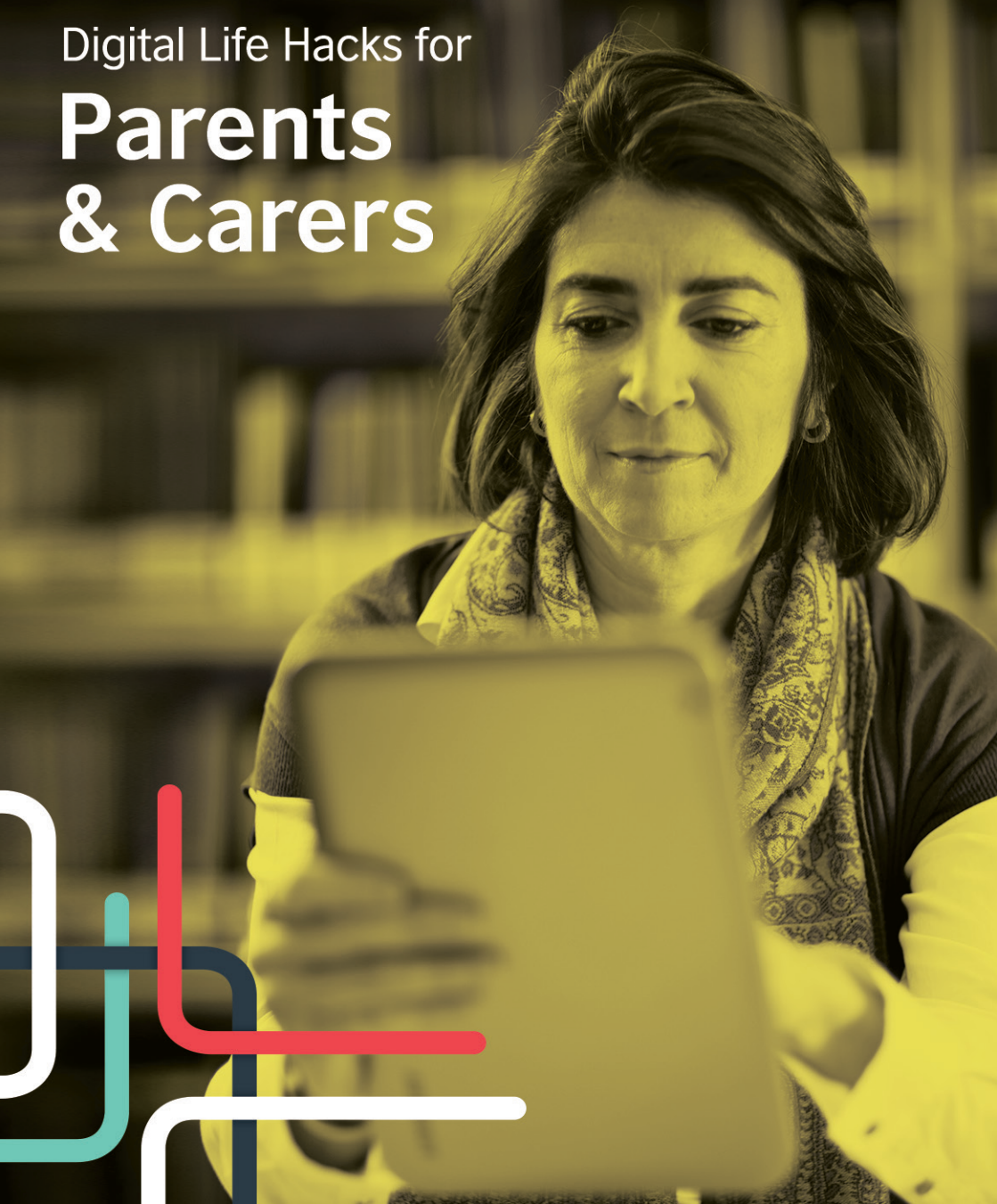


Digital Life Hacks for

# Parents & Carers



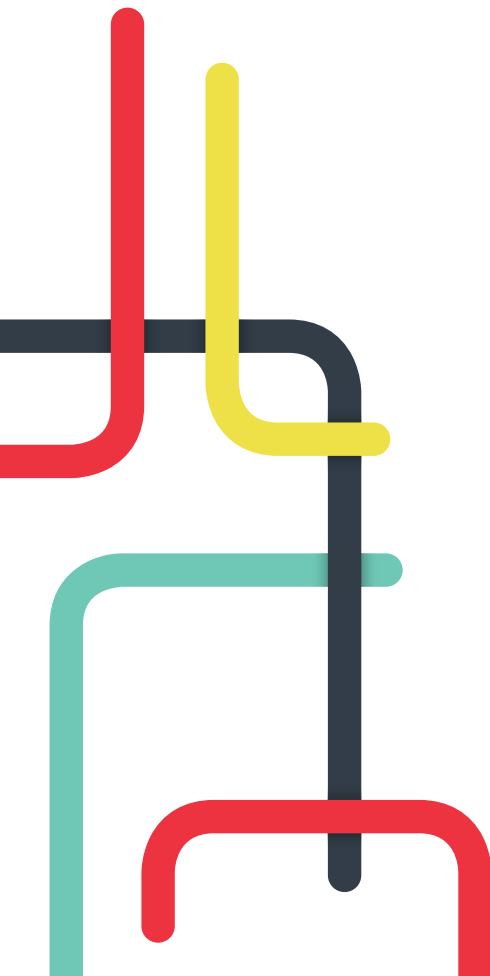
## Introduction

The Partner Schools Global Network (PSGN) is the British Council's global community of schools delivering international curriculum and assessment provided by the UK awarding bodies. The PSGN supports school leaders, teachers, students and parents in over 1,700 partner schools in over 30 countries around the world. As well as support in delivering international school exams including IGCSEs and A-levels, the PSGN provides access to professional development, resources, networking opportunities and support for extra-curricular development.

The British Council is committed to working with its partners to develop a common understanding of child protection issues and good practice in keeping children safe in line with our global child protection strategy. The PSGN offers support to partner schools through online child protection awareness and cyber well-being training.

The fast-changing landscape of the internet and social media presents opportunities and challenges for the whole school community to consider. The British Council has collaborated with the South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) to produce three e-safety brochures to support schools, parents and young people. Our aim is to support young people in becoming responsible digital citizens and in doing so to create a safer internet.

The South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) is a UK charity that has been working with schools and other organisations to protect children online for over eighteen years. Through its innovative services, resources and support, SWGfL has developed an international reputation for supporting online safety and this has been recognised through numerous awards. SWGfL is a founding member of UKCIS (UK Council for Internet Safety) and works with governments, technology providers and partners across the world. Since 2010, SWGfL has led the UK Safer Internet Centre, alongside partners Childnet and the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), as part of the European Commission's Safer Internet Programme.





# DIGITAL FAMILY

Childhood is changing. Young people are making friends, playing and learning online. From smartphones to smart speakers, technology is touching every part of our lives. How can your family use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively?

