

In our module, Harold's Online World, we ask kids to think about the trusted adults they have in their lives - the special people they can go to for help when they feel frustrated, worried, uncomfortable, or unsafe online.

The online world can have many benefits. We can use digital technology to help us learn, connect with family, play games and share fun times together. It also comes with risks, like scams, viruses that can harm our devices and online content, and experiences that can be unsafe for young children.

Think of it like a playground. You wouldn't allow your precious child to play in an unknown playground, with unsafe equipment, in the company of strangers.

It's the same online. It's important we help kids find safe and suitable spaces to learn and thrive.

Children and young people need us to be a part of their online experiences while they are learning how to be safe, respectful, and make healthy choices.

Some of the conversations we need to have with our children at this age can be a bit confronting and make us feel uncomfortable, but they are vital to protecting our child.

Let them know that while most people are good people and most of their experiences online will be positive, there can be times when they might be unsafe, or see things online that make them feel uncomfortable.

When these things happen, you want your child to know that they can come to you for help.



Supporting your child online

You can help reduce the risks to your child by having family rules.

Talking about the difference between private and public information, and encouraging your child to only engage with age-appropriate content online can be helpful too. However, it is highly likely that there will be times when your child will feel unsafe, worried, scared – the online world is a big place – so reminding them that they can always reach out to you for support is a good idea.

Your child may be young now, but knowing they can talk to you and you will be there for them, to support them and help them sort things out, if necessary, starts now and goes through their whole lives.

