bit later or a bit earlier, or see if they can walk with other people who live near you, even if they're older or younger. Many streets, shops and business premises now have CCTV so if they are attacked in the street the police may be able to get evidence