



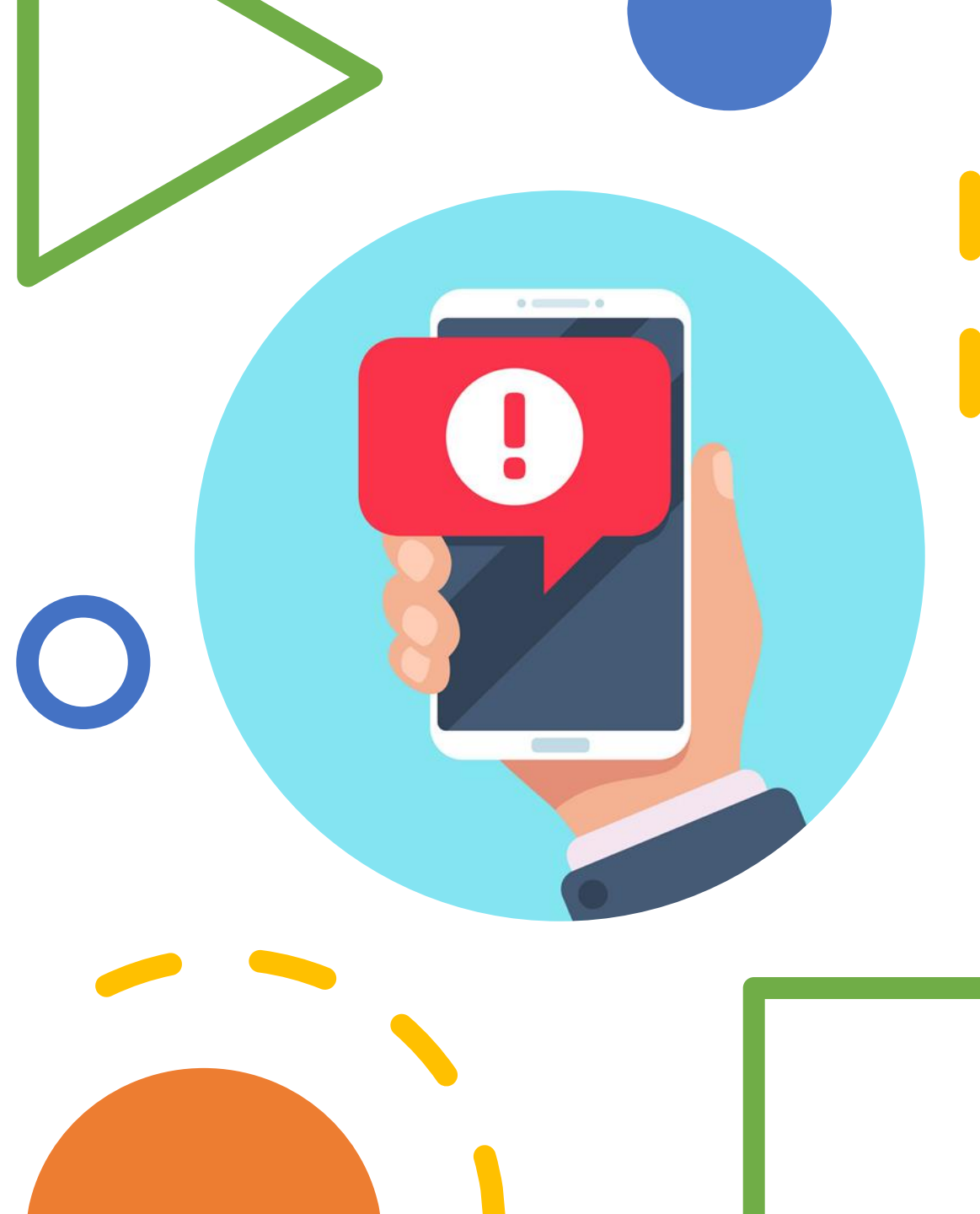
Smartphone Safety Guide

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1. Risks and Dangers

The more advanced smartphones are becoming the easier children are being exposed to inappropriate content and people. These factors can influence and negatively impact your child's thinking, wellbeing and behaviour

- Exposure to violence, hateful and pornographic content
- Inaccurate or false information leading to anxiety
- Promotion of harmful behaviours including self-harm
- Body image comparison leading to eating disorders
- Over-sharing of personal information
- Active or unintentional bullying or hurtful behaviour
- Easier access into poor social circles with no escape
- Targeting by gangs for fraud and money laundering
- Gaming addiction, gambling addiction or in app purchases
- Obsessive behaviour and fixation on a particular topic.



