Focus on...

Lancashire Early years

Social media

Children and young people use many different social media apps and websites. There are many benefits to using these apps such as keeping connected with friends and families, they can use these platforms to learn new skills and build on existing relations. Like most things there can be negatives too, for children and young people there are risks that you must be aware of to help keep children safe on social media.

How can you teach children to be safe when using social media and minimise the risks children may face?

- Make children aware of the importance of keeping location services off. Adults should consider reviewing location settings regularly.
- Safety and privacy settings will need to be modified for each individual app. Explore these with children and explain to them this is a safety measure.
- Open communication is key when allowing children access to social media sites. Look at the age restrictions on different apps.
- Parental controls are a great measure in keeping children safe. Ensure adults and children understand which ones to activate to ensure safety.

Key message

The best way to keep children safe online and whilst using social media is to learn about online safety, be curious and get to know the safety functions of each online app.

Ensure communication is open and two way and show the child/young person that they can trust you without judgement. Show the same level of interest in their online friends as you would their offline friends.

Useful websites

What is social media? | NSPCC

Child Safety Online: A practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media- GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Keeping children safe online | NSPCC

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