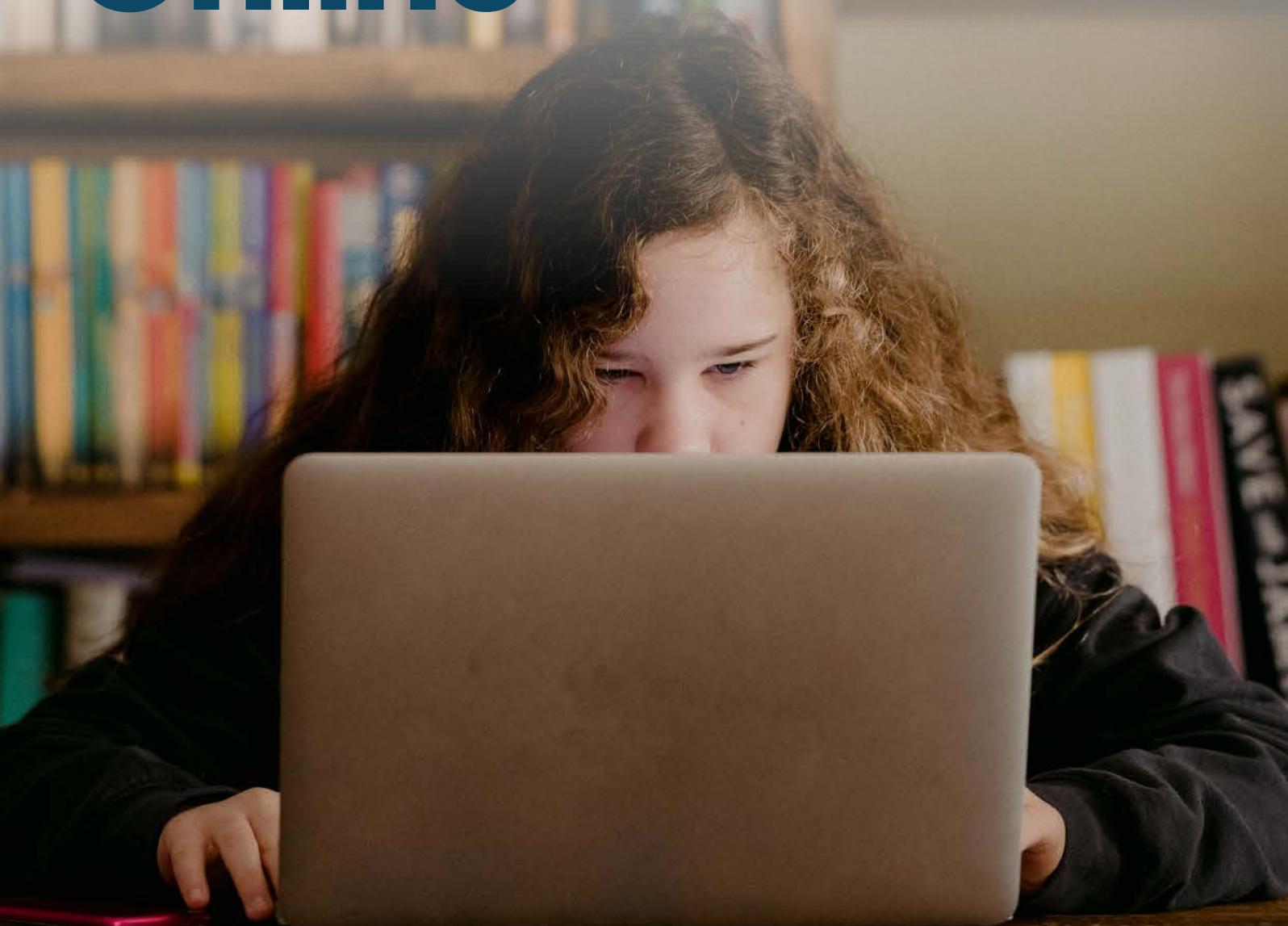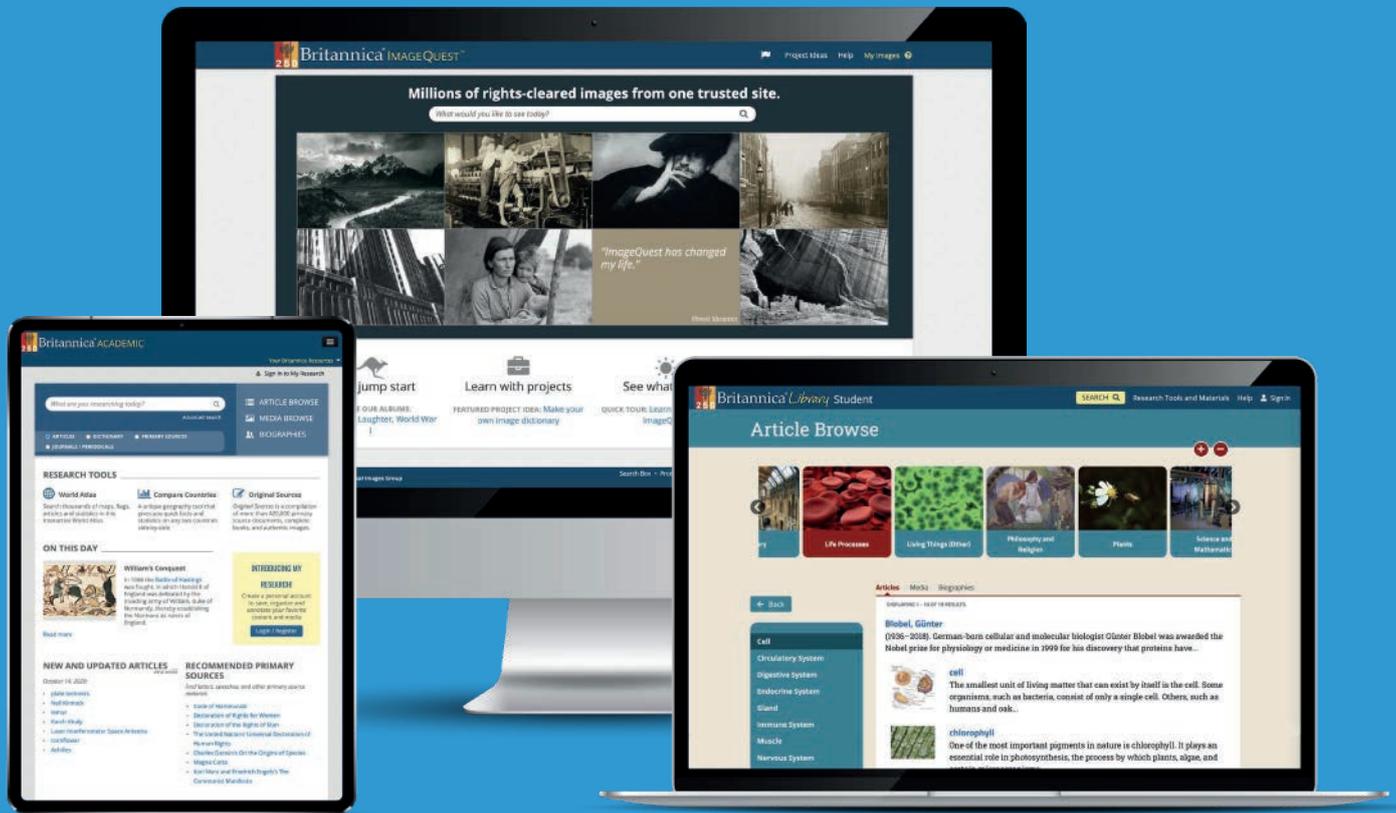# Britannica's Guide to Keeping Safe Online