2. Establishing a Safe Routine

Having a positive routine in place from when your child starts using a smartphone is the best way to ensure their long term online safety. Establishing a routine allows you to monitor their activity and set appropriate boundaries that allow them to enjoy their device, maintain contact and also get a break.

- Phones should have a cut off time. E.g. switched off and handed to a parent by 9pm.
- Smartphones to be kept with a parent when not in use.
- Smartphones should be used in a shared living space e.g. not allowed in bedrooms.
- You should have the passwords and log ins to your child's smartphone. This should be non-negotiable for their safety and allows them to be mindful of their online behaviour.
- Regularly go through your child's contacts list and phone content with them, you should know who all their friends are and who they talk to as you would in real life.



3. Wi-Fi and Data Controls

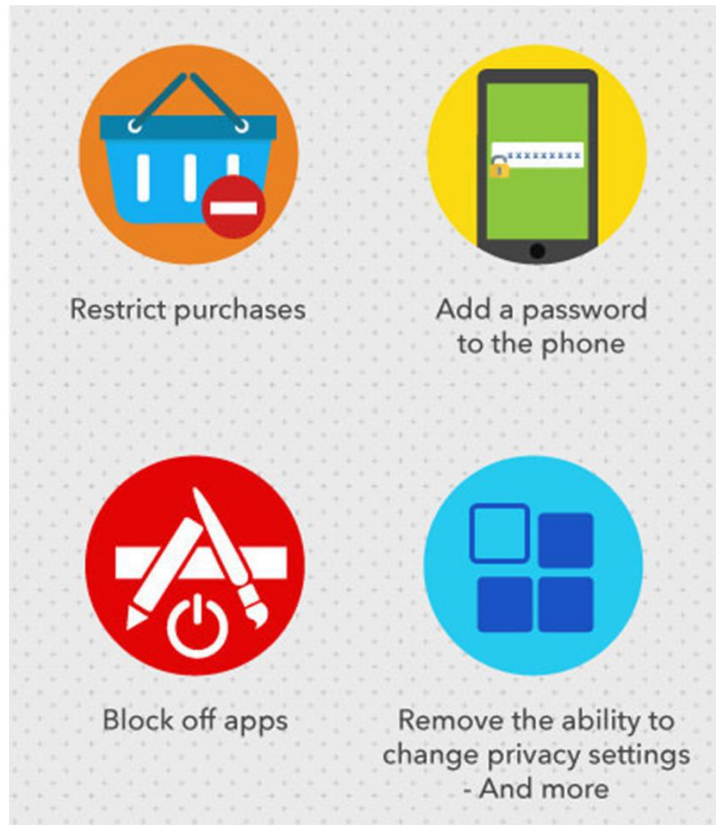
Your child's smartphone is at its most powerful when it has unlimited and unmonitored access to fast internet. It's important to use this to your advantage and maintain control. At school, internet access automatically blocks or flags inappropriate or unsafe content - access to private internet prevents this.



- Avoid taking out a monthly contract for your child e.g. 12/24 months.
- Maintain a monthly rolling contract that can be stopped as and when needed depending on how your son is using their data.
- Inappropriate use should lead to a cancellation of data or a limiting of the amount of data each month. **GIFFGAFF** allows you to choose how much data your child can have each month.
- Household wi-fi should have parental controls and time limits – contact your internet service provider for info.

4. Safety Controls and Apps

There is a range of safety features built into your child's smartphone that can be set up for them. Read through your child's phone manual and take full advantage of these features. In addition to these, there are apps (free & paid) you can use to further monitor and limit your child's smartphone activities.



