ONLINE SAFETY PARENT MEETING

NOVEMBER 2026

Agenda

1. How have things changed?
2. Where are we now?
3. What can we do?



Quiz



- When was the first iPhone launched? **2007**

-What year was '4G' launched, making the internet available practically everywhere in the UK? **2012**

-What is the average age a child gets a smartphone in the UK? **9 Years Old**

-What is the minimum age requirement for having an account on most major social media platforms, including TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat? **13***



Contextual…

Caveats

- Not going to cover everything, but we will hopefully get the conversation started.
- Lots of my slides have been taken from 'Smartphone Free Childhood' who do a lot of awareness and work around the risks of smartphones and social media for young people.

1. How have things changed?

In two decades, everything's changed

2005 → → → 2026











2005
Nokias ruled…
texts, calls & snake

2007
The first
iPhone launches
"A computer in our
pocket"

2012
4G UK launch, internet
always available,
everywhere

2020s
Explosion of short-form
content & AI powered
algorithms

2025
Smartphones have
transformed society…
and childhood

THEY'RE NOT REALLY 'PHONES' AT ALL



MOBILE PHONE

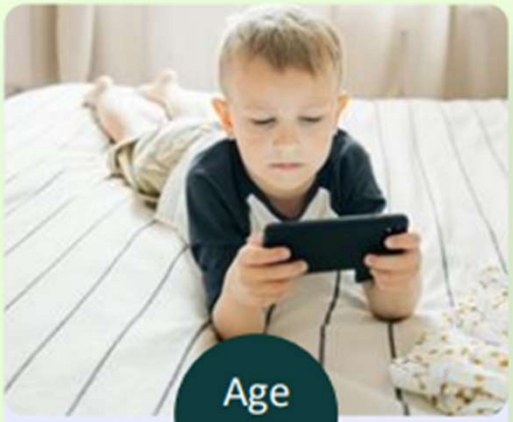
Make calls, send texts, play Snake



POCKET SUPERCOMPUTER

24/7 access to the whole of the internet in your pocket

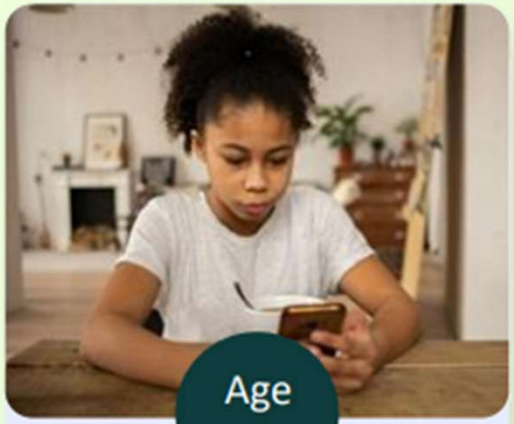
Smartphones have become ‘normal’ for kids



Age 6-7

1 in 3

children have a smartphone



Age 9

Average age

a child gets a smartphone in the UK



Age 12

90%

of children have a smartphone

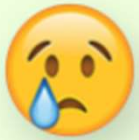
Nobody is happy with the status quo



94%

of **primary school parents** think smartphones are harmful

PARENTKIND POLL 2024



33%

of **parents of children with smartphones** have cried over their child's phone obsession

HMD POLL 2024



87%

of **teachers** agree for teens the negatives of smartphones outweigh the benefits

TEACHER TAPP SURVEY 2025



67%

of **16-18 year olds** think smartphones are harmful

PARENTKIND POLL 2024

Doctors are speaking up too

"I believe this is the most **urgent public health issue** of our time."



Dr Rangan Chatterjee

NHS GP, AUTHOR, BROADCASTER

"**Every day doctors see the damage** smartphones are doing to children's mental health and wellbeing."



Dr Susie Davies

NHS GP AND CAMPAIGNER;
FOUNDER OF PAPAYA PARENTS

The only winners are the tech companies

The Attention Economy

We don't pay them.
The more **time** we spend, the more **money** they make.



