Online safety in early years for parents

According to Ofcom, 2019, 52% of 3-to-4-year-olds go online for nearly nine hours a week.

With the use of technology now featuring heavily in the lives of so many children, parents can be overwhelmed with information on how to keep their children safe online.

Share our top tips with families in your setting, to support them to be internet savvy when it comes to keeping their children internet safe at home.

1. Keep internet use to family areas only: by creating a cosy but open space for children to sit in when online. It is easier for adults to keep an eye on what children are playing and watching, and this way you can tackle anything inappropriate as soon as you spot it
2. Ensure all safety controls and filters are set on devices being used by children, even if these are parental devices too
3. Talk to children about staying safe online. By using age-appropriate language it is possible to give children a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. For example, 'Just like we don't talk to strangers in the street, we don't talk to strangers online'
4. **Kiddle** is a child-friendly search engine with internet filtering, to ensure safer search results come up. However, close supervision is still required when using this as, although it is checked by editors, it may still contain inappropriate search results
5. **YouTube Kids** is a much safer way for children to watch their favourite videos online but be aware that content can still be uploaded by anyone and inappropriate content is not removed until moderators see it or it is reported
6. Check the privacy settings on all applications to ensure that location services are turned off and children's data is not being collected unnecessarily. You can also control 'chat' features through this setting to ensure your child does not communicate with someone that they do not know
7. Websites like **Common Sense Media** will give detailed information on films, apps and television programmes allowing parents to look up specific titles to check their themes and age appropriateness

Online games and applications are the way of the world now and children can learn so much through them and have a great time.
Having limits and boundaries in place means that they can still enjoy these activities, but do so more safely.