# Moving on up!

Our guide to the online aspects of moving from primary to secondary school

Preparing young people to move to secondary education, and enabling them to settle quickly, is important for their wellbeing and learning. This resource is specifically designed to help you as a parent/carer look at the role that technology might play in this process too. We have identified four important issues and provided conversation starters, supporting top tips, and useful links.
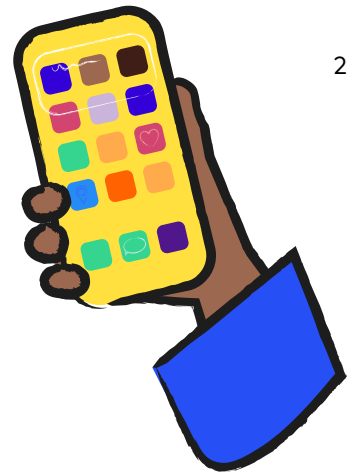
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Giving your child new devices

It is usually around this age that you may give your child their first phone or allow them more independence if they already have one, especially if they're now travelling to school alone. It's important that you feel confident enough to help your child manage their technology use and ensure they're ready for the responsibility of having their own phone. Our Childnet First Phone Checklist can help with this.

Conversation starters to ask your child

A   What apps and games would you like to have on your phone, and why?

B   What rules do your friends have in place for using their phones?

C   If a friend shared something that you were uncomfortable seeing, what would you do?

Top tips

1   Take an active interest in your child's online life and find time to talk to them about what they enjoy.

2   Use our Childnet Family Agreement to outline your expectations for your child's use of their phone. Things to consider could include where the device is kept at night, rules for downloading new apps/in-app purchasing, and screentime limits etc.
www.childnet.com/resources/family-agreement

3   Activate the content filters/restrictions that are available on the phone, and your home Wi-Fi, and talk these through with your child. Filtering is a helpful tool, but open conversations are key. Let your child know they can always come to you if they see anything that worries or upsets them.

To help you talk to your child about their online life:
www.childnet.com/resources/lets-talk-about-life-online

Helping your child with an expanding circle of friends

Moving to secondary school can mean a rapidly increasing social circle for young people, and an increase in the number of online services being used to connect with each other, e.g. social media and gaming platforms. Your child will want to keep in touch with old friends from primary school, but also connect with new friends, and may need help to manage this process.

Conversation starters to ask your child

A   How well do you think you should know someone, before you add them as a friend online?

B   What is it that you like most/least about group chats?

C   If you changed your mind about someone, is it easy/hard to remove friends online and why?

Top tips

1   Talk about friendship and trust with your child, to help them evaluate each friend request they send/receive. Do they want/need to be sharing personal content with these people?

2   Show your child the different group chats that you are in and talk about how you might behave differently per group, depending on the other members.

3   Help your child take control of their content and audience, by using the privacy settings available. It's okay to regularly review friend lists and recognise that friendships may naturally change.

For more information on these topics and more, visit:
www.childnet.com/blog

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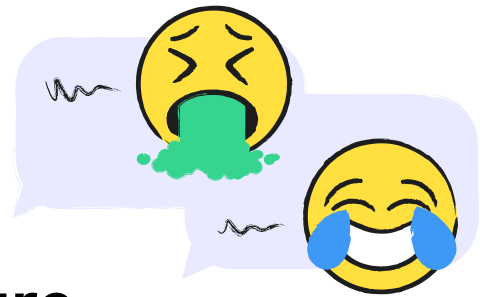
Responding to peer pressure and online bullying

Being given your own device for the first time brings the potential to be connected to your peer group 24–7, and this can present challenges. Whilst it's natural for young people who are learning to use technology to make some mistakes, starting secondary school can result in changing friendships and bigger year groups, which means that arguments may be played out online, and peer pressure may increase from a desire to 'fit in' with new friends.

Conversation starters to ask your child

A How can you tell if something is bullying, and not just a joke between friends?

B What would you do if someone is pressuring you to do something that you are not comfortable with? (Tell an adult, take screenshots, block, report).

C How can you help someone who is experiencing online bullying? (Take screenshots, report the content online, tell an adult, let your friend know that you are there for them).

Top tips

1 Reinforce the importance of being kind and respectful online, and not retaliating or being unkind back if a situation escalates.

2 Let your child know that it's okay to say no to something they are not sure about, not comfortable with, or do not want to do.

3 Ensure your child knows they can tell you, or any trusted adult, if someone is being unkind to them online, or they see it happening to someone else. Help them to use the blocking and reporting tools and save as much evidence as possible.

For more information visit:
www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-bullying
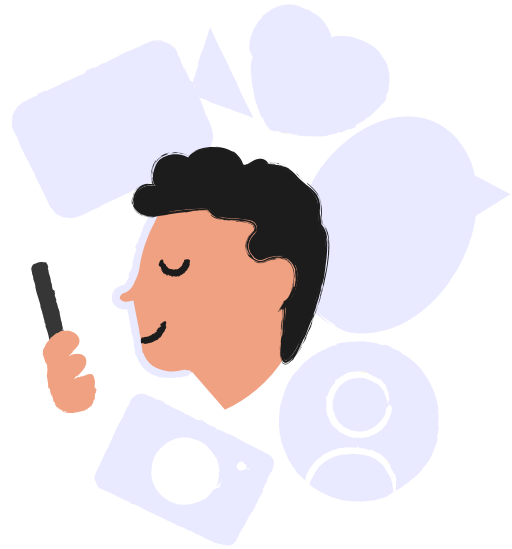
Digital wellbeing

Going online and using technology can impact young people's emotions and mental health in both positive and negative ways. If your child has recently received a new device, they may be spending longer online than before, and so it's important that they understand how going online can make them feel, and how to recognise when they need help.

Conversation starters to ask your child

A   Would you like to spend more time online, or less time online than you do now, and why?

B   How can going online make someone feel better, or feel worse?

C   What would you do if going online was making you or a friend feel upset?

Top tips

1   Encourage your child to think about the quality of their time spent online, to help make their internet use as positive as possible.

2   Remind your child that the things other people post online might not always show what their life is really like; also that posts can be filtered and edited to look different from reality.

3   Let your child know that it's okay to take a break if going online is feeling overwhelming. Your child may need support in doing this, such as timers and reminders.

For more information visit:
www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/digital-wellbeing

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Childnet's mission is to work in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. We work directly with children and young people from the ages of 3 to 18 on a weekly basis, as well as parents, carers, teachers and professionals, finding out about their real experiences online, and the positive things they are doing as well as sharing safety advice.

Explore more resources at childnet.com/resources