Attention = Profit

The business model of social media giants is based on ***addiction***

Tech companies make

$40B+

per year from under 18s*

The attention economy profits from lost childhoods

It can feel like an impossible position

Either we…

Give our children an addictive product



Or we…

Risk alienating them from their peers



It's a lose-lose: for parents, young people & society

Pause for discussion

Is this something that you have had to struggle with as a parent already?

Are there any aspects of social media or smart phones that most concern you?

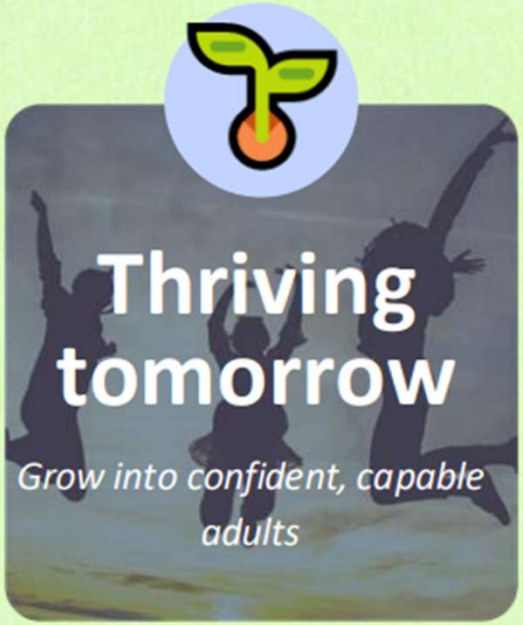
2. Where are we now?