**THIS LEAFLET HAS SOME QUICK TIPS  
DIGITAL LIFE HACKS - FOR PARENTS AND CARERS.**

## DIGITAL LIFE HACKS

### 1: ENCOURAGE A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

What online activities help your child to have fun, learn, create and socialise online? What would be a good mix of online and offline activities? Ensure they take a regular break from online activities and avoid using screens in the hour before bedtime.

### 2: SAFE CHAT AND INFLUENCE

Who is your child talking to online? Can you help them identify good online role models?

### 3: REPUTATION MATTERS

Is your child comfortable with information about them shared by you or other people? Can you help older children develop a positive online identity? Search for family members' names online within speech marks e.g. "Oliver Smith" and see what results come up.

### 4: SHARE YOUR STANDARDS

Technical settings can help protect children online at home. But there are other ways children can access

online services. Share your standards with other adults in your child's life. This includes extended family and their friends' parents.

### 5: KNOW HOW TO REPORT

Have fun with your children online, so that if there is a problem, they will come to you. Talk to them about what will happen if they report an issue to you.

### 6: BE A DIGITAL ROLE MODEL

How can you model the online behaviour you would like from your child? Would your posts pass the billboard test (if you put your posts on a billboard outside your house)? If you were a child, would you be happy with your parent's online behaviour? If not, make a change.

### 7: WRITE A FAMILY AGREEMENT... AND STICK TO IT!

Agree to a set of ground rules for online behaviour. This helps everyone in the family use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively.





## CONNECTED LIVES

What does it mean to 'go online'? Some people might say they are always connected to the internet. What impact does this have?

### THE CONNECTED HOME

At home, you may have a fast internet connection, allowing you to stream TV programmes, videos or music. You may have a home heating system or appliance that you can control using an app. Your child may have their own tablet, smartphone or internet-connected toy.

