

Advice for families on how to balance a healthy digital diet

We know that it can sometimes be challenging to keep up to speed with what children and young people are doing online. We have put together some advice on how to support your children to have a healthy digital diet.

Remember to be SMART online

**S****SAFE**

Keep your personal information safe. When chatting or posting online don't give away things like your full name, password or home address. Remember personal information can be seen in images and videos you share too. Keep them safe to keep yourself safe.

**M****MEET**

Meeting up with someone you only know online, even a friend of a friend, can be dangerous as this person is still a stranger. If someone you only know online ever asks you to meet up, for personal information or for photos/videos of you then tell an adult straight away and report them together on www.thinkuknow.co.uk

**THINK
U
KNOW**
CO.UK**A****ACCEPTING**

Think carefully before you click on or open something online (e.g. links, adverts, friend requests, photos) as you never know where they may lead to or they may contain viruses. Do not accept something if you are unsure of who the person is or what they've sent you.

**R****RELIABLE**

You cannot trust everything you see online as some things can be out of date, inaccurate or not entirely true. To find reliable information compare at least three different websites, check in books and talk to someone about what you have found.

**T****TELL**

Tell a trusted adult if something or someone ever makes you feel upset, worried or confused. This could be if you or someone you know is being bullied online. There are lots of people who will be able to help you like your teachers, parents, carers or contact Childline – 0800 11 11 or www.childline.org.uk

**BE SMART WITH A HEART**

Remember to always be smart with a heart by being kind and respectful to others online. Make the internet a better place by helping your friends if they are worried or upset by anything that happens online.



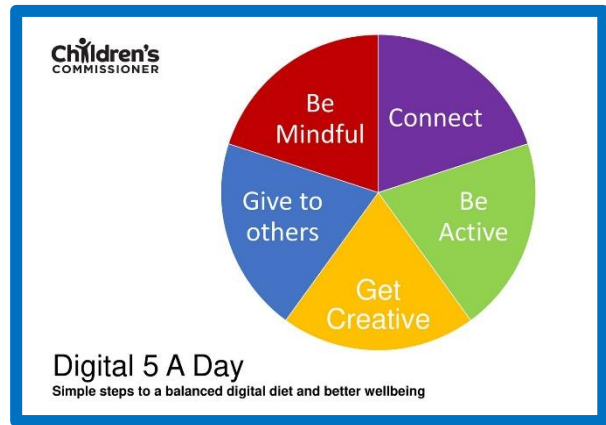
WWW.CHILDNET.COM

Digital 5 a day

Easy to follow, practical steps for children and parents to achieve a healthy and balanced digital diet.

The digital 5 a day provides a simple framework that reflects the concerns of parents/ carers as well

as children's behaviours and needs. It can also act as a base for family agreements about internet and digital device use throughout both the holidays and term time.



Based on the NHS's evidence-based 'five steps to better mental wellbeing', the digital 5 a day campaign gives children and parents easy to follow, practical steps to achieve a healthy and balanced digital diet.

1. Connect

The internet has enabled everyone to maintain friendships and family relationships no matter where they are in the world and children often say that chatting with friends is the best thing about social media.



It's important to acknowledge that this is how children keep in touch but it's also important to have a conversation with them about who they are connecting with and their privacy settings. Remember to keep a dialogue open and talk to your child to understand how they're spending their time and so that they can come to you for help should they need to.

2. Be active

Activity is very important for mental wellbeing and all children should have time to switch off and get moving.

Children don't have to be an athlete to be active. Find something that they enjoy – be that swimming, walking, dancing or yoga – begin at a level that works for them and make it a regular activity.



Researching an activity or place online before going out is a good way of combining the two and provides an opportunity for you to use the internet together.

3. Get creative

The internet provides children with unlimited opportunities to learn and to be creative. From learning to code to building complex structures in Minecraft to creating video content, the summer can be a great opportunity for children to build their digital skills. Time spent online doesn't have to be spent passively consuming content. It can be educational, creative and can provide opportunities to build skills for later life.



4. Give to others

As well as using the internet to learn about how to get involved with local and national charitable schemes, children can give to others through their everyday activities.

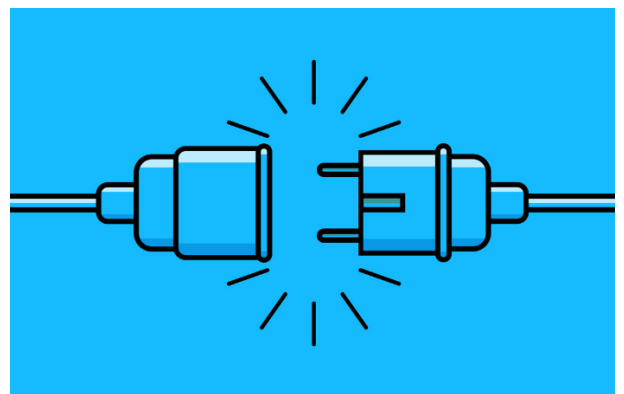


Remind children that by giving positive feedback and support to friends and family as well as reporting the negative behaviour of others, children can help the web make a positive place for everyone.

5. Be mindful

We hear that children often feel pressured by the constantly connected nature of the internet. While they might want to do other things, it can be difficult for them to put their phones down when apps are encouraging them to engage. Being mindful about the amount of time that your child is spending online – and encouraging them to be mindful about how this makes them feel – is important.

Encourage children to come up with ways of managing this i.e. keeping a diary as way of logging the amount of time they are spending online or downloading an app that helps them manage their notifications.



For more information:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/digital/5-a-day/>