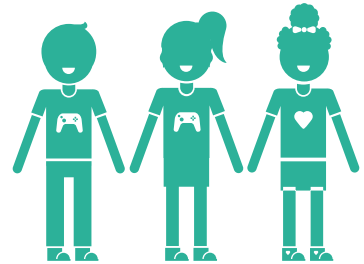


A straight forward guide to protecting children from online hate, extremism, and fake news



The pandemic has meant that children are spending more time than ever before learning and socialising online. Parents are juggling new technology alongside working and navigating the risks children face online. This **interactive guide has links to resources, advice, and information to help you:**

- Understand the risks and issues.
- Know where to get help.
- Find resources.
- Develop practical strategies.
- Start conversations.
- Build your child's digital resilience.



A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.



Mark Twain

Risks and Tactics

Extremists use the internet and social media to spread their ideology, hate, fake news, and conspiracy theories. They actively **target, exploit** and **groom children and young people**.

They know young people are using the internet much more, quite often by themselves, and so utilise these opportunities to exploit and recruit.

They frequently do this by exploiting our emotions, deeply held beliefs, and values and are increasingly using the social isolation, anxiety, and fear that many children are experiencing because of the pandemic.

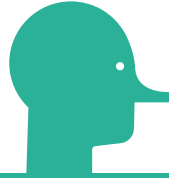
A common approach they use is to spread misinformation to **generate anger** and **outrage**. Teaching our children not to **fall for this trick** is one of the most important things we can do to protect them from grooming by extremists.





Frequently used tactics includes memes, making alterations to photos, videos, and documents and using them out of context. They make up quotes and social media posts for popular public figures.

Especially ones that children and young people look up to and follow online. Their aim is to draw children into conversations and encourage them to share misinformation and hate.



Extremists often pick a genuine local issue or concern and use it to spread lies, fear and hate about the group they're targeting. This [BBC Bitesize guide](#) has some great ideas of how to talk about this to children.

Where to start?

The most important thing parents and carers can do is talk to the children and young people in their lives about what they enjoy doing online. Talk about what they think isn't so good about being online and how to make it better. Then just keep talking as your child grows up and becomes more independent online. Find out what's their plan for when things go wrong or get them down and consider having a no blame rule, so that they'll talk to you when things go wrong, if they're worried about being told off or having devices confiscated they may decide to keep things to themselves.



The more a stranger knows about your child, the easier it is to groom them and gain trust. Only share with trusted friends and family.

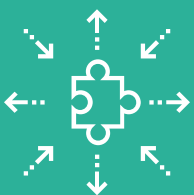
Support, ideas and resources



Click on the topics below to learn more about how to keep your child safe and support their wellbeing online. Learn how to identify misinformation, talk to children about hate speech and spot the signs they could be being groomed by extremists or other online predators.

Educate Against Hate

Messages of hate can take many forms. Extremist groups use them to recruit young people. Parents can find answers to common questions and resources to help protect their child from being groomed by extremists as well as ideas about how to talk to children about hate and extremism.



Fact Check

Know how to fact check and have a link to a reliable fact checking site on your devices. This link to full fact is a great place to start, its one of the best sites for identifying Fake News for just what it is.

How to know what to trust

This guide from the News Literacy Project is great place to start and has fun games and ideas for children and young people of all ages.



Conspiracy Theories



Conspiracy theories have grown significantly in the past year they have been fuelled by the confusing and unsettling nature of the pandemic and have resulted in people being drawn into extremists groups, committing violent and criminal acts. They can also be deeply disturbing and unsettling for children and young people who come across them accidentally online. The video in this link explains why they are dangerous.

Common Sense Media

This website has the latest research, tips, and tools on what really keeps children safe online. Which privacy settings should you use? What are the ins and outs of parental controls? Get tips on everything from the basics, such as smart usernames, to the big stuff, such as appropriate sharing. Plus lots of resources and strategies to look after your child's wellbeing online. What are the pro's and con's of Roblox, TikTok, Instagram or how to talk to teens about online predators.

[Digital Resilience Toolkit](#)

[Facts and advice about Online Radicalisation](#)

[The Fake News Quiz Test your skills](#)

Four ways to counter hate on social media



1. **Don't feed the trolls**, click on [this link](#) and read this Guide to Dealing With Hate on Social Media.
2. Watch [this video](#) with the children in your life and talk about what you can do to make the internet happier.
3. **Block, mute and report** [this guide](#) will show you how. If you see a **hate crime** [report it here](#).
4. **Look after yourself** and the children in your life. **Switch off** your devices and go for a walk, talk to a friend or do something else you like together that doesn't require technology.

Is someone you know becoming a stranger?



Act early

Kent and Medway Prevent Education Officers

Jill Allen (South & East Kent) jill.allen@kent.gov.uk
Sally Green North & West Kent and Medway sally.green2@kent.gov.uk