### THE CONNECTED HUMAN

We use our hands to operate a keyboard and mouse, and touch screens. We can speak to a smart speaker. We may wear a device that counts our steps and tracks heartbeat, sleep and other health signs.

### KEEPING US CONNECTED

Technology companies use clever techniques to keep adults and children on screen. For example, when a video service auto plays the next one. It can be particularly difficult for children to disconnect.

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK #1: ENCOURAGE A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

What online activities help your child to have fun, learn, create and socialise online?

What would be a good mix of online and offline activities?

Ensure they take a regular break from online activities and avoid using screens in the hour before bedtime.

## ONLINE COMMUNICATION

Young people have many options for communicating online. This could be on social media, messaging apps, in games or live video chat.

Many social media, messaging and chat apps have a minimum age of 13. You may see age ratings for games and apps which show the minimum age the content is suitable for. But there is always some risk in using any app or game which allows chat with other users.

Children may follow their favourite celebrities, gamers and influencers online. This could be on video streaming services or social media.

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK #2: SAFE CHAT AND INFLUENCE

Who is your child talking to online?  
Can you help them identify good online role models?



## WHO IS MY CHILD ONLINE?

What could someone else find out about your child, from searching online? Is their online reputation helpful for future education and job opportunities? How would your child want to be perceived by their friends, family and local community?

Perhaps your child has shared information about themselves online. Do they have a public profile in a game or on social media? Have they shared personal information with strangers? Have they criticised or gossiped about other people online?

What have you posted online about your child? This could be childhood photos or funny stories. Could a fraudster find out your child's date of birth e.g. from a birthday photo? Could someone identify your child's school, or where they live?

Has someone else tagged your child in a photograph, or talked about your child online? Have you or your child said something in a private message or group which someone else has made public?

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK #3: REPUTATION MATTERS

Is your child comfortable with information about them shared by you or other people?

Can you help older children develop a positive online identity?

Search for family members' names online within speech marks e.g. "Oliver Smith" and see what results come up.



## TECH TOOL CHECKLIST

Here's a handy checklist of technology tips to help protect your family online:

### **FILTER OUT THE BAD STUFF**

Your internet service provider may provide the ability to block inappropriate content. E.g. to prevent pornography on your home broadband service, or on a smartphone contract. But children could access this content through friends or when visiting other relatives.

### **MAKE DEVICES, GAMES AND APPS CHILD-FRIENDLY**

Use the parental controls on all devices used by your child. This can prevent access to age-gated games, spending money online, or using the device at night. Some games and apps include parental controls, e.g. to prevent in-game chatting.

### **PROTECT YOUR DATA AND PRIVACY**

Ensure your anti-virus and malware software is up to date on all devices. Check for software updates and use available parental controls. Set privacy settings on all social media accounts e.g. whether the public or friends can see what you post.

### **IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PASSWORDS**

Longer passwords take longer to crack, so choose 3 random words. If an internet-connected device has a default password, change it. Use a different password for every service (use a password-manager if you can't remember them all). Use multi-factor authentication – e.g. you need a special code on your phone as well as a password to log in.

### **DIGITAL LIFE HACK #4: SHARE YOUR STANDARDS**

Technical settings can help protect children online at home. But there are other ways children can access online services. Share your standards with other adults in your child's life. This includes extended family and their friends' parents.



## REPORTING A PROBLEM

Technology can be a source of conflict at home. Family conversations can focus on telling children to switch off or to be careful online. Children may be less likely to report a problem to parents, if they think they'll have a negative reaction. They might worry their parents will confiscate their device or ban certain apps.

How can you encourage more positive conversations?

One way is to get involved in your child's online world.

Can you use fun apps and games together?

Can they talk to you about what they do online?

Would you know what to do, if your child had a problem online?

You should report illegal online content to the relevant authority. If something online worries you (but it is not illegal), you can report it to the service provider. Take a look at their community guidance or service terms and conditions first. If you are not satisfied with their response, you can report the issue to

**<https://reportharmfulcontent.com>**

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK #5: KNOW HOW TO REPORT

Have fun with your children online, so that if there is a problem, they will come to you.  
Talk to them about what will happen if they report an issue to you.





## DIGITAL PARENT

Children notice how the adults in their lives behave. They learn about appropriate online behaviour by seeing how adults behave around technology. Are you a positive digital role model?