We all want the same for our children



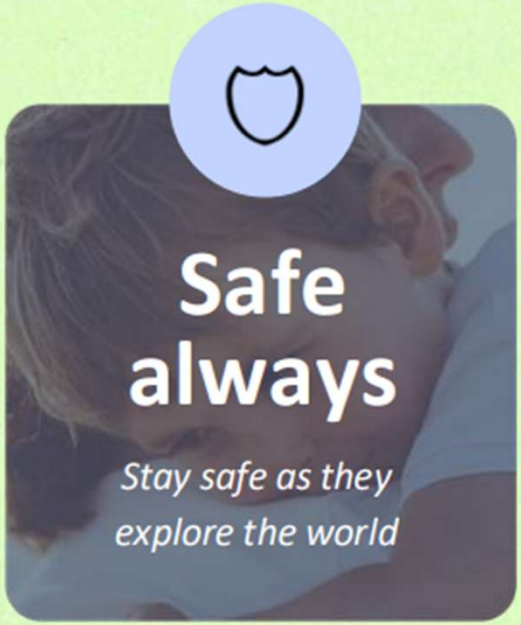
Happy today

Enjoy a happy, healthy childhood



Thriving tomorrow

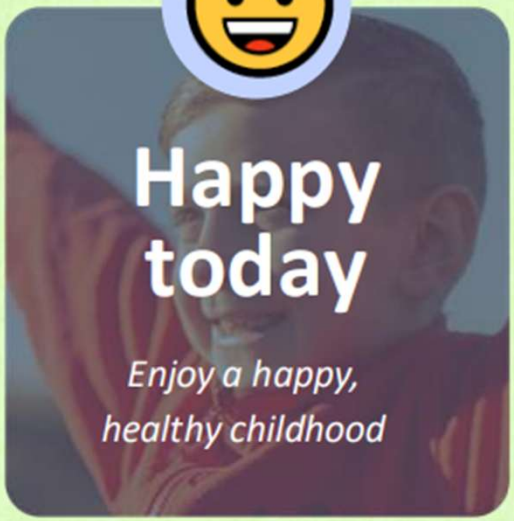
Grow into confident, capable adults



Safe always

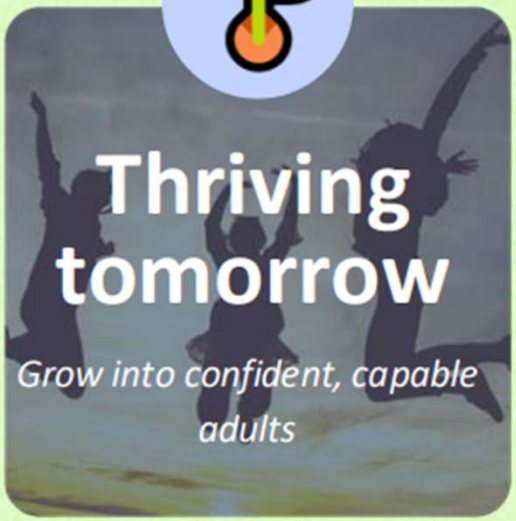
Stay safe as they explore the world

We all want the same for our children



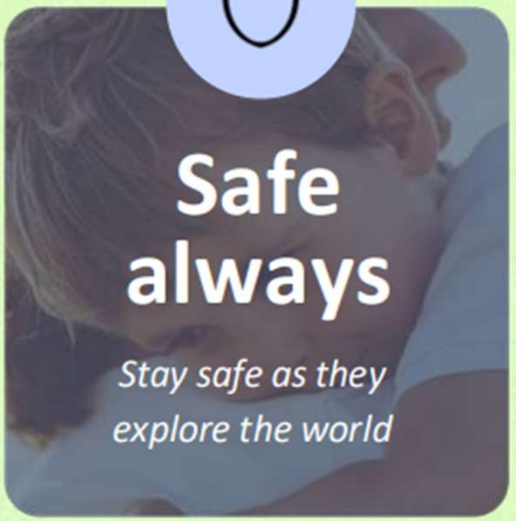
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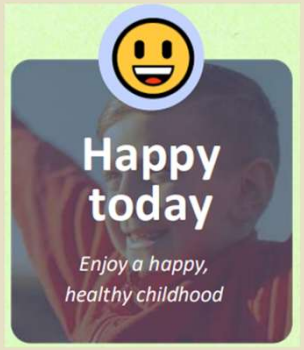
Stay safe as they explore the world

Smartphones make this all harder – and the data shows it

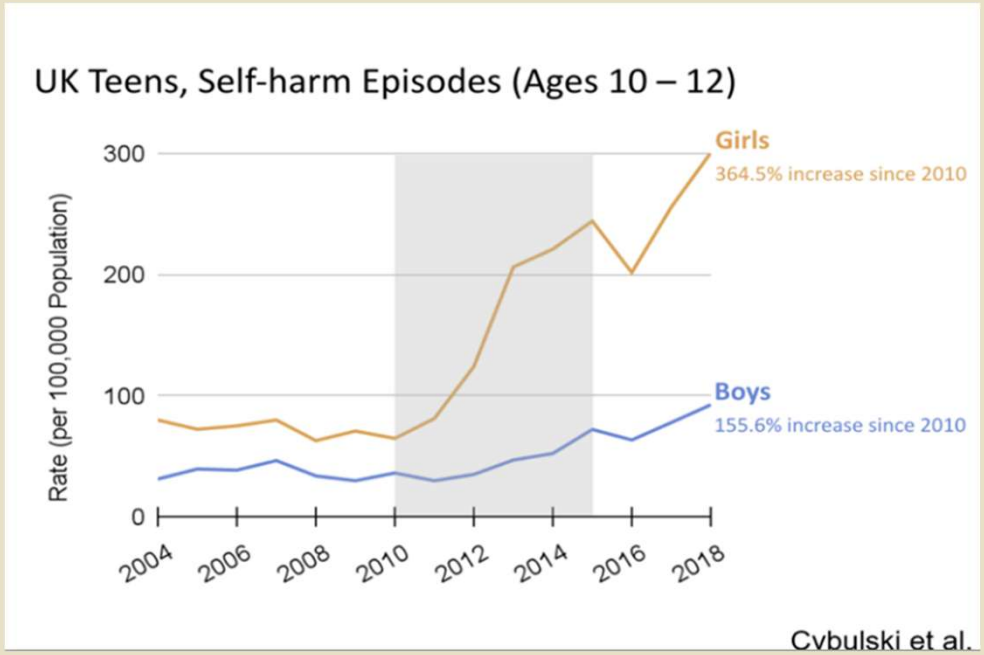
“We’ll look back in 20 years and be horrified by what our children were exposed to”



