

# WHO'S CHATTING TO YOUR KIDS?



Surviving the use of social media with your children

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## Who's chatting to your kids?

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**Family Internet Safety Agreement ([click to download](#))**

# WHO'S CHATTING TO YOUR KIDS?

The internet has brought the world to our children's fingertips, providing access to vast resources of information and the opportunity to communicate with people from around the world.

Smart devices and social media have become part of our children's lives and they have strongly influenced how our children create, share and exchange information with others.

Unfortunately these same devices and applications have been embraced by sex offenders, who have proven to be exceptionally skilled at using them to gain access to children.

As parents and caregivers it is imperative you have a basic understanding of these technologies to enable you to guide, assist and supervise your children.

Children might not safeguard their personal details on the internet like they would in the real world. Therefore it is just as important to educate our children about 'chatting' to people online as it is meeting new people in the real world.

**This e-brochure provides you with practical information about internet safety and reducing online risks for children.**



# SOCIAL MEDIA

Children use social media sites and instant messaging applications to communicate with friends and family. They are increasingly popular due to the ease with which information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (photos / videos) can be instantly shared.

Social media sites are online communities, with most sites containing a profile page where children post personal information including their name, age, location, photographs, contact details, email addresses and in some instances, their sexual preference.

Social media sites can include the following methods of communication:

- Instant messaging/text chat
- Video chat - via a web cam
- Online chat rooms
- 3D interactive communities

**Ensure children are using age appropriate social media applications.**



## BE AWARE

Child sex offenders will use social media to:

- Obtain a child's contact details (from profiles or online chats)
- Build rapport with children
- Lower a child's inhibitions by slowly introducing sexual content into their conversations
- Seek a face-to-face meeting with your child

## Ensure your child

- Chooses a non-identifiable, non-gender specific username
- Never gives out any personal information
- Never accepts a friend request or file from a person they don't know
- Does not share passwords



# SMART DEVICES & PHONES

Mobile devices and most phones are electronic devices that are capable of connecting to the internet via a number of different protocols including (3G, 4G or Wi-Fi). In addition to connecting to the internet smart devices can also act as a mobile telephone, camera, music device and games console.

Children can personalise their smart device and download social media and instant messaging applications allowing them to communicate and access the internet anywhere and anytime.

## Did you know...

Smart devices include built-in geolocation technologies that allow you to identify the physical location of the device. This can provide other people using the same applications as your child, real-time access to your child's location.

You need to know what applications on your child's device use location services and how to disable them when appropriate.

## BE AWARE

- Child sex offenders have been known to send smart devices to children as gifts to enable communication
- Child sex offenders will provide phone credit to children to enable continued communication.

## Web cams

Most smart devices have built-in web cameras allowing children to capture and send images or live video stream. Child sex offenders will seek to communicate with the child via a web camera for the purpose of transmitting indecent images or footage and requesting children do the same.

**Ensure your children have in place the most restrictive privacy settings to reduce the risk of being approached online by a sex offender.**



# OTHER INTERNET CAPABLE DEVICES

## Online gaming

The popularity of electronic and video game consoles amongst children has increased dramatically over the last few years. Advances in technology have meant these devices can be used for a variety of purposes. Parents should be aware that many gaming devices can now connect to the internet or feature built-in web cameras. Some devices even provide online chat and audio capability, enabling anyone (including predators) to communicate with your child.

Child sex offenders have been known to pretend to be a child in order to engage in gaming and then chat with your child. Once a friendship has been established, they can suggest taking the conversation to another internet chat or social media site.

You should investigate what internet and communication capabilities your child's devices have and decide whether they require these facilities.

## Smart TV's

Smart TV's are televisions that incorporate internet access capability. These televisions provide online interactive media streaming and internet television. This provides a new medium that enables users (including children) to search and find videos, movies, photos and other content on the web.

Parents should be familiar with the parental controls available on their smart TV and set them to ensure access to content is age appropriate.

It is your decision whether to set the available electronic parental controls on these devices or to disconnect these capabilities.



