Become a Tech-savvy Parent

How to help your child stay safe in a technology rich world

NEWSLETTER

This Newsletter is a follow up to the 3 Parent workshops that we held on 5th February around girls and social media, boys and gaming and infants and technology.

What's happening to children in our society? There has been a wave of tragic stories in recent weeks about teenagers harming themselves, backed up by a barrage of statistics that appear to show that this generation may be the most physically safe but most mentally fragile in history. The OECD has already labelled British children as the unhappiest in the world. A YouGov survey this week found that the number of children who don't think life is worth living has doubled in a decade to 1 in 5.

Is this just down to the internet and social media?

For younger children, studies have shown that that preschool children who get too much screen time; on video games, internet-connected devices, television screens, and other digital mediums are among those showing delays and deficits in learning by the time they enter school at the age of five.

The digital age is changing our children's lives and childhood dramatically.

Whilst there is a greater debate over what is happening to our children and why, we need to also think about what we can do to help our own children and the children in our community. Is the use of new media beneficial or harmful to infant children's language and cognitive development? Does excessive gaming affect the hard-wiring of the brain? Does social media impact on children's mental health and well-being?

How to help your child stay safe in a technology rich world.

Technology is also GREAT!!

Playing online games can develop hand eye coordination, problem solving skills and dynamic spatial aware-ness.

The Internet can increase knowledge and expand horizons; promote and increase personal skills and talents. Social Media can improve communication, allowing us all to keep in touch. Google earth lets us explore the world in a way that we never could before—and all from the 'security' of our own home.

It can also keep our children quietly occupied whilst we busy parents get on with house-hold chores!

Keeping children safe in a technologically rich world is NOT about banning electronic devices.

Things to think about as a parent:

⇒ Technology is great—but it is not everything. Are you making sure that your child finds ways to amuse themselves away from technology? Are they reading books at home regularly, playing with toys or playing non—electronic games?

⇒ Parents are in charge. Manage the time spent on technology.

⇒ Model good tech behaviour. Are we talking to our children or spending too much time in front of our own phones and tablets?

⇒ Is it okay to let children play 16 or 18 certificate games? (see www.everybodyplays.co.uk/parents-guide-to-games for more information.

⇒ Talking about technology is the best way to keep children safe. Do you know how to play the games that your children are playing? Do you know what social media apps are being used and what is being put on them? (See www.net-aware.org.uk)

⇒ If your child is a victim of online bullying will you know? Do you know who they are communicating with online?

⇒ Have you got parent controls (filtering software to block unwanted content/privacy or child settings etc) on the technology used by your children?

We will be holding the same workshops later in the school year, but if you have any concerns that you want to share please come in and see Mrs Moakes. For more advice and support please visit: www.internetmatters.org