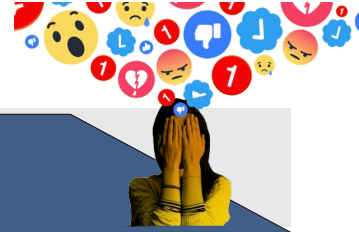# Online Safety Newsletter

Monitoring Social Media

We all know how important social media is to our children's' generation. They use it to stay connected with friends, make new friends, and express themselves. However, a huge number of the incidents we see in school stem from the inappropriate use of social media and social media can also be a dangerous place, and it's important for parents to monitor their children's use of it.

Here are some of the reasons why it's important to monitor your child's social media use:

- *Cyberbullying*: Cyberbullying is a serious problem, and it can have a devastating impact on a child's mental health. By monitoring your child's social media use, you can be on the lookout for signs of cyberbullying, such as mean or threatening messages, or posts that make your child feel bad about themselves. You may need to monitor SENT messages as well as those received!
- *Online predators*: There are people online who pose as children in order to prey on young people. By monitoring your child's social media use, you can be on the lookout for signs of online predators, such as adults who try to befriend your child or ask for personal information.
- *Inappropriate content:* Social media is full of inappropriate content, such as pornography, violence, and hate speech. By monitoring your child's social media use, you can help to protect them from seeing this type of content.

There are a few different ways to monitor your child's social media use. You can:

- Talk to your child about social media: Talk to your child about the risks of social media, and let them know that you're willing to help them stay safe.
- Set rules for social media use: Set rules for how much time your child can spend on social media, and what types of content they're allowed to view.
- Monitor your child's social media accounts: You can use parental controls to monitor your child's social media accounts, or you can simply check their accounts yourself.
- It's important to remember that monitoring your child's social media use doesn't mean you don't trust them. It simply means you want to help them stay safe. By talking to your child about social media, setting rules for social media use, and monitoring their social media accounts, you can help your child have a safe and positive experience online.

Here are some additional tips for monitoring your child's social media use:

- Be aware of the different social media platforms your child uses. There are many different social media platforms out there, and each one has its own set of risks. Be sure to research the different platforms your child uses so you can understand the risks involved.
- Pay attention to your child's behaviour. If your child starts spending more time on social media than usual, or if they seem withdrawn or upset after using social media, it's a good sign that something may be wrong. Talk to your child about what's going on and offer your support.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you see something on your child's social media account that concerns you, don't be afraid to ask them about it. It's important to have an open line of communication with your child so they feel comfortable talking to you about anything.

Monitoring your child's social media use can be a challenge, but it's important to remember that it's worth it. By taking the time to monitor your child's social media use, you can help them stay safe and have a positive experience online.