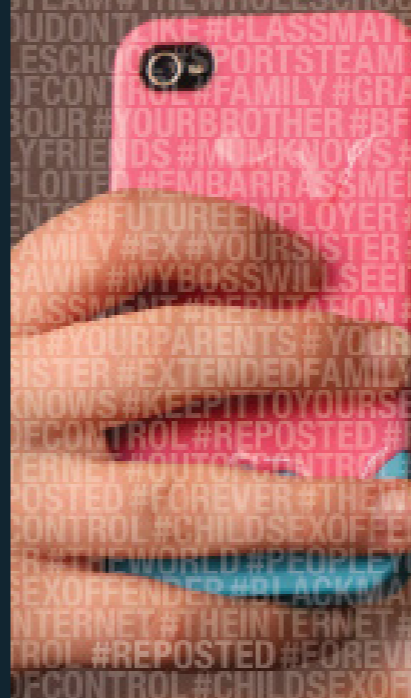
# SEXTING

Sexting is a concerning trend that involves children and young people taking sexually explicit images or videos of themselves and sending them to their friends or to other people. This practice has escalated in recent times due to the increased uptake of smart devices and phones.

Of significant concern is that once the image or video is transmitted the child or young person loses complete control. It has the potential to be easily shared with other people within your child's personal life and school community, and could be severely embarrassing now and in the future.

**Make your children aware that they could be committing a serious criminal offence by taking, possessing or sending indecent images and may be liable to criminal prosecution.**

# Your SELFie?



## Keep it to YOURSELF!

For information about internet safety visit [www.police.qld.gov.au](http://www.police.qld.gov.au)



# Your ~~SEL~~FiE?

## SEXTING

### WARNING

Child sex offenders will:

- Pose as children in order to engage in this style of communication
- Blackmail children for further indecent images by threatening to post already received images on the internet

### Protect both your online and real world reputation

Children need to consider the harm that can be caused to their reputation or to other children as a result of sending, receiving or re-posting self-produced indecent images.

**Keep it to YOURSELF!**

For information about internet safety visit [www.police.qld.gov.au](http://www.police.qld.gov.au)





# SIGNS YOUR CHILD COULD BE AT RISK

- **Your child is spending an excessive amount of time on the internet**
- **When you enter the room your child's behaviour is evasive**
- **Your child is receiving gifts or mail from people you don't know**
- **You find pornography on your child's computer**
- **Your child is receiving phone calls from people you don't know or is calling numbers you don't recognise**
- **Your child is displaying irregular personality characteristics.**

Take the time to sit down with your child and check your child's friends and contacts within their social media applications. These people should be known to both child and parent, and if not, they should be removed or blocked from their list.

Without parental supervision, it is easier for child sex offenders to form strong relationships with children online. Police investigations have identified occasions when children claim they are 'in love' with the child sex offender, even after their true age is revealed.

It is important for parents to be aware that some children actively seek and participate in sexually explicit conversation and have voluntarily met with people they meet online to engage in sexual contact.

**CLICK HERE  
TO DOWNLOAD THE  
FAMILY INTERNET  
SAFETY AGREEMENT**



# Suggestions to help protect your child on the internet

Where possible keep all internet capable devices in **common family areas**

Know how to **disable location services** on your child's smart device

Check **privacy settings** on your child's social media accounts

**Be aware** of the social media sites on your child's device

Check your child's **online profiles** and ensure the content is appropriate

**Maintain direct and open communication with your child**

Ensure you have **access** to your child's accounts in order to monitor them

Consider **password protected settings** for installation of age appropriate applications on smart devices

Consider installing **filtering and/or blocking software** on computers

**Monitor** your child's phone plans and credit for **unusual activity**

Consider what **device** you provide your child

Consider **appropriate** phone and data plans for your child

Know how to save copies of your child's **instant messaging chat logs**

Consider the "**Family Internet Safety Agreement**" developed by QPS

Children should be able to tell you the name of their **online contacts**

Consider **syncing** smart devices to a family account



# For more info

To report information to police call

**Policelink 131444**

**Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000**

**Task Force Argos, State Crime Command**

**Telephone 3364 4142**

Life threatening emergencies or crime in progress call Triple Zero (000)

**[www.police.qld.gov.au](http://www.police.qld.gov.au)**

For further information on how to enjoy the internet safely visit the  
Australian Communications and Media Authority web site **<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>**

ThinkUKnow **<http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/>**



## **QPS Vision Statement**

Members of the community work with Queensland police  
to stop crime and make Queensland safer

