Internet Safety Toolkit

1 **Prioritise safety.**

Teach children not to give out personal information, like their name, address, telephone number, or which school they go to.

- ☐ Talk to your child about the risks of publishing their personal information online, including their location.
- ☐ Instruct your child that they shouldn't accept friend requests from people they don't know.
- ☐ Remind your child that sometimes, people aren't who they say they are online.
- ☐ Show them how to update their privacy settings on social media apps like Instagram, and explain why these are necessary.
- ☐ Tell your child that if something happens online that upsets them, that they can always come to your for advice.
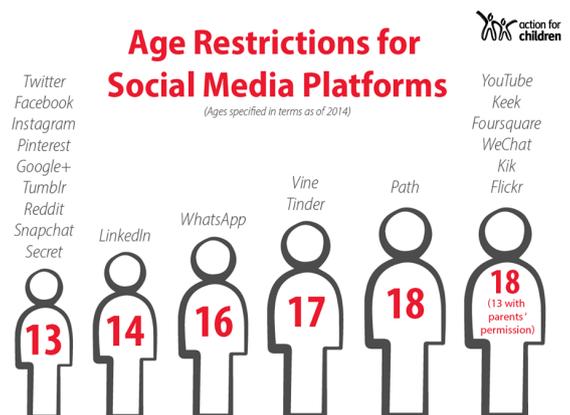
2 **Set parental controls.**

Agree a list of websites and apps your child is allowed to visit, and remember to check the minimum age limit on services like Facebook or YouTube.
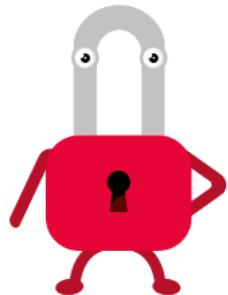
List of websites/apps that are OK to visit/use

- ☐ Keep the computer in an open area in the house, like the sitting room.
- ☐ Ensure the pop-up blocker on your browser is turned on.
- ☐ Install an anti-virus system on any computer in the home. There are free ones available for download online.
- ☐ Each device and system will likely have a way to set parental controls - contact your ISP or the manufacturer of each device for advice on how to do this.

Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms
(Ages specified in terms as of 2014)

Twitter
Facebook
Instagram
Pinterest
Google+
Tumblr
Reddit
Snapchat
Secret
13

LinkedIn
14

WhatsApp
16

Vine
Tinder
17

Path
18

YouTube
Keek
Foursquare
WeChat
Kik
Flickr
18
(13 with parents' permission)

3 Discuss their activity.

Take an interest in their online world. Talk to them about their favourite websites, videos, and online friends.

- [ ] Ask your child for their recommendations for "cool" websites and videos. This shows that you're interested in their opinions and allows them to be the "expert". It can also help flag any issues, especially your child admits to viewing or sharing inappropriate content.
- [ ] Talk openly about your friendships from your childhood, and ask your child about their friends and how they like to interact online. Be sure to ask if they've met all of their friends "in real life".
- [ ] Ask your child if you can become their friend on Snapchat or other social media. Reassure them that you won't intrude or post things they don't want, but admit that you're interested in seeing updates.

4 Set boundaries.

Establish time limits for activities such as using the internet and game consoles. Make sure to set side time for "unplugged" family activity.

- [ ] Establish a set of house rules about computer, television, internet, phone and game console use, including time limits per day/week.
- [ ] Identify the challenges your children enjoy in the video games they play and replicate them. Do they like games about sport? Encourage them to play a sport in the park, or go as a family to a local sports match. Are their favourite games puzzles or brain-teasers? Organise a family board game night!
- [ ] Practice what you preach: when you've used up your screen time, turn off your devices too. Hold yourself to the same house rules.
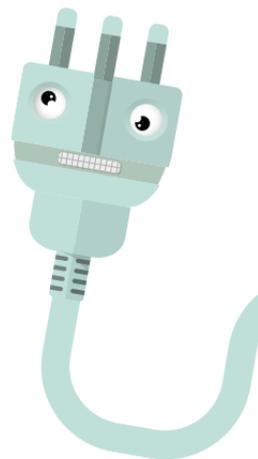
5 Be open.

Let your child know that they can tell you about anything that happens on the internet, and that you'll listen without judgment.

- [ ] Be honest about your experiences with the internet and technology, and why you're looking out for your child's safety. Knowing that your concerns are based on experience will motivate your child to heed them.
- [ ] Tell your child you know that they'll make mistakes, and that you'll be around to help them when that happens.
- [ ] If your child comes to you with a suggestion about technology or internet use, be open to considering it. Show them that you take their ideas seriously.