

# The Fraud Bulletin

## MARCH 2025

Your monthly update direct from West Mercia Police on the latest  
frauds

### ARE YOUR CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE?

Whilst the world of the Internet offers great opportunities for young and old alike, it also presents many risks. The use of the Internet by children has increased greatly in the last 2 years for social, entertainment and educational reasons.

So, with extra time being spent online, how can you protect the younger family members from the potential issues they may face, and make them aware?

First of all, make sure all the safety settings are set up and in place including:

- Parental controls on all devices, browsers, and Apps to filter out inappropriate material.
- Set strong privacy settings to make sure personal information is only visible to trusted individuals i.e. "Friends only".
- Make use of Safe search filters such as Google SafeSearch to block out harmful content
- Set daily usage time limits for Apps and overall daily screen time.
- Explain and encourage safe searching, websites, and apps. Check what they are watching and sharing on streaming sites such as YouTube and TikTok

Always remember that anything you share online, such as images, videos and comments may hang around for much longer than you think.

You could also consider some of the following ideas to protect your children further:

- Know about the online risks such as grooming, bullying and sexting (never share inappropriate images you would not want your family and friends to see)
- Make sure your child understands what personal information they should never share including location, passwords. Phone numbers, schools, date of birth.
- Set up two-factor authentication (2FA) on accounts for a second layer of protection.
- Make them aware that most apps may collect data even when privacy settings are in place.

Not everything online will be true so teach them how to spot misinformation, fake profiles and most important of all – never be rushed into making any decisions.

If there is anything you are not sure about, never cover it up, but do talk to an adult, or a trusted friend or relative.

***Please feel free to share these messages with any vulnerable friends, relatives or neighbours***

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If you've fallen for a scam, report it to **Action Fraud** on **0300 123 2040** or via [actionfraud.police.uk](https://actionfraud.police.uk).

**Scam Text messages can be forwarded to 7726** to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks. Scam mobile calls can also be forwarded to **7726**, followed by the word "**CALL**", then the **scam phone number**

Forward **Fake Emails** received to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

*For further information visit:*

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/> <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>