Child Online Safety, it matters!

Why it is important

The online space was never designed for children and therefore exposes them to serious hazards, hence the urgent need for Child Internet Protection.

Platforms on the internet can be used by offenders to attack, bully, sexually abuse children or facilitate offline abuse. These offenders use technology or the internet to harass children, share explicit material, not fit for child viewing. groom children online, or live stream the sexual abuse of children. This includes abuse perpetrated by other children against any individual under the age of 18.[1]

Child online safety is protecting children from harmful content on the internet.Today, more than ever, the Internet and many electronic media provide children with access to information and entertainment.

According to the Child SafetyOnline Conference of June, 2022, from a very young age, children use the Internet to learn, play, and communicate with others. This, however, became more apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic when educational, social and entertainment interactions all moved to the online world.

The risks you need to be aware of include:

- Cyber bullying
- Cyber predidtors
- Phishing
- Online scams
- Posting private information
- Accidental malware download
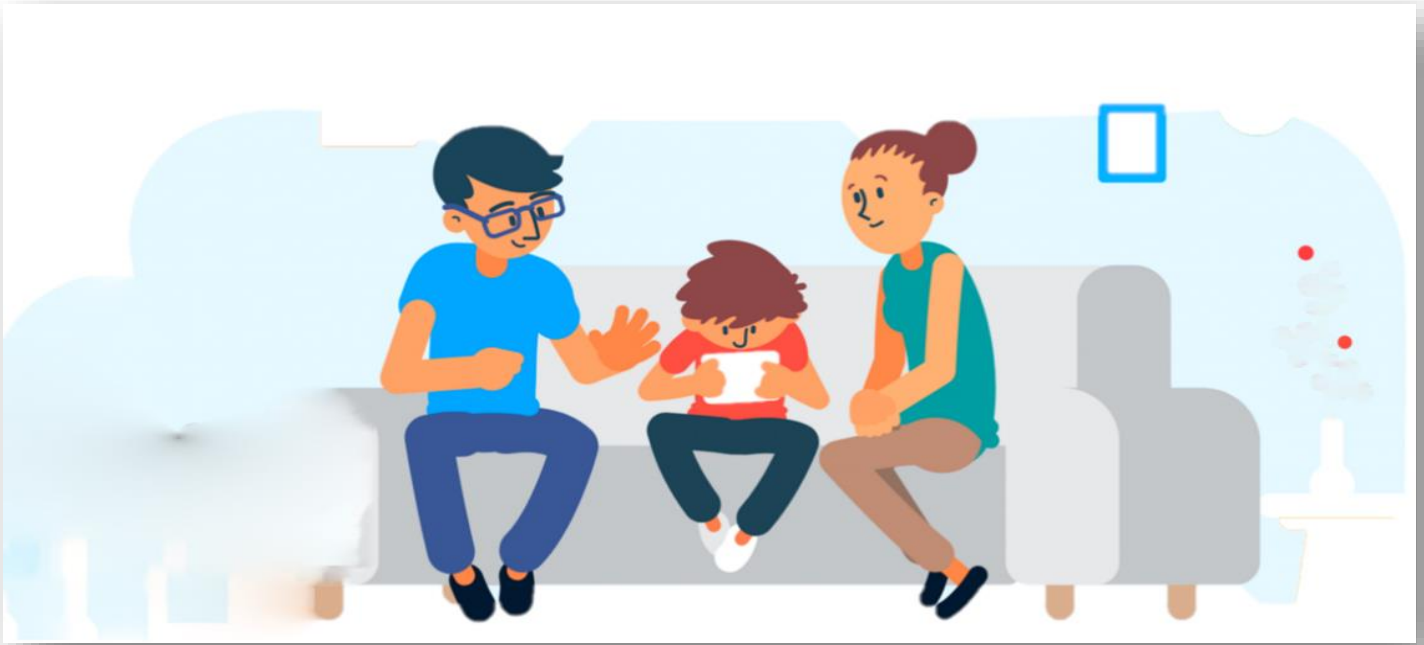
Online scams are a great threat to children

Cyber bullying can affect your child's mental health

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Tips to keep children safe on the internet

(1)**Talk openly with your child about their online activity-** As soon as your child starts accessing the internet, talk to them about what they are reading, watching and who they are communicating with online.

(2) **Keep screens and devices where you can see them-** Keep the computer in a central spot in the home where it's easy to keep an eye on what your child is doing and viewing online.

(3) **Know your parental controls-** it's wise to know how to use the parental controls/search restrictions offered by web browsers, internet service provider and devices.

(4) **Keep control of your family's digital footprint-** Teach your child to stay in control of their digital footprint, by only sharing information and pictures with people who they know and trust.

(5) **Lead by example** - If your children see you being cautious and respectable when you are online, they are more likely to follow in your footsteps.

https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/blog-10-things-keep-kids-safe-online/

As a parent or guardian, it is your duty to protect your child on the internet

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[1] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/child-online-safety-protecting-children-from-online-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse

[2] https://usa.kaspersky.com/resource-center/threats/top-seven-dangers-children-face-online