

ONLINE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

Resetting Digital Boundaries

Earlier this year, during the initial lockdown we found ourselves in a completely alien world of not being able to see friends and family, not being able to get out, whilst still trying to maintain our own work lives (working from home) and supporting children to complete their online learning. Many families found the use of devices and gaming a fantastic resource to keep children occupied. As we begin to return to a slightly more normal way of life (although still in a type of lockdown) we need to reaffirm our previous digital boundaries and rules. It's important to consider children's ages when re-instating these rules. Vodafone's Digital Parenting magazine has some tips about these, here.



4-7 years

Curious explorers

Children at this age are starting to become curious about the world around them. It's important to allow them some freedom to explore the online world but also to do it more safely. Apps like YouTube Kids may give filtered access to social media – but some inappropriate content can occasionally slip through the net, so keep an eye on what your child is viewing. Games for older children might be starting to appeal (e.g. those rated PEGI 12) but be aware that some contain violent content and in-game chat functions.

Sleep: NHS recommends 10½-11¼ hours a night | **Content:** PEGI 7; BBFC U, PG, 12A | **Screen time:** Maximum 1hr a day

8-12 years

Becoming independent

Children are likely to have a growing interest in social media, through friends and role models. Many social media platforms, like Facebook and Instagram, have age 13+ restrictions, but this will not stop your child from being attracted to them. Show an active interest in the platforms they are talking about, whether that's discussing how sharing selfies makes them feel or the realism of images they see online. Children's moods can be affected by social media, so it is better to be involved and help them explore in a safer way.

Sleep: NHS recommends 9¼-10¼ hours a night | **Content:** PEGI 12, BBFC 12A, 12 | **Screen time:** From 1hr, progressing to 1.5hrs a day, as they get older

www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting-archive



As Christmas is approaching it seems a good time to consider which devices / games are appropriate for different members of our households. If you need help finding out about privacy settings on specific apps or advice in general you can find a plethora of information on the Parentzone website, <https://parentzone.co.uk/advice/parent-guides>