Dame Rachel de Souza
Children’s Commissioner for England, 2022

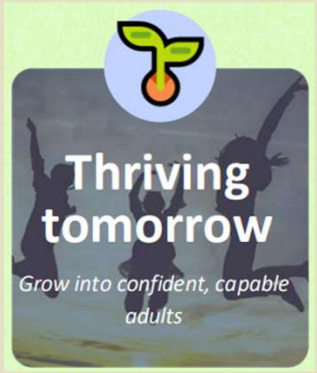


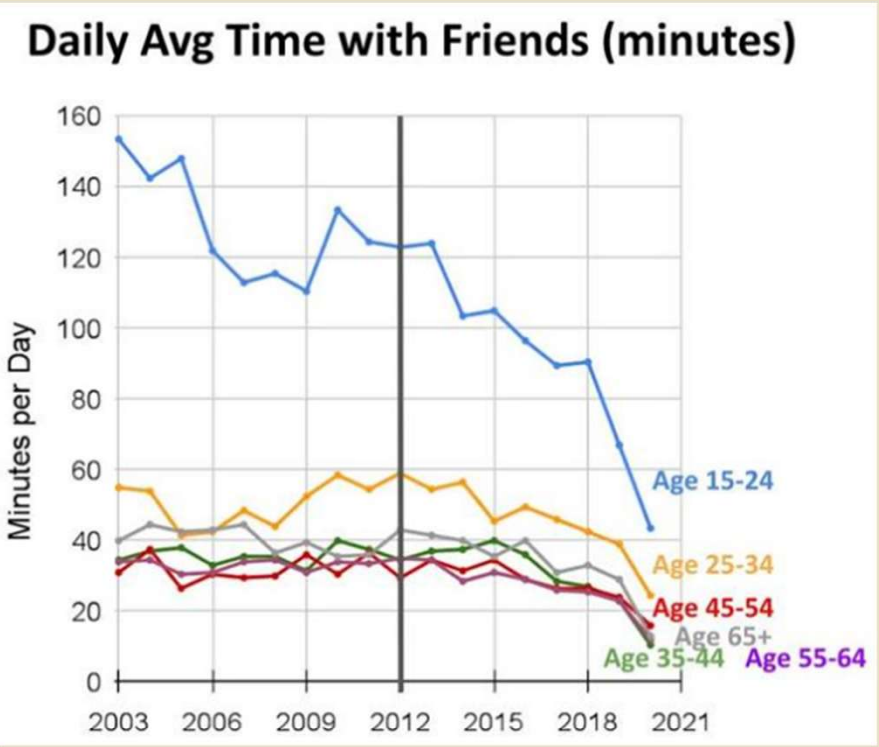
Smartphones expose children to harmful content



"Having unrestricted access to the internet in your pocket creates a gateway to extreme content and viewpoints that we'd never dream of exposing children to in real life. Hardcore pornography, extreme political views, sexualised and violent imagery, trolling and material promoting suicide, self-harm and eating disorders have become part of the fabric of modern childhood."

