

Keeping Your Child Safe Online

A practical guide for parents and guardians in Ghana. You don't need to be a tech expert to guide your child online.

Know their online world

- Ask your child to show you the apps and games they use, and what they enjoy about them.
- Learn the basics of WhatsApp, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat and the games they play.
- Most social media apps are for ages 13 and over. Check age ratings in the app store.

Set up devices safely

- Use parental controls such as **Google Family Link** (Android) or **Screen Time** (iPhone).
- Set accounts to **private** and turn off location sharing.
- Turn off chat with strangers in games, and require approval for purchases.
- Use a PIN on your own phone if your child uses it.

Talk, don't just watch

- Have regular, calm conversations about life online, not only when something goes wrong.
- Agree family rules together, such as no phones at meals or in the bedroom at night.
- Tell your child they can always come to you, and that **they won't be in trouble** for telling you.

Warning signs to look out for

- Becoming secretive, or hiding the screen when you come near
- Seeming upset, anxious or withdrawn after using the phone
- A new older "friend", or unexplained gifts, airtime or money
- Changes in sleep, eating or school work

If something goes wrong

1. **Stay calm** and listen. Don't blame or shout.
2. Don't take the phone away as punishment. Children may stop telling you things.
3. **Save evidence:** screenshot messages and profiles. Never copy or forward sexual images of a child.
4. Block and report the account on the platform.
5. Call the **CyberClinic Helpline on 267** for confidential advice.