

Online Safety Newsletter

March 2022

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Smartwatches / Fitness trackers

Check what the smartwatch allows your child to do and if available, set appropriate restrictions. Talk to your child about the different settings and if you have, why you have set up the restrictions.

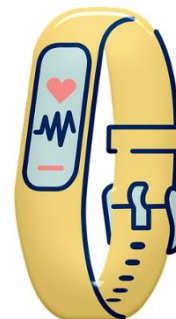
What are the risks?

- Some smartwatches allow you to take photos. It is important to talk to your child about appropriate behaviour when taking and sharing photos. Once a photo is shared, they lose control of it.
- Some smartwatches have internet access with the ability to download apps. You need to be aware of the potential of in app purchases and viewing upsetting content.

Depending on the brand of smartwatch, you may be able to set up parental controls for example to restrict content and prevent purchases. More information about Apple Watch parental controls can be found here:
<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/guide/watch/apd54d0a51fb/watchos>

As always, ensure your child knows to talk to you or another trusted adult should they see anything inappropriate or that worries them whilst using their device.

Many schools discourage or do not allow smartwatches – check your child's school Policy as this will tell you if they are



the use of Acceptable Use allowed in school.

Further information

- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/digital-family-basics-smart-watches-fitness-trackers>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/tech-guide/smart-toys-and-wearable-gadgets/#smart>

Supporting young people with SEND online

is a great place, but we need to be aware of the risks involved with being online. For children with SEND, there are further challenges and therefore additional support may be required. There is a lot of support available to parents and carers and the following links are a great starting point:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-families-children-with-send/>
<https://www.internetmatters.org/inclusive-digital-safety/advice-for-parents-and-carers/supporting-children-with-send/>
<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/supporting-young-people-with-send-online/>

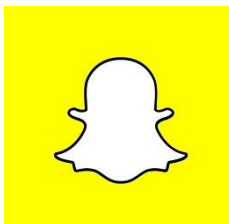
For topics such as helping your child browse safely online, setting appropriate parental controls, discussions about being online and the steps you can take to help protect your child online.

Snapchat

**Apps for learning and
having fun!**

What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is an app used for messaging and **must be 13+ to sign up**. Users can send only be seen for a set time period e.g. 10 snaps to stories which then disappear after 24



sharing photos and videos. **You** messages (snaps) to others that can seconds. Users can also upload hours.

What should I be aware of?

- **Who is your child friends with?** Talk to your child about who their 'friends' online are.
- **Group chats** - in a group chat there may be people that they're not friends with on the app who can then communicate with them in the group. This also increases their risk of interacting with strangers.
- **Snap Map** - The map lets users see where 'friends' are. Location sharing via the map is optional and is off by default (we recommend that it remains off).
- **Snapchat streaks** - Streaks count how many consecutive days two people have been sending Snaps to each other, this can increase pressure to respond daily.
- **Inappropriate content** – due to the nature of the app your child may come across content that is inappropriate.
- **Screenshots** – whilst Snaps disappear, users may take screenshots before they do, potentially resulting in them losing control of what they have shared as it could be sent to other people.
- **Bullying** – there is a risk of bullying on all platforms so please ensure your child knows how to block and report other users if necessary.
 - <https://snap.com/safety/safety-reporting/>
 - <https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/a/remove-block-friends>

Safety tips

It is important to talk to your child regularly about what they are doing online and make sure that they know that they should always talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns. **Please make sure the appropriate privacy settings are set up and your child knows how to block and report other users if necessary.**

We would recommend you explore Snapchat with your child and suggest why certain options are safer, for example, setting your account so only friends (rather than everyone) can see your content and only those you are friends with can contact you.

- <https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/article/privacy-settings2>

Don't forget to talk to your child about **being kind online**, for example only posting positive comments, don't say anything they wouldn't say in real life and treat others as they would expect to be treated.