Smartphone Free Childhood

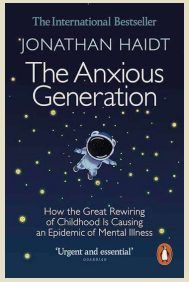


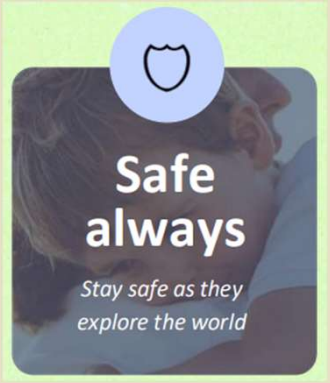


"When kids are on their phones all day, it's not just what they're doing on the phone that matters — it's what they're not doing. They're missing out on crucial experiences that help them grow into healthy adults."



Dr Jonathan Haidt
Professor of Social Psychology, NYU





Smartphones have increased the risk of online grooming

A child is

60x

more likely to be groomed online than abducted from the street

Groomers go where kids are

% of reported incidents



"When we give our child access to the world, we give the world access to our child"

NSPCC 2024

NSPCC FOI, 2023/4
(7,062 reported online grooming cases);

Pause for discussion

What do we find most difficult about helping our children stay safe online?

What wisdom can we share as parents to help our children to be safe online?



3. What can we do?

Know what your child is using

– apps, games, platforms, chat functions?

Check the age rating*

- and remember that an age rating isn't necessarily a recommendation that a child is ready for it!

Use parental controls

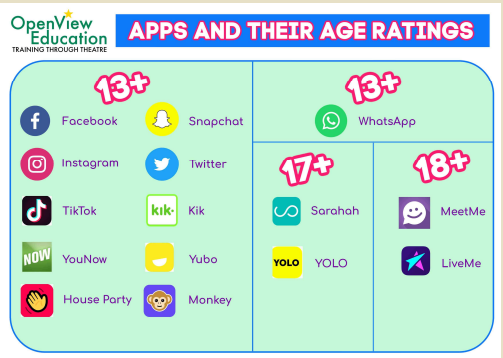
- but don't treat them as a substitute for conversation.

Have regular conversations

- particularly about what they see and who they talk to.

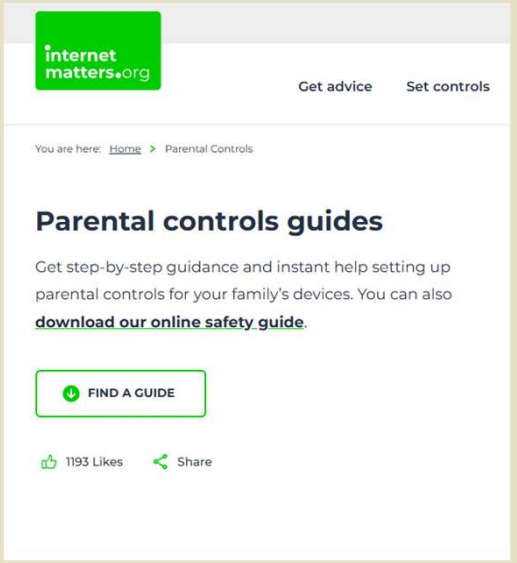
Make sure your child knows what to do when something goes wrong.

- stop, block, report, tell an adult.



