

## Mind the Gap – questions you may want to ask your child/ren

What do you like to do most online?

- Do you play Club Penguin with friends you know or do you play with anyone?

What do you write on your MoshiMonsters pinboard? Who can see your pinboard?

- Do you tell your online friends your secrets or things you wouldn't tell them in the playground?

What is the age rating of the game you are playing? Can I play/watch the game with you?

The minimum age to be able to open an account on Facebook and many other social networks is 13 years. Ask your child/ren what age they pretended to be and why?

Do you know your online friends in the real world? Are you always nice to your online friends?

- If someone online says or does something to frighten or upset you would you know what to do?

Would you let a stranger in the street ask you personal questions in the real world? Do you let a stranger online ask you personal questions? If yes is it time to change?

- Can you show me how to change Facebook privacy settings? Are your settings correct and have you disabled 'Facebook Places'?

Has anyone ever said something nasty to you online?

- Were you frightened or scared?
- Would you know what to do?
- Do you know or can you show me how to report nasty comments, images and videos on (MoshiMonsters/ Star Doll/ Facebook and so on). Are you aware that you can usually do this anonymously?

**Once online – always online.** Ask your child/ren if they are happy for those comments, images, videos to be online forever? This online content could have a long term negative impact such as not getting a job interview or generally being unhappy about what was said and done several months/ years ago



**Mind the Gap – you keep your child/ren safe in the real world. Here are some things you may want to do to help your child/ren ‘Stay Safe’ in the online world**

Set ground rules and with younger children agree which websites they can visit. *Remember these will vary depending upon the ages of your child/ren.*

- Agree time limits and regular breaks. *Remember letting children play video games just before bedtime may stop them sleeping and have an impact on their learning.*

Find out how to set the parental controls and safe search. Consider buying parental monitoring/ control software for younger children. *Remember none of these are 100% effective and supervision is always needed.*

- Check the home page of your child/ren’s favourite social network, game and so on. This will give you an overview of the website and its suitability.
- Spend 30 minutes watching your child/ren play an online game so that you can see the content and be happy that it is suitable for them.
- Check the age ratings of games at PEGI <http://www.pegi.info/en/index/>  
*Remember video games ratings are all about the content and not the difficulty of the game.*

**Say NO** to your child playing any game that has a rating of 18 years and above or using websites that you think are unsuitable.

- Talk you child/ren about their privacy settings and ask them to show you how to change these settings. Encourage your child/ren to only have online friends that know in the real world.

Tell your child/ren what to do if they ever feel frightened or scared when online or using their mobile phone. *It is important that your child/ren know they **can always talk to you** and you will help them ( you may not know the answer but by talking to the school, other parents, ThinkUknow FAQs, mobile phone provider and so on you will be able to find a solution)*

- Visit **ThinkUknow** [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) and look at the parents section. Show your child the ‘**Report Abuse**’ button and together click to see the advice and links.



- Visit **Childnet** and have a look at the parents section <http://www.childnet-int.org/safety/parents.aspx> Towards the bottom of the page ‘Parents Online’ is an interactive animation specifically developed for parents.

Mind the Gap been developed by the HSCB eSafety Multi-agency group.  
For further advice email: [esafety@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:esafety@hertscc.gov.uk) or call 01438843086

