

When we talk about digital resilience we talk about a person's ability to cope with setbacks and bounce back when they experience something difficult online.

With so much connectivity and access to the World Wide Web, social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, young people in particular are at risk of predators, scammers and irresponsible and illegal use of the internet.

### For Responsible Adults

#### Discuss, don't dictate

By the time children have reached secondary school age, it can be difficult to change established habits. The best thing to do is have open and honest discussions with your child about your concerns, and find positive solutions together.

#### Say no to negativity

The term 'detox' can imply that the thing you are cutting down on is toxic. Your child is unlikely to respond if you approach a conversation about the time they spend online from a position that the internet is 'bad'. Explain that, as with most things in life, striking a balance is key.

#### Be practical

It's not practical for children and young people still at school to take a break from the online world completely – how would they do their homework, for one thing? If they have special educational needs, they may find online easier than offline communication.

But there are practical suggestions you can make to help them cut down, such as:

- Turn off notifications on social media apps
- Uninstall and close apps for a set time to see how they feel without them.
- Do they really miss them?
- Use the timer function on their phones or tablet to schedule 'internet breaks'
- Set their device to airplane mode or turn it off for agreed periods, gradually extending them as they get used to being offline.
- Act as a role model. It's difficult to encourage your children to cut down on the time they spend online if they see you constantly updating your Facebook status or checking how your current eBay auction is doing. If you want to encourage your children to modify their internet use.
- With younger children, it's easy for parents to suggest family days out or activities together that don't involve technology.
- As children get older, their lives become more independent from you and it's neither right nor possible to control what they do all the time. But you can encourage them to pursue activities away from their screens, such as: Playing sport, Learning a musical instrument, Signing up for a local youth group.
- **Discuss cyberbullying and what to do if this is happening.**



### 1. Block the person bullying you

There is always a way to stop the bully from contacting you on social networks, mobile phones, instant messaging and even games consoles. Check out the privacy or safety settings of the service you are using to find out how, or even try searching 'block' or 'abuse' in the help section. You can also ring up your service provider or network provider who can help you block the abuse.

### 2. Strong passwords

Make sure for any account you have, you have a strong password that you don't share with anyone. The best passwords contain numbers and capital letters. This will mean people can't access your account and steal any information, pictures or personal data or pretend to be you. Change your password regularly and don't have the same one for every account.

### 3. Keep the evidence

Make sure you save or copy any cyber bullying such as texts or conversations you receive so the necessary people can investigate the bullying. A good way to do this is to press the 'PrtScrn' button on the right hand side of the keyboard which prints the screen and you then copy and paste this into a word document or try using Window's 'snipping tool'.

### 4. Choose your online friends carefully

Remember when you accept someone as your friend on instant messaging or social networks, they can access information and pictures you have posted so make sure you are happy for them to see this.

### 5. Tell someone your trust

Cyber bullying can make you feel very alone and humiliated. It is really important that you tell someone you trust if you are being cyber bullied so they can support and help you.



### 6. Report it

Any cyber bullying you suffer should be reported. Whether it is nasty comments, a text message, online chats or group bullying, it is still bullying and is not ok. Make sure you report it to an adult you trust. It is important you feel supported and someone else knows what is happening. If you have blocked the person but it is still continuing, all social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. have report abuse buttons, as do most mobile phone networks who have teams to deal with abuse. Games consoles also have advice on their websites.

### 7. Don't reply or answer back

Don't become a cyber bully yourself, deal with the bully by blocking and reporting the abuse. It is sometimes hard not to write back, but it is always best to ignore, block and monitor the situation. Sometimes the people bullying you are looking to get a reaction out of you.

### 8. What do you want people to know about you?

Check out the privacy settings which will allow you to choose the information you share with people, for example you can set your profile or data to private or only allow certain people to contact you and view particular information. Don't ever share where you live, your telephone number or email address with cyber-friends.

### 9. Google your name

Even if we don't admit we've all Googled our name at some point to see what comes up! Typing your social media usernames is a really good way to check your privacy settings and check that strangers online can't view any of your personal information.

### 10. Stay positive

Stay positive, things will get better. Do activities which make you feel happy with people who love and appreciate you.