

Northants FA online advice and guidance for parents /carers



The Coronavirus outbreak and having to remain in our homes for 24 hours a day except for being able to exercise once a day is going to be a very challenging time for parents and carers. Alongside being kept indoors comes increased use of internet with children and young people.

We are aware that many of you are already monitoring closely their children's use of apps and online activity. However, we at Northants FA thought we would offer some support and advice during this very difficult time in providing some useful guidance.

- Check the age restrictions the app your child is using or asking to download. Ensure it is age appropriate for your child/children. You can use the family sharing setting to monitor this app.
- Ensure all social media accounts are not set on public but set to private. Even if your child says they have done this, check.
- Speak with your child/children to ensure they understand what to be appropriate to post online and have an understanding of social media apps and messenger apps – use 'family mode' with certain apps
- Ensure your child /ren knows how to report if they feel unsafe whilst online – who to go to and how to report.
- Don't assume all children use apps the same way. Ask regularly where they are going on line, who with and what are they accessing/and who are they speaking to . If it is an app where they will be having communication with friends, ensuring it is a friend. Be aware and mindful, that all may not always be at it seems. Adults have the ability to pose as children and can interact your child and groom them online. Be vigilant and always try and have ongoing open conversation with your child/ren about who they are talking too online
- Ensure your child/ren have their location settings turned off and do not share them, unless it is you the parent/carer has requested to have your child/ren share their location with you/other family members.



- Some games have applications within them where they can chat openly to the other gamers. Ensure if your child has a headset they know who they are talking to and check on this often to ensure they are keeping themselves safe. If they are being asked to provide personal information and /or the conversations and requests regarding outside the gaming chat, then ensure your child understand that they must report to the adult within the household and encourage them to talk openly with you regarding who they are gaming with and if they are feeling safe and the content of conversations
- Agree and encourage your child/ren to adhere to a realistic time period for being online. Too much online activity can affect a children's behaviour and mood. Most internet providers have apps parents/carers can use to restrict the timings of internet use per electronic equipment.
- Bullying can be a major concern with online gaming/social media . Encourage your child to report to an adult/and know how to block gamers/followers/friends on social media.
- Many games encourage spending to get more points etc. Ensure you turn off or restrict your in app purchases. It has been known that children have spent hundreds and some thousands of pounds gaming using their parent's card which had been saved in the app

This is a worrying and uncertain time for us all. Something most of us will have never experienced before. We need to ensure we allow our children to have normality as much as possible in their lives, but also they require routine and to continue to practice safe internet and gaming use, With this guidance, hopefully we can continue to allow our children to play safely online.

If you worried about online sexual abuse or the way someone has been communicating with your child online? Please report this via <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Bullying, grooming and any other safeguarding worries your child may have regarding what is happening when online Childline is available online, on the phone, and if you are a child who isn't ready to report to Ceop, you can call 0800 1111 and access online at <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

If you would like to raise any concerns to be, then please contact me, Candice Hart @ safeguarding@northantsfa.com Mobile: 07535 640252

