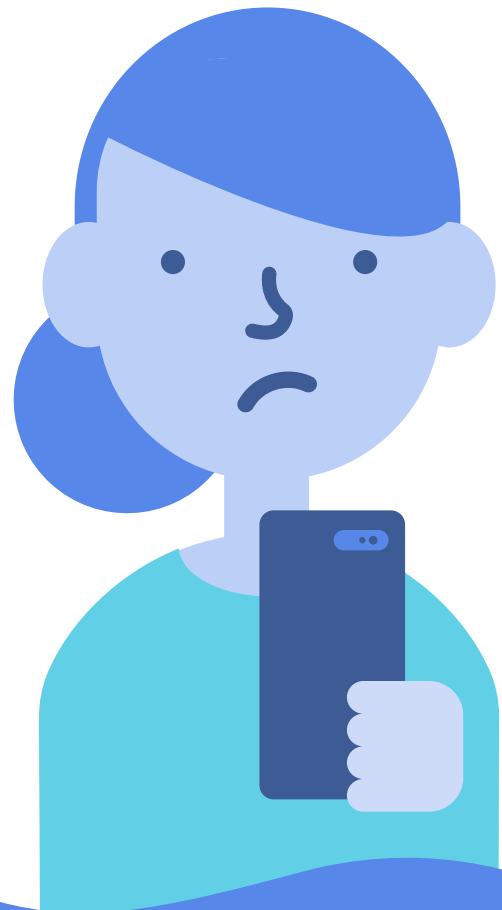


Empowering young people with additional learning needs to connect safely online.


Seeing inappropriate content

The more time your child spends online, the more likely they will be to come across something that will upset them. This is true for all children but for young people with SEND it can have a deeper impact because of their vulnerabilities.

Research shows that 56% of 11-16 years have seen explicit material online and a third of children in the UK aged between 12-15 have seen sexist, racist or discriminatory content online.



Find coping strategies to help your child deal with seeing things that may upset them online.



What you can do to help them

It's important to remember that although children may be old enough to use certain websites and apps, they may be exposed to things that they're not emotionally ready to deal with.

- 1 Make them aware that sometimes they may come across things that they'd prefer not to see, or that you would prefer they didn't see



- 2 Explain the importance of having age limits on platforms to protect them from unsuitable content



- 3 Find out the kind of things your child likes to do online and agree which websites and apps are the best for them to use



- 4 Switch on Google SafeSearch and set YouTube safe mode to make sure they see age-appropriate results



- 5 Talk to them about what is real and fake online - [CBBC has videos and articles you can share with your child](#)



- 6 Manage their access by setting the right settings on the platforms they use. [Visit our parental controls and privacy guides](#) for more information

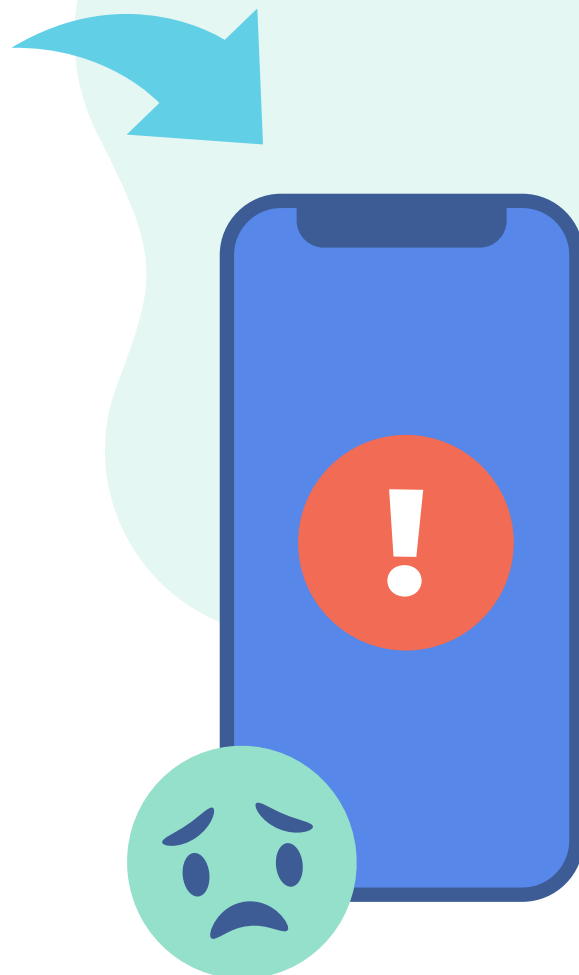


- 7 Use safety filters available on the sites they use and block pop-ups to stop them seeing ads that may have inappropriate content



Steps to take if your child has been affected by content shared online:

- **Discuss how they came across the content** – were they simply curious or did they stumble across it accidentally?
- **Reassure them** that it is not a bad thing and show you understand
- If they search for it - try to find out why they felt the need to - **help them understand** that it may be better to come to an adult if they have any specific questions or talk to a trained counsellor through Childline
- If it was shared by a friend and they are able to, **show them how to gently challenge their friends** if they find their content offensive
- **Talk about how it made them feel** to assess what emotional support they may need
- If they can't talk to you, there are organisations like Childline where **they can talk to trained counsellors** about what they may be feeling
- **Review settings and controls** on the platforms they use to ensure that these are set to the right levels



Remind them that you can always talk to you about things happening online.

See 'Where to go for help' for a list of organisations and services to get help.

Practical things to you can do

Check your [Family Agreement](#) – does it need updating?

This is where your house rules are agreed between you and your child. Make sure to give your child rewards in the Reward Chart if they stick to what you have agreed, this includes rewarding them for telling you when things go wrong – not only when all goes well. Your family agreement should include older relatives and siblings who need to take care of sites they leave open or films or videos they view.

Ensure they know that they should report abusive or inappropriate content on the social platform and consider blocking anyone that may be saying hurtful things. You can also reach out to specialist organisations and individuals that work as trusted flaggers who can support you in reporting your concerns to the platforms your child is using.

If they are deeply affected by the posts, consider advising them to take a break from the social network and concentrate on other activities that might make them happier.

If you feel that the comments may be affecting your child's mental health and wellbeing, it's best to go and see your GP. Depending on the seriousness of the comments, it might be advisable to file a police report. If you do take this step, make sure you keep some evidence that records what has happened and how it's affected them.



Where to go for help



[Navigating social media safety guide for Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram](#) - Get tools and tips to support your child's digital wellbeing on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.



[Parental control how-to guides](#) - Set up the right controls and privacy settings on a range of devices and platform.