

FOR PARENTS

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE DURING THE COVID19 PANDEMIC

FOR CHILDREN AGED 6 - 11:



Accounts for children: Create a separate profile/account on devices and platforms for your children. This will help keep a track of their online activities, and also keep them safe from inappropriate content. Do not create accounts for children/or let them do so on apps and platforms that are not age appropriate for them, especially on live streaming and video making apps, since they are not meant for these ages.



YouTube Kids: Instead of browsing videos on YouTube, use YouTube Kids, which shows only curated age appropriate content. You can use the app or even the desktop version.



Managing Screen Time: To keep a check on screen time, you can use in-built features on your devices as well as apps. You can also create a family agreement, and chart out terms like no devices at the dinner table, or no games for more than one hours, as agreeable to all.



Technology for Good: Learn about a new app or website together that will benefit all members of the family. This will help reinforce the idea of using technology productively, and not just for entertainment.



Building Trust: Engage in conversations with your child to understand what they do online. Building confidence and trust will help foster an environment, where they feel comfortable sharing their experiences, both good and bad.



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FOR CHILDREN AGED 12 - 17:

18+

Age Limits: All apps and platforms have set their own age limits. Make sure your child uses only those that are appropriate for their age. You can use parental controls to make sure they do not access inappropriate apps and content.



Know the Rules: If your child uses any social media platform, sit together with them and go through the community standards/guidelines of the platform. This will help them understand what content and behaviour is allowed on a platform and what is not. Encourage them to report anything that they may find inappropriate.



Stranger Danger: Remind your child about not accepting friend requests from people they may not know but have friends in common with. Also discuss that sometimes people are not always who they say they are online.



Online Threats: Talk about risks that they may face online, like grooming, bullying, stalking, etc. Children are often unaware of behaviour that may be wrong, let alone illegal. Sensitization will help the child understand when to say no and what they should report.



Bonding Activities: Watch movies, sports, news, web-series or gaming together as a family as a stress buster and an enjoyable bonding experience. But it may also be a good time for parents to recall and share almost lost traditions of storytelling, songs, word games or indoor games with children, who may be able to help them build their technological skills.



Family Agreements: Work on “family agreements” based on negotiation on the time to be spent on entertainment (such as online games, watching movies, web series), advancing knowledge (revising school work, researching projects, acquiring new skills) and doing basic exercises (including exercises to prevent physical problems associated with excessive use of digital devices).

