

# What's my child doing online?



## **Sharing information online**

Most sites your child uses will encourage them to share information about themselves with others. This might be:

- ❖ Opinions – such as what they like and don't like
- ❖ What they are doing
- ❖ Pictures and videos of themselves
- ❖ Information about themselves – such as their name and where they live
- ❖ Videos and music

The internet is a great tool for sharing information like this and young people love to keep up-to-date with what their friends are doing.

However, it is important that they think before they share as there can be risks with sharing personal information.

Once you share information online, you lose control of it. It is important for young people to be aware of the implications of sharing different types of information.

### **Pictures and videos**

It couldn't be easier to share pictures and videos online. With cameras on every mobile phone, a picture can be posted and shared in an instant. When you can share at the click of a button, there is no time to think whether it is the right thing to do. It's easy to make mistakes. Tell your child not to share anything online that they would be embarrassed to show you.

Young people might be tempted to share pictures of a sexual nature of themselves – this might be with people they trust, like a boyfriend or girlfriend; however, this can easily get out of hand.

### **Personal Information**

The more information you share about yourself, the easier it is for a stranger to build a picture about you. You should discuss what information your child actually needs to share.

If your child is using social networks, like Facebook, make sure you go through the privacy settings with them so they can control what they share, and with whom.

### **Location**

Social networking sites increasingly allow you to share your exact location with your friends through your mobile phone. Services like 'Facebook Places' allow you to 'tag' yourself – which pinpoints you on a map and tells your friends where you are. There are obvious risks with young people sharing this type of information.

We recommend that people under the age of 18 turn off this function on any social networks or services that they use.