Adults may expect children to act in a way that is very different to their own behaviour online. For example, younger children may be ignored by an adult who is engrossed in a smartphone. Older children may see their parents or carers sharing inappropriate content online.

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK #6: BE A DIGITAL ROLE MODEL

How can you model the online behaviour you would like from your child?

Your children need your time and attention – do they compete with your technology?

Would your posts pass the billboard test (if you put your posts on a billboard outside your house)?

If you were your child, would you be happy with your online behaviour? If not, make a change.



## FAMILY AGREEMENT

A Family Agreement is a great way to bring together all the tips in this booklet, to talk as a family about technology.

Things to include:

- How adults and children can use technology together for fun.
- When, where and for how long technology can be used by every member of the family e.g. can it be used at the dinner table?
- Which online services are good to use and which are not.
- Which online behaviours are encouraged, and which are not appropriate.
- How parents will monitor children's online activity.
- What to do if there is an online problem.
- Sanctions for any family member who breaks the rules.
- The digital life hacks contained in this booklet.

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK #7:

#### WRITE A FAMILY AGREEMENT...AND STICK TO IT!

Agree to a set of ground rules for online behaviour. This helps everyone in the family use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively.



# Digital Life Hacks for **Kids**



# ARE YOU A DIGITAL WHIZ?

## *Do you like to game, watch videos or livestreams online?*

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| a) Yes, it's the best thing ever | 3 |
| b) Yes, sometimes                | 2 |
| c) No, I'm not interested        | 1 |

## *Do you message or talk to friends or family members online?*

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| a) Nope, I only talk face to face | 1 |
| b) Yes, it's my life's purpose    | 3 |
| c) I've done it once              | 2 |

## *Have you ever talked to a smart assistant?*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a) What's that?  | 1 |
| b) Yes, but it didn't understand what I said   | 2 |
| c) Yes, it's helpful for finding things out, playing music, telling stories and more | 3 |

How did your score? \_\_\_\_\_

**3-4:** Want to master your digital life? Read our tips and tricks to become a whiz online in no time.

**5-7:** You're fast becoming a whiz at all things digital. This leaflet will help you on your way.

**8-9:** You might be a digital whiz! But even experts can benefit from our digital life hacks. Read on to find out more....





# WHO ARE YOU ONLINE?

*What could someone else find out about you, from searching online? There might be:*

- Photos or videos of you or comments made about you.
- Information about you in your public profile in apps or games.
- Photos, videos, comments or links that you've shared or questions you've asked online

**Other people can form an opinion about you  
based on what they see about you online.**

## DIGITAL LIFE HACK 1

### ***Your online identity belongs to you***

Search for your name online within speech marks e.g. "Oliver Smith" and see what results come up. Need to delete something posted by someone else? Contact the person who posted it, or report to the app. Make sure family and friends know to ask your permission before sharing photos of you online.

 **SAFE: KEEP YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SAFE**



# YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

An online friend is someone you can chat with or follow online. This is not the same as making friends in person. An online friend could be someone you met online or someone you also know in real life. It could be someone you know well or someone you've never talked to. It could even be a bot!




## DIGITAL LIFE HACK 2

### *Choose your social network*

**Do your online friends make you feel happy?  
Are they trustworthy, loyal and supportive?**

If yes, great! If not, choose others.

 **MEET:** MEETING UP WITH SOMEONE YOU ONLY KNOW ONLINE, EVEN A FRIEND OF A FRIEND, CAN BE DANGEROUS AS THIS PERSON IS STILL A STRANGER.



# CYBER RESILIENCE

## DIGITAL LIFE HACK 3

### *Become a cyber quizmaster*

How cyber-savvy are your parents or carers? Can they answer the following questions?

1. 'Phishing' is:

- a) An activity using a rod to catch fish
- b) Sending a message to trick someone into giving away personal information

2. True or False? *To protect myself from getting a computer virus, I should keep away from anyone who has a cold.*

3. *To ensure my password is secure, it should:*

- a) Use three random words
- b) Not include personal information such as a child or pet name
- c) Be a different password for every service
- d) All of the above

**Answers: 1 b), 2 False, 3 d)**



**ACCEPTING: THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU CLICK ON OR OPEN SOMETHING ONLINE.**



## MONEY AND INFLUENCE

Have you ever had to watch an advert before you could play a video or get to the next level in a game? Maybe you've noticed the word 'sponsored' next to an online search result. Or does your favourite vlogger recommend a particular product?

