



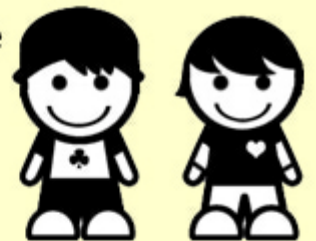
Safer Online Behaviours over Summer - useful advice for Parents and Carers

As the summer holidays begin, many children and young people will often spend an increased amount of time online...

...whether it is using the latest apps, playing their favourite games, watching their favourite vloggers or simply keeping in touch with friends through social media. For parents and carers, it offers us a good opportunity to have a positive discussion about their favourite sites, apps or games and agree some expectations about how much time they are allowed and what they should do if something concerns them. The LSCB's 'Useful Tips for Parents and Carers' can be found at the top of the Parents and Carers section of the Online Safety website: (www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/online-safeguarding/parents-and-carers).



Keeping in touch: During the summer break, many young people may use social media to keep in touch with their friends or stay updated on what's happening. It is a good opportunity to find out which apps are their favourites and for younger children, **remind them they must be at least 13 to use most popular social networking sites**. Encourage them to make sure they have privacy settings in place, why this is important and only to share appropriate content with those they know and trust in real life.



Tip: If you aren't sure what the different apps are or what they do, check out the **excellent NetAware site** from the NSPCC & O2 (www.net-aware.org.uk).

Time Online: Without the normal structure that typically comes with being at school, children may find it challenging to manage their time online appropriately. Agreeing some **time limits and setting out expectations beforehand** can help to avoid difficult discussions later – if they have only just started to play a team game online only to find their allocated time is up can understandably lead to frustrations.



Tip: Deciding whether to give children extended time online whilst off school **can be challenging but consider a compromise** – akin to 'you must do your homework before you go online', maybe they can have some extra time if they agree to go through and update their privacy settings first?



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Online Friendships: The holidays are also a good opportunity to talk to our children about their online friendships and encourage positive behaviour by discussing what makes a good online friend. It is very important that they also understand that just because they may have been chatting to a friendly person on a site or through a game for some time, if they only know them online, then they are still a stranger and they must not give out any personal details. If you or your child are worried about an adult pressuring them online, you should contact the Police immediately.



Tip: Remember many console games are online multiplayer environments but children may not make the connection and think 'stay safe online' messages only apply to websites or social media. Make sure they understand how **online safety rules apply to the gaming world too.**

Sharing Photos: Many children and young people will understandably want to share photos and videos of their holiday activities and this gives us a good opportunity to discuss what types of photos and videos are okay to share and who they can be shared with. Make sure they understand that photos and selfies can give away personal information without them realising it. **Remember, only sharing with our real friends is really important** – stop and think carefully about who might see your Social Media post about the fantastic time you are having on holiday (**this goes for adults too !**) – friends, relatives, work colleagues, burglars...if you have posted it for all to see on Facebook, they know your house might just be empty !



Tip #1: If going abroad, check if your mobile network has additional roaming charges so you can avoid unexpected bills.



Tip #2: Consider just sharing your holiday posts with friends on direct messaging services (e.g. WhatsApp) and **save those Facebook updates until you get back home.**



Tip #3: Many apps include location sharing functions (e.g. Snap Maps). Check the settings in apps and know what information you and your children may already be sharing.

