

23 October 2024

This is a message from West Midlands Police for parents, carers, and older brothers or sisters.

Police and schools across the West Midlands are committed to working together to protect our young people from becoming victims of robbery and violent crime, but to do this we need your help.

As we head into October half term, we are urging everyone to talk to their child about increasing their phone security and their safety during Halloween and Bonfire Night.

We have seen an increase in criminals targeting young people who carry iPhones or iPads. Thieves are forcing young people to log out of their iCloud to prevent the phone being tracked after it's stolen. By enabling two-factor authentication on iCloud or your child's phone, can make thieves lose interest in taking their phone.

Increasing the security on your child's iPhone and iPad:

1. Firstly, talk to your child about enabling two-factor authentication on their devices to help keep them, and their phones, safe from theft and exploitation.
2. Reassure them that turning on location and enabling better privacy settings allows them to communicate with their friends and family safely and securely.
3. Turn on two-factor authentication for your child's Apple Account: On your iPhone or iPad: Go to Settings > [your name] > Sign-In & Security. Tap Turn on Two-Factor Authentication. Then tap Continue and follow the onscreen instructions.
4. Discuss with your child who they would like to add to their 'trusted contact list' and encourage them to save these numbers in their emergency contacts list in case they get into trouble.
5. Add your child's devices to your 'Family' by heading to your Apple ID settings and adding the devices.
6. Make sure all the latest software is updated across the devices you're adding
7. From the 'Family' group you can enable content and privacy restrictions and two-factor authentication, as well as location sharing.

For further information about parental controls and privacy guidance please visit: [Use parental controls on your child's iPhone and iPad - Apple Support](#)

Please note, if your child has an Android phone there are additional security settings you can put in place to make sure the location of their phone and data is secure. Visit your phone provider website for further crime prevention advice.

Reducing antisocial behaviour and keeping young people safe:

We want everyone to go out and enjoy the festivities of Halloween and Bonfire Night, but this can be a worrying time for those most vulnerable in our communities. Before your child heads out with their mates, be sure to talk to them about how to respect others and how to get help if they find themselves in trouble.

Your schools' officer will be able to provide you with a parent's guide to Halloween and firework safety but here are some top tips:

1. Plan a safe and familiar route and stick with friends
2. Make sure phones are charged, location on, and kept out of sight
3. Wear high-visibility clothing or something recognisable so friends and family can spot you in a crowd

4. Attend a public firework display when you can and never allow children to handle fireworks
5. Organise a meet-up place in case you lose each other
6. Talk to your child about the dangers of pointing fireworks at people, animals, and roads.
7. Tell them that police can arrest and prosecute anyone using fireworks dangerously
8. If someone has a 'no trick or treating' card in their window do not approach the property or ring the bell.

What to do if you are concerned about your child or a young person you know:

Talk to them in a safe and quiet location that feels comfortable for both of you.

You may wish to contact a member of the Pastoral Team at school if you feel your child isn't listening or is at risk. You can reach out your school's officers to seek advice. They can talk through your concerns and plan a way forward together.

If you or your child has been a victim of crime or their life is in danger, call 999 immediately. Alternatively, you can call 101 if the crime has happened and you want to report this to the police.

You can contact Crime stoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via www.crimestoppers-uk.org

Thank you, **West Midlands Police.**

Keeping your child safe online

Always call 999 if you or your child is in immediate danger.

You can also call 101 to report non-urgent crime or visit www.west-midlands.police.uk/incident-report to fill in an online form

Report online sexual abuse at www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre

Talk to your child's school about their mobile phone policies

It's important that children have the opportunity to explore, learn about online spaces and relationships, and – on occasion – have negative experiences or make mistakes. Have an honest conversation with your child about staying safe online and set up some house rules to protect them. Here are a few top tips:

1. Start talking to your child about content they look at online and what apps they go on.
2. Get clued up on how different apps share personal information. Advise them to keep personal details off social media and keep profiles on private.
3. Get to know their friends in and out of school – they might be talking to different people online. It's good to ask what they talk about in their online chat groups
4. Check the age restriction before your child downloads an app. An app or game that could be suitable for one young person may not be suitable for another.
5. Use parental controls on your child's iPhone and iPad to restrict explicit content, purchases and downloads, and changes to privacy settings. By allowing two factor authentication on your child's iCloud account, it can prevent thieves taking their phone and using their data. Learn more about iPhone privacy settings here.




West Midlands
POLICE

Learn more about online safety



ParentSafe

 www.parentsafelgfl.net

An amazing resource page from the London Grid for Learning (LGfL) with guidance and videos on a variety of topics online, including safe settings and controls, and how to talk to children about online life.


Internet Matters

 www.internetmatters.org

Step-by-step guide on how to set parental controls on a number of devices, internet connections, gaming and social media apps.

NSPCC

 www.nspcc.org.uk

 0808 800 5000



NSPCC

The UK's leading youth charity that has a lot of useful information and resources available covering a wider variety of topics. They also have a YouTube channel, scan the QR to find out more.

Stop radicalisation and exploitation

Anyone can be vulnerable to extremism and radicalisation, but children are particularly at risk. As they grow and become more independent, it is not unusual for them to take risks, explore new things and push boundaries. Educate Against Hate's website (www.educateagainsthate.com) offers practical advice and support to protect children from extremism and radicalisation. NetMums have partnered counter-terrorism policing to promote Act Early, a safeguarding website for parents, friends and families who are concerned, visit www.netmums.com/act-early for more information.

Report online sexual abuse

If you or your child is worried about online abuse or grooming, make a report to on CEOP's website www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre

A Child Protection Advisor will get in contact and help you talk through what's going on. CEOP cannot help with bullying or account hacking.

For a child or young person, having a sexual image or video of themselves shared online can be a distressing situation. This can be difficult for parents and carers too, but there are ways you can support your child. If they're under 18, they can use Report Remove. **Report Remove** is a tool that allows young people to report an image or video shared online, to see if it's possible to get it taken down. Provided by Childline and the Internet Watch Foundation, it keeps the young person informed at each stage of their report, and provides further support where necessary.


Advice for parents - search 'NSPCC Report Remove' for more information or scan the QR code to make a report

Search '**WMP Advice**' for more information.



childline

 www.childline.org.uk

 0800 1111