***Changing to 16 in Spring 2027??**

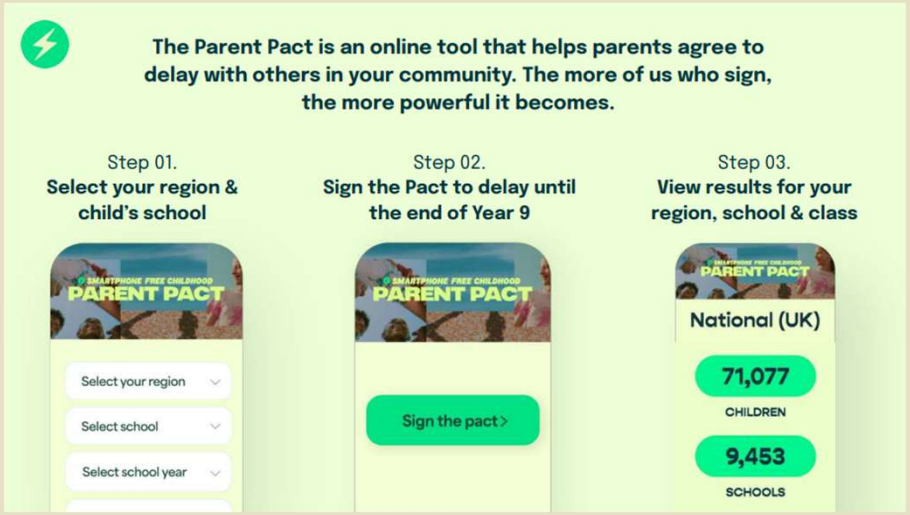
Parental Controls



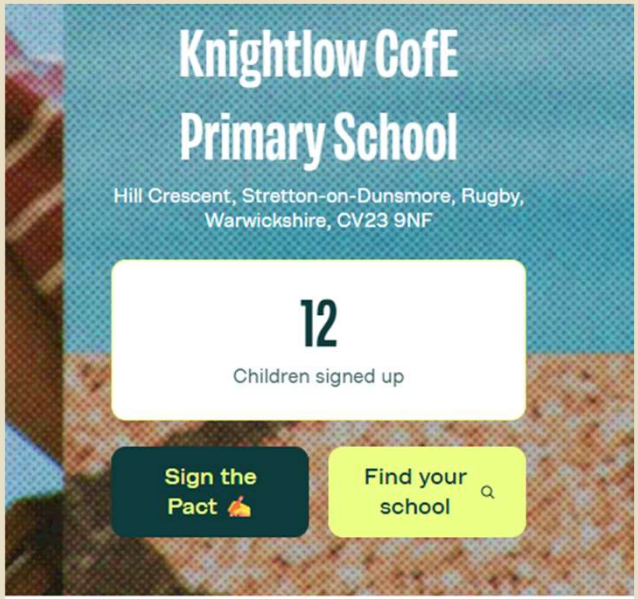
Step-by-step guides

'Internet Matters' – Parental Control guides

https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/







Year / Age	Pacts
Pre-school (age 3 - 4)	1
Year 1 (age 5 - 6)	1
Year 2 (age 6 - 7)	2
Year 4 (age 8 - 9)	4
Year 5 (age 9 - 10)	2
Year 6 (age 10 - 11)	2

Our School Curriculum

Online safety runs through our Computing Scheme at Knightlow and it also has a significant place in our PSHE curriculum too.

Have a look at the print outs at the back of the hall for more information about the knowledge and skills (related to Online Safety) which are taught in each year group.

Example of Year 5/6 knowledge blocks:

Knowledge

Being online

- ✓ To know that online platforms are digital spaces, such as apps or websites, where people interact.
- ✓ To know that online platforms show digital content based on the things they have liked, watched or subscribed to.

Online relationships

- ✓ To know that interactions through online platforms such as social media should still be polite and respectful.
- ✓ To know that people may present themselves differently online.

Risks and harms

- ✓ To know that the things they share and post online can remain online.
- ✓ To know that once something is shared online, it cannot always be deleted or fully removed.
- ✓ To know that sharing images or posting comments online is often public.

Responsible and safe use

- ✓ To know that social media platforms have age restrictions.
- ✓ To know that if they are under the age limit for a particular online platform or app, they should not create an account.

Reporting concerns

- ✓ To know that the block and mute tools can stop people from contacting them online.
- ✓ To know that reporting or flagging content online will anonymously alert someone to a problem.

Questions and next steps

Useful links:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsw9HdM_MZw (to consider watching this with older children if they are asking for a smartphone)
- If you're child is using a smartphone, then this website is great for working out the parental controls: https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/