

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

Working together to keep our young people safe



In this month's issue:

- Staying safe during the summer holiday
- Regulating screen time
- App focus: Snapchat: For My Eyes Only

Secondary | July 2024

Keeping safe during the summer holiday

Children eagerly anticipate the summer holiday all year long. It's a time to break from school, often for a family holiday and a chance to spend time with friends outside of school, engaging in activities they might not usually have the opportunity to do.

As children grow older, they are usually granted more independence to spend time with friends without parental supervision. They often visit local parks, shopping centres or leisure centres.

Children deserve to feel secure in their local community, but there may be instances when they encounter other young individuals, adults or situations which could be a potential threat to their safety.

Having a safety plan in place can provide peace of mind for both you and your child, ensuring they can venture out and enjoy their time away from home.

How to prepare

Consider doing these things before your child goes out without you:

- Make sure you know who they are with and where they are going;
- Agree on a return time;
- Make sure their phone is charged (if they have one) or they have another means of contacting you;
- Make sure they have a way of getting home such as, bus pass or money.

INSTILLING THESE PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS INTO YOUR CHILD CAN HAVE A HUGE IMPACT WHEN THEY ARE OUT WITH FRIENDS

O1	▶ INTERACTING WITH OTHERS Only interact with those you know and intended to meet.
O2	▶ KEEP PARENTS UPDATED Let parents know if plans and locations change.
O3	▶ NO CHALLENGES Do not take part in challenges that could potentially be dangerous.
O4	▶ PLAN YOUR ROUTE HOME Take the safest route home, leaving yourself enough time.
O5	▶ BEWARE OF YOUR BELONGINGS If you have valuable belongings, do not keep them on show.
O6	▶ STAY AWAY FROM UNSAFE AREAS Including: railway lines; abandoned buildings and large; unsupervised areas of water.



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4

Steps for ensuring a positive outcome when managing your child's screen time

Determine a suitable screen time limit

Have in your mind what you think a suitable amount of screen time for your family is. However, be willing to compromise with your child.



Talk to your child

Initiate discussions with your child regarding the impact of excessive screen time and encourage them to participate in other activities as well.



Make a plan, with your child

Set boundaries for your child's screen time. Be open to finding a middle ground since your perspective may differ greatly from your child's.



Keep them busy

Find activities for them to do when they are not on their devices.



How to regulate screen time over the summer holiday

During school holidays, children enjoy a break from their regular schedules and rules, allowing for more flexibility. This may involve staying up later, sleeping in longer, extending curfews and increasing screen time or gaming. Some children may spend most of their day on screens or playing games, leaving little room for other activities. The six weeks of freedom can make it challenging to establish positive routines before the new term begins in September.

If you are exploring ways to limit your child's screen time without conflicts, these four steps could be helpful.

Initiating discussions with your child regarding screen time restrictions might appear challenging. You might worry about potential conflicts arising between you and your child, so it's beneficial to begin with steps one and two well before the summer holiday begins. Starting conversations about the adverse effects of screen time now can pave the way for smoother discussions in the future.

Conversation starters:

- 'Have you seen the news report on the negative impact of too much screen time?'
- 'So you don't spend the whole summer on your phone/computer, what other activities shall we plan for you?'

Snapchat: 'For My Eyes Only'



Understanding 'For My Eyes Only'

For My Eyes Only (FMEO) serves as a secure vault within Snapchat designated for saving messages and pictures privately. This feature protects the content, ensuring only those with the passcode can view it. Users need to set up the vault initially to allow content to be saved into FMEO; this means any content found there is intentionally added. Accessing FMEO is possible through the 'memories' section of Snapchat.

What Risks Does FMEO Pose?

Setting up FMEO indicates that users have content they prefer to keep hidden. This implies that any inappropriate messages or pictures could be stored there. It also means that, as a parent, you won't be able to monitor what your children are sending or receiving, or who they are communicating with.