- Ensure your child's smartphone is set up using your email and details. Check your child's phone 'settings' and ensure the phone is set up with your details only e.g. email. Additional information for your child can then be added as a secondary user.
- Go through safety and 'privacy' setting on your child's smartphone. Ensure these are set up in the most appropriate way for you.
- Search on the 'Appstore' or 'Playstore' for apps that can be used to further monitor your child's phone. E.g. MMGuardian, Zoodles, Teensafe, Netnanny, Mobile Guardian
- A good free app to use can be found at the link below. <https://www.life360.com/>

5. Social Media Safety

The majority of social media platforms have a minimum age requirement of '13 years old'. The risk is that your child consumes an unrestricted and unlimited amount of content. They are also able to share pictures and videos of themselves which can be stolen, changed and shared without their permission.

- Ensure your child's social media accounts are set to private. This is to prevent them being 'friended' by people they may not know and who could be of risk to them.
- Check regularly who they engage with on social media. This can change rapidly with different trends emerging almost weekly.
- Encourage discussion around these trends to ensure they are safe. Fake news is a serious issue that can cause anxiety.
- Discourage your child from uploading and sharing pictures and videos of themselves or other children.



6. Bank Fraud and Financial Safety

Children are often targeted by fraudsters to help launder stolen money or drug money. This exposes your child to a world of danger they may not be aware of in order to earn quick money. This often leads children 'owing' money to dangerous people unintentionally or putting you at financial risk as a parent.



- Children are normally targeted by their peers and friends with the aim of making quick cash.
- They are often asked to hand over their banking details so money can be deposited into it. They are then asked to withdraw/transfer this money and keep a cut of it – sounds easy.
- A step further finds students targeting others to get their bank details. This includes their siblings, friends and parents.
- Some children are asked to hand over their passports in order for new bank accounts to be opened in their names to be used undetected.
- ***Hold off on setting up a bank account until your child is 16 or avoid setting up online banking on your child's bank account.***
- ***Ensure no bank cards are saved to your child's phone on any apps or website. All payments that need to be made for anything should be made from your personal phone.***
- ***Regularly check your child's bank statements to ensure all transactions are legitimate. If you see a large deposit suddenly appearing, inform the bank immediately.***

7. Online Gaming and Gambling Addiction

Monitor closely the games your child is playing online. A lot of these games are designed to keep them playing for as long as possible, and also to invest as much as possible. This can have a massive impact on your child if they become too invested - a lot of these games have gambling elements and adverts.

- Most online games make their money in two ways. Advertising and 'in-app' purchases.
- These games are designed to be highly addictive in order to gain a large investment from your child in terms of time and money. This can become difficult for your child to step away from.
- Check the advertising on the game does not include gambling. Gambling websites can often look like just another game to your child and must be reported if you come across them. Warn your child against these!
- Ensure your child spends a limited amount of time on games. Discourage purchases that allow further access to a part of the game



8. Distributing Child Pornography

Child pornography is a serious threat to your child's safety and is a constant battle online. However, children often unknowingly contribute to this issue by sharing images and videos of themselves and others. Sharing or keeping sexual content can lead to serious legal repercussions if not monitored.



- Ensure your child does not take any indecent pictures of themselves. Any that have been taken must be deleted as phones can easily be stolen or hacked.
- **DO NOT SHARE!** Once your child uploads any image or video to the internet, it can not be removed. Even if you click the delete button.
- Your child should avoid sending or sharing any images of themselves or others with anyone. This is considered as distribution of child pornography and can lead to severe consequences for all those involved.
- As a parent, this can have a serious impact on you legally and professionally so please remain vigilant.

9. Online Dating, Grooming and 'Catfishing'

Children become interested in romantic relationships and dating at an earlier age than we would want. Their pursuit of these connections can often lead to them being taken advantage of by anyone pretending to be a child or someone else harmless (catfishing)– monitor all online connections closely.



- Ensure your child does not use any dating apps. These have an age restriction but your child can circumvent these by lying about their age.
- Ensure your child's account is set to private on all platforms and they do not accept friend requests from people they don't know in real life.
- Adults with ill intentions often create child-like profiles with the aim of befriending children online. Monitor all online relationships closely as your child's friendship network grows.
- As a rule of thumb – if you or your child does not know this person offline, they should not know them online.