



Parents Safeguarding Newsletter Autumn Term

Christmas for children on the Autism Spectrum

Whilst the Christmas period is exciting for many children, for those with ASC, it can lead to anxiety and fear. Changes to routine, surprises and noise can all lead to panic attacks and meltdowns. These are some resources that might be helpful:

[Christmas tips \(Ambitious about Autism\)](#)

[Christmas \(National Autistic Society\)](#)

Buying Smart Toys this Christmas

There have been a number of concerns raised about internet connected 'smart' toys that without appropriate safety features, could pose a risk to your child's safety.

This [Which article](#) discusses the dangers and identifies some of the high risk toys, while [Parent Zone](#) offers tips on how to make these toys safer.

The Information Commissioner has also recently published [an article](#) looking at the risks of using smart toys.

Buying your child a phone or tablet for Christmas

If your child is getting a new phone or tablet for Christmas, you may wish to consider some monitoring software to keep an eye on what they're doing. There are plenty available to download. [This article](#) explains some of the more popular monitoring apps.

[Internet Matters](#) offers advice and instructions on setting up the most popular devices (parental controls, internet filters etc.)

Support for conversations with children about keeping yourself safe

Online safety conversation icebreakers

As part of its partnership with the NSPCC to help children and families stay safe online, O2 have created a series of [weekly emails](#) for parents and carers containing information, advice and activities to help them understand their children's online world. The content will then help parents start conversations with their children. Each week covers a particular topic and is tailored to their child's age.

Voice box

These are a series of great short films on the [Childline Youtube Channel](#) discussing a wide range of issues including sleep, visiting the doctor, exam stress and puberty. These are great to start conversations and develop understanding.

The Surrey Family Information Service (FIS) website

FIS provides information, guidance, support about services and activities for children, young people and families in their community. This includes information on local sports activities, guidance on keeping young people safe or support with parenting, as well as childcare, further education or the support available when things aren't going so well.

You can access this information through a variety of self-service tools including the [FIS](#) and [SEND Local Offer websites](#) and [online directory](#), as well as social media. If you prefer, the FIS is also easy to contact by phone, email, social media and online form.

You can make an enquiry online in the following ways:

Complete an [online enquiry form](#)

Phone 0300 200 1004

Email surrey.fis@surreycc.gov.uk

Follow [SurreyFIS on Twitter](#)

Visit [Facebook page](#)

Keeping Safe Online

Family agreements for technology use

Family agreements for technology are a really good way of managing children's screen time. Childnet International have published advice for parents/carers on putting [family technology agreements](#) into practice. The advice covers discussing positive online behaviour at home, school and at friend's houses and setting out your family's expectations.

Own It website

The BBC has launched [Own It](#), a new website for 9 to 12 year olds to help them maximise opportunities in the digital world as well as helping them to develop the confidence and resilience to tackle the everyday challenges they face online. The site includes quick links to charities and organisations including Childline to provide urgent support should children need it.

Be Internet Awesome - New Google online safety resources

Google have produced a new educational tool for KS2 children, their parents and carers. [The online interactive game 'Interland'](#) allows children to explore the online world to combat hackers, phishers, over sharers and bullies while developing skills to make them good digital citizens.

The package also contains videos for parents/carers to support conversations with their children about online safety, the [#BeInternetAwesomeChallenge](#) and a 'Be Internet Awesome Pledge' for families to commit to.

Helping children set up a safe profile

The UK Safer Internet Centre have published [advice for parents and carers when helping their child set up a profile on a new site or game](#). The guidance includes using a family email address, avoiding the use of personal information (full name or date of birth) in a username and making sure that profile pictures don't include personal information clues such as school uniforms and house or street names.

NSPCC Share Aware

The NSPCC have relaunched their [Share Aware campaign](#) which contains new resources to help parents 'untangle the web' and keep their children safe. It includes advice on talking about children's online world, creating a family agreement and a video 'Be share aware - safety advice from a 10 year old'.

Understanding the terms and conditions on social media sites

This is hard for all, but particularly for children. [The Children's Commissioner](#) has produced a set of simplified terms and conditions for Instagram, Snapchat, Whatsapp, Youtube and Facebook.

YouTube

There have been some alarming reports in the media lately about highly inappropriate (and illegal) videos on YouTube. Please talk to your children about the different videos/channels they watch. Just because a thumbnail or title appears child-friendly it doesn't mean it is. Also check if they have their own channel and upload their own videos. Many children I talk to say their parents don't know!

Consider using [RESTRICTED MODE](#) have a look through their watch/search history and for younger children (under 7) consider [YouTube Kids](#)

Other good resources include:

[Advice guides from Parent zone](#)

[Advice from different forms of social media from Swgfl.org](#) [A new leaflet from Childnet explaining online gaming](#)

[Talking about cyberbullying](#)

Live Streaming



You may have seen recent [news about online live streaming](#), both about video of children being abused and about [children sharing](#) online using live streaming. CEOP have issued [new resources](#) to help parents and children understand these issues.

The risks of radicalisation and extremism

There are growing concerns about children becoming radicalised by both far right and religious groups and becoming involved in extremism. This is a particular concern for children with ASD as they tend to be more rigid in their thinking and literal in their understanding of language. [Dr Linda Papadopoulos](#) on [internetmatters.org](#) and a leaflet from [Tower Hamlets](#) offers some useful advice.

The advice includes:

Talk - there are different types of extremism -religious or far-right groups. Children can be radicalised with self-harm websites, pro-mia or pro-ana websites. Make sure you're monitoring your children's behaviour and their self-esteem, making sure they're mentally healthy.

Discuss content - it comes down to the source of their information. Talk about how someone's view is because of what they've experienced; help them to think critically. Evaluate what an internet site is saying and why they may be saying it, get them to challenge the ideology, the stories they're being told. Children are going to develop opinions and if they're engaging with Islamic ideology, for example, support them to ask questions. Don't patronise them; have sensible conversations.

Practically – look at privacy settings – Facebook and Twitter, look at what's making them vulnerable there and what are children being exposed to. Visit internetmatters.org for help with their privacy settings or growing online trends.

Speak to them regularly about what you value as a family, remind your children about that part of their identity, what we value such as tolerance, equality and honesty. Remind them who they are and about the need for mutual respect.

Change of contact details for reporting safeguarding concerns

If you have a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or adult in Surrey and need advice or to make a referral to social care, the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has new email addresses for people who want to report a safeguarding concern about vulnerable children or adults.

- For concerns about a child or young person, the address is: csplash@surreycc.gov.uk
- For concerns about an adult, the address is: ascplash@surreycc.gov.uk

If you have an urgent concern about the safety of a child, young person or adult, call the MASH on 0300 470 9100. If you wish to report concerns directly to the Police, please call 101, or in an emergency where the immediate safety of a child, young person or adult is at risk, dial 999.