**These are examples of online advertising:  
where a company is paid to show their product to you.**

### DIGITAL LIFE HACK 4

#### *Influence your influencers*

Think about the motives of the people you follow online. Are they trustworthy? Do they make you feel happy and self-confident?

Only follow celebrities, gamers and influencers you would recommend to a friend.



**RELIABLE: YOU CANNOT TRUST EVERYTHING YOU SEE ONLINE AS SOME THINGS  
CAN BE OUT OF DATE, INACCURATE OR NOT ENTIRELY TRUE**





# HELP!



## DIGITAL LIFE HACK 5


### *Help is at hand*

If someone or something online makes you feel upset, worried or confused:

Tell a trusted adult such as a parent, carer, teacher or family friend. If the first person is unable to help you, talk to someone else.

Report the issue to the app, game or website. An adult may be able to do this for you.

You can block someone who is making you feel upset. This means they can no longer contact you online. Check your privacy settings to ensure that only your friends can contact you. A trusted adult may be able to help you with this.

 **TELL: TELL A TRUSTED ADULT IF SOMETHING OR SOMEONE EVER MAKES YOU FEEL UPSET, WORRIED OR CONFUSED.**



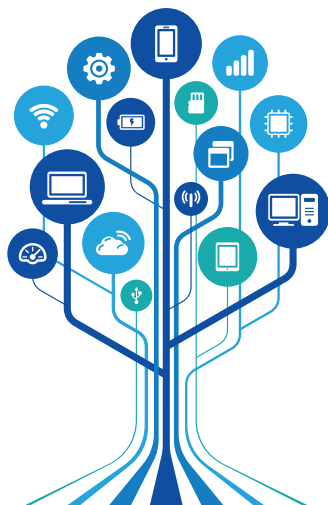


# TECHNOLOGY AND YOU

*Do you have a good tech/life balance?*

*Thinking about being online, have you ever:*

- Learnt how to do something new
- Been inspired by something you've seen
- Had fun with friends
- Given advice to a younger child about being online
- Missed sleep because of being online
- Worried about something you've seen
- Felt pressure to spend money
- Believed something that turned out to be false



## DIGITAL LIFE HACK 6

### **Get a tech/life balance**

If your life feels out of balance, make some changes! Digital whiz kids use tech to help them socialise, learn, have fun, be healthy and help others.



## SMART RULES CREATED BY CHILDNET

- S SAFE:** Keep your personal information safe. When chatting or posting online, don't give away things like your full name, password or home address. Remember personal information can be seen in images and videos you share too. Keep them safe to keep yourself safe.
- M MEET:** Meeting up with someone you only know online, even a friend of a friend, can be dangerous as this person is still a stranger. If someone you only know online ever asks you to meet up, for personal information or for photos/videos of you then tell an adult straight away
- A ACCEPTING:** Think carefully before you click on or open something online (e.g. links, adverts, friend requests, photos) as you never know where they may lead to or they may contain viruses. Do not accept something if you are unsure of who the person is or what they've sent you.
- R RELIABLE:** You cannot trust everything you see online as some things can be out of date, inaccurate or not entirely true. To find reliable information compare at least three different websites, check in books and talk to someone about what you have found.
- T TELL:** Tell a trusted adult if something or someone ever makes you feel upset, worried or confused. This could be if you or someone you know is being bullied online. There are lots of people who will be able to help you like your teachers, parents, carers or other child support charity/organisation
- ♥ BE SMART WITH A HEART:** Remember to always be smart with a heart by being kind and respectful to others online. Make the internet a better place by helping your friends if they are worried or upset by anything that happens online.



# ***DIGITAL LIFE HACKS***

## **#1 Your online identity belongs to you**

Make sure family and friends know to ask your permission before sharing photos of you online.

## **#2 Choose your social network**

Are your online friends trustworthy, loyal and supportive? If yes, great! If not, choose others.

## **#3 Become a cyber quizmaster**

How cyber-savvy are your parents or carers? Can you help them?

## **#4 Influence your influencers**

Think about the motives of the people you follow online. Only follow celebrities, gamers and influencers you would recommend to a friend.

## **#5 Help is at hand**

If someone or something online makes you feel upset, worried or confused, tell a trusted adult.

## **#6 Get a tech/life balance**

If your life feels out of balance, make some changes! Digital whiz kids use tech to help them socialise, learn, have fun, be healthy and help others.



