Top Tips for Adopting Safe & Healthy Online Habits

Everyone has so much going on in their lives, and that includes children. From exams and deadlines to anxiety and mental health struggles, it’s easy to get sidetracked by the things that irritate us, but when was the last time you or your child took a moment to share something positive and uplifting? In fact, when did you last stop and think about your family’s online activities? If you’re struggling to keep them safe and teach them healthy online habits, you need to develop your child’s digital resilience. There are lots of ways that children can become more digitally resilient, and we’ve pulled together some popular strategies here.

**WHAT IS DIGITAL RESILIENCE?**

Resilience doesn’t mean being tough that nothing gets to you, and it’s not about “putting up with things” either. Instead, it’s the ability to recover from setbacks. Everyone feels sad, worried, scared or upset at times: it’s how we respond and adapt to those situations which is important. Digital resilience is about making choices that keep us safe and happy online, even when we’re exposed to something negative or upsetting. Building your child’s digital resilience will help reduce the impact of potential risks as they engage with and navigate around the online world.

**MAKE POSITIVE LIFESTYLE CHOICES**

- **Make time for the people and things that make you happy.**
- **Monitor your screen time and stick to your limits.**
- **On social media, follow people that make you feel good about yourself and unfollow the ones who don’t.**
- **Spread some positivity: post good reviews, leave encouraging comments and share good news.**

**KEEP YOUR HEALTH IN MIND**

- **Try to factor in regular breaks offline and away from your screen – ideally, outdoors for some revivifying fresh air.**
- **Exercise is a brilliant stress-buster: even a walk around the block, a bike ride or a stroll to your local shop can really work wonders.**
- **Be strict with yourself about putting devices away in plenty of time before bed; they can interfere with a good night’s sleep, which is essential for staying healthy.**

**REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT**

- **If you have a problem online, don’t be afraid to reach out to specialist people or organisations that could help.**
- **Follow people on socials who have the same values and morals as you.**
- **You could always talk to a friend, or a trusted adult like a teacher or family member for some advice.**

**PUT SAFETY FIRST**

- **If you see something online that upsets or worries you, talk to a trusted adult about it as soon as possible.**
- **You could also report the content that’s making you feel uncomfortable to the site or app that you saw it on, so they can look into it.**
- **Another option is to block the person or the account that’s causing you a problem – or you could go one step further by totally deleting the app you were using.**

**GET THINGS CLEAR IN YOUR HEAD**

- **Ask yourself what kindness online actually looks like. Can you remember the last time someone was kind or supportive towards you online? What did they do?**
- **Think about how it makes you feel when someone sends you a positive or funny message online.**
- **What about the opposite: has someone ever been deliberately unkind to you online? What did they do and how did it make you feel?**
- **If someone’s behaviour online is causing you stress, try to remind yourself of all the steps you can take if a person’s being unkind online.**

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Meet Our Expert

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