

# Mind the Gap

## Conversation Starter Kit

Questions you may want to ask your children, and use as a way of starting a conversation about internet use and staying safe online.

- What do you like to do most online?
- Do you play online games with friends you know in the real world, or do you play with anyone?
- What do you write on your Moshi Monsters pinboard? Who can see your pinboard?
- Do you tell your online friends your secrets or things you wouldn't tell them in the playground?
- What is the age rating of the game you are playing? Can I play/watch the game with you?
- The minimum age to be able to open an account on Facebook, Instagram and many other social networks is 13 years. Ask your child/ren what age they pretended to be and why?
- Do you know your online friends in the real world? Are you always nice to your online friends?
- If someone online says or does something to frighten or upset you would you know what to do?
- Would you let a stranger in the street ask you personal questions in the real world? Do you let a stranger online ask you personal questions? If yes, is it time to change?
- Can you show me how to change Facebook privacy settings? Are your settings as private as possible?
- Has anyone ever said something nasty to you online?
  - Were you frightened or scared?
  - Would you know what to do?
- Do you know or can you show me how to report nasty comments, images and videos on (Moshi Monsters/ Instagram / Facebook and so on). Are you aware that you can usually do this anonymously?

**Once online – always online.** Ask your child/ren if they are happy for those comments, images, videos to be online forever? This online content could have a long term negative impact such as not getting a job interview or generally being unhappy about what was said and done several months/ years ago.

## Here are some things you may want to do to help your child/ren 'Stay Safe' in the online world

- Set ground rules and with younger children agree which websites they can visit. *Remember these will vary depending upon the ages of your child/ren.*
- Agree time limits and regular breaks. *Remember letting children play video games just before bedtime may stop them sleeping well and have an impact on their learning.*
- Find out how to set the parental controls and safe search. Contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to see what controls they may offer as part of the service. *Remember none of these are 100% effective and supervision is always advised.*
- Check the home page of your child/ren's favourite social network, game and so on. Is there a section with information for parents? This will give you an overview of the website and its suitability.
- Spend 30 minutes watching your child/ren play an online game so that you can see the content and be happy that it is suitable for them.
- Check the age ratings of games at PEGI <http://www.pegi.info/en/index/> *Remember video games ratings are all about the content and not the difficulty of the game.*
- Say **NO** to your child playing any game that has a rating of 18 years and above or using websites that you think are unsuitable.
- Talk you child/ren about their privacy settings and ask them to show you how to change these settings. Encourage your child/ren to only have online friends that know in the real world.
- Tell your child/ren what to do if they ever feel frightened or scared when online or using their mobile phone. *It is important that your child/ren know they **can always talk to you** and you will help them ( you may not know the answer but by talking to the school, other parents, ThinkUknow FAQs, mobile phone provider and so on you will be able to find a solution.)*

Visit **ThinkUknow** ( [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) ) and look at the parents section. Show your child the '**Report Abuse**' button and together click to see the advice and links.



Visit **Childnet** and have a look at the parents section <http://www.childnet-int.org/safety/parents.aspx>

Visit **Internet Matters** ( [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) ) which contains lots of useful information and guidance.

