

Online safety talks for parents is key defence to digital risk

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to fuel a perfect storm in digital risk to children in Scotland, the NSPCC and 02 are delivering virtual online safety talks for parents.

The important online safety workshops have moved online – the latest resource from the organisations' ongoing partnership. They are free to join and are presented by experienced NSPCC staff, who provide advice, tips, and signposting to free resources and extra support.

Social media and gaming sites have proven to be a lifeline for parents, carers and their children as they have adapted to being at home during lockdown but more time online has brought with it heightened risk for young people and increased opportunity for offenders.

Recent NSPCC research revealed that children who are lonely, like attention and rely on social media are more than twice as likely to be groomed online. And recently the National Crime Agency warned of a spike in child sex offending during the coronavirus crisis, with new information leading it to conclude that there a minimum of 300,000 individuals in the UK who pose a sexual threat to children.

Regular family discussion about children's digital lives has never been more important. Parents can also get further

support via the NSPCC and 02's co-created resource [Net Aware](#), designed to help parents and children information on the latest social media sites, apps and games and be a helpful part of coping with self-isolation.

Now, the charity and the telecommunications giant are working together to provide free 30 minute webinars for parents, grandparents and carers. Topics include:

- Why children enjoy using the internet and how it can help them, as well as the risks
- Concerns that families might have about their child's use of the internet
- Exploring how families can navigate the digital landscape together, safely

NSPCC Local Campaigns Manager for Scotland, Carla Malseed, said: "There are so many great opportunities on the internet for children to play, create, learn and connect but there are also many risks.

"The coronavirus pandemic has, unfortunately, generated the conditions for a perfect storm in online abuse, and we want to help mitigate that danger.

"Our free webinars are designed to give parents and carers an opportunity to collate advice, tips and support. We also signpost to other free and useful resources.

"It's really important to talk to your child about how they spend their time online and these webinars are here to make that discussion much easier."

If you would like to organise a webinar for yourself or on behalf of a group (community group, staff team or school), contact parentworkshops@nspcc.org.uk

