

Friendship for all

A guide to friendship inclusive social media



1. How to support children and young people to use social media safely?
2. How to make social media accessible
3. Social Networking sites:
 - YouTube
 - Skype
 - Facebook
 - WhatsApp
 - Twitter
 - Snapchat
 - Instagram

1. How can we support children and young people to use social media safely?

There are many official websites containing information and advice about Internet safety for both parents and young people. Some are very good and others are scary, some are overwhelming. This 'How to' guide aims to break down all the information into some bite size chunks, enabling the safest possible online experience for children and young people.

Although there are parental controls available from your Internet service provider, young people who are determined enough can find ways around these and still access adult content via proxy servers and hide behinds. The key to enabling your young person to have a safe, enjoyable time when using the Internet is an open dialogue about what they're using and accessing.

In addition to conventional a conventional computer, following devices will provide internet access:

Tablets are wireless portable computers with a touch screen interface. The most popular tablet used is the iPad

Smart Phones are mobile phones that have that have the capacity to access internet remotely. These are the probably the most popular internet devices with young people

Kindle similar to a tablet but with the primary function is reading and downloading books

With the ever growing number of devices that access the internet, and the difficulty with monitoring everything children will download, it is good practice to contain internet access to family space, particularly for younger children, so that their viewing can be carefully monitored. This will help to give some foundations for their inevitable need to independence and it's about best preparing them for this eventuality.

The NSPCC

The NSPCC has been running a campaign called Share Aware, which is aimed at parents and carers, encouraging them to talk to their children about ways to stay safe online. Visit their www.itsnotokay-york.org.uk website to learn more about their 'It's not okay' campaign

In addition, the NSPCC has been running a campaign called Share Aware, which is aimed at parents and carers, encouraging them to talk to their children about ways to stay safe online. We have some hard copy booklets which I could send you to be included in the foster carers pack or you can direct them to our website - www.nspcc.org.uk/ShareAware

Other internet safety guides

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/

www.saferinternet.org.uk

<http://ceop.police.uk>

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

www.kidsmart.org.uk

(Internet safety guide aimed at young people)

Guardian articles related to issues around Internet safety

www.theguardian.com/technology/internet-safety

2. How to make social media accessible

Some young people with more profound physical impairments are comfortable using switches to control computers. The recent assistive tool for apple iPhones and iPads allows two switches to be plugged into these devices for complete control.

http://assistivetechology.co.uk/news/great_news_pererro_is_finally_here_and_ready_to_ship

Portable tablets and phones now have many assistive tools to enhance the experience for their disabled users. Please check the links below for a comprehensive look at the various features currently available, including voiceover, voice-control, image enhancement etc.

Apple operating systems and hardware:

www.apple.com/uk/accessibility/ios

www.apple.com/uk/ios/accessibility-tips

www.apple.com/uk/accessibility/osx

Accessibility advice and guidance for Google operating systems and hardware:

www.google.com/accessibility/

<https://support.google.com/accessibility/android/#topic=6007234>

www.androidcentral.com/basic-accessibility-settings-android

www.samsung.com/uk/accessibility

Accessibility advice and guidance for Windows 7 operating system:

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows7/products/features/accessibility>

Facebook accessibility:

www.facebook.com/help/141636465971794

Adaptations

There are many assistive tools designed to help children and young people with physical impairments access the internet freely.

The Eyegaze system is for those with very limited body movement and tracks eye movement to control the cursor on the computer screen.

www.eyegaze.com

Video Games/ Consoles

The current generation of consoles (PS4, Xbox1 etc) access the internet and have their own self-contained social network where young people play and interact with other gamers

TV's – many of the new updated TV's have the capacity to access the internet directly, allowing users to maintain a social media presence.

Watch – Apple have introduced a new innovative technology where internet can be accessed through a watch... yes a watch!!!

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3. Social Networking Sites

Social Networks can be a brilliant tool for young people to communicate, make friends and learn. If set up properly, they are a safe and secure environment for young people to socialise.

Through the use of social media WAC Arts Interactive have helped disabled young people to develop important and sustainable friendships, creating a WhatsApp group called WAC Arts Interactive, where they have regular chats and updates, agree meeting times and organise visits. The use of social media has been vital in supporting disabled young people, who lives miles apart and only see each other two hours a week, to develop strong and sustainable friendships. Friendships have improved self-esteem and sense of identity for many of our young people.

YouTube

www.youtube.com/yt/policyandsafety/safety.html

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/174084?hl=en-GB>

YouTube is a great place to learn, be entertained and share thoughts and ideas to people across the globe. YouTube provides an opportunity to watch videos on how disability-specific issues have been addressed and can provide an opportunity to share similar ideas with others. Many YouTube videos also feature captions, providing accessibility to the content for people who are deaf or hearing impaired. The captions can also be translated to a number of other languages.

Skype

Skype is a popular software application that uses the internet to make free audio and video calls. The application is free to use and it is free to make audio or video calls over the internet to other Skype users. Skype can also be used as an instant messaging application, allowing text messages to be instantly sent for free between Skype users.

For people with disabilities Skype also provides some significant benefits. One of the biggest is the ability for users of sign language, such as children who are deaf or hearing impaired, to make sign-based video calls for free.

Facebook

13 years old age limit

www.facebook.com/safety/groups/teens

www.facebook.com/help/325807937506242

Facebook can provide a quick and easy way to communicate and share information with friends. For people who are hearing impaired, Facebook can be an effective communication platform as most of its key features do not have an audio component.

There are many online community groups within Facebook that allow you to communicate with other people with disabled young people to provide support or share information that can help overcome disability-related issues.

For disabled young people who attend social groups, social networks are supporting them to make new friends, arranging meetings with friends and staying in touch. **Ning is one completely private social network tool which offers a safe group link that nobody can invite anyone else into.**

“We find that young people are using Ning to link up with friends of friends, widening their social circles with a safe and monitored tool, we administer it and keep it safe” Choose 2 youth group., York

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a messaging service which allows users to send text, picture, video and audio messages. This versatility means the service would be of interest to users with a wide range of disabilities, allowing users to communicate via whichever means they find most comfortable.

Twitter

13 year old age limit

<https://support.twitter.com/groups/57-safety-security>

Twitter can be a great way to seek disability-specific information on how to overcome potential issues or to provide support through shared experience. Twitter can also be used to unite with others in the form of a protest or as a mechanism to receive quick answers to particular issues. Given its relative anonymity, many people with disabilities feel comfortable asking questions through the medium knowing that the user can control how much of their identity is revealed to others.

Snapchat

12 year old age limit

Snapchat is a messaging application where you share pictures and videos that can only be viewed once by the receiver. Videos and pictures can be viewed for up to 10 seconds but after that, they disappear. The application is becoming increasingly popular with a younger demographic and because of the way the application works, some safeguarding issues have arisen with underage users. The application is a fun and creative way to communicate but users need to understand how to stay safe and what the potential risks are before using it.

<https://support.snapchat.com/ca/login-verification>

Instagram

Instagram is the most popular online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service amongst young people. Instagram enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them to their network. It is a great way for young people to be part of a larger community.

There are issues with security so it is important to make sure your teen's privacy settings are locked down as photo visibility is set by default to public. **To lock down the privacy, young people should open Instagram, go to their profile, select 'Edit your profile' and toggle 'Posts are Private' to on.** This means that their photos will only be shown to their followers, and they'll also have to approve any future follower requests.

Blind or visually impaired users are able to access the app using the text to speech function - www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1e7ZCKQfMA