Research from Britannica among 11 to 16-year olds reveals:

Here at Britannica, we have long understood that while the internet opens a whole world of discovery, it also has certain risks and dangers! Whether it's updating Facebook on a smartphone, playing with online gamers at home, or researching a homework assignment on a laptop, safety concerns are always present.

19% of students feel unsafe when researching online

40% of students say it is "very uneasy" to access inappropriate material online

19% say their school has not taught them how to research safely online

We all want students to understand the risks and stay safe. This guide introduces everything that they need to know about e-safety and brings together the very latest advice to help keep young people safe online, wherever they are and whatever devices they are using.

Britannica's e-Safety Tips for Students!

Do's

Do think before you post
Before you post a comment, image or video on the internet, think about its content. It might be funny to you and your friends but upsetting or offensive to others.

Do tell an adult and report it
You can always report something upsetting. If you see a post, website, image or video that upsets you or makes you uncomfortable, the most responsible thing you can do is to tell an adult.

Do about privacy control
No matter what you use the internet for, always investigate privacy settings. Make sure you never display your date of birth, address, phone number or any other personal information.

Do consider blocking
Most sites will have a block function, so you can ignore someone who is behaving inappropriately or is upsetting you.

Do protect your computer
Check with your parents/guardian that your computer has anti-virus software and that it's up-to-date.

Do shut down or log off
It can be difficult to avoid seeing things you wish you hadn't. You can always shut down/log off your computer. You can then report the site to a responsible adult or to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.

Do be careful with your mobile
Your mobile phone is just like a portable computer, so you need to apply the same "do's and don'ts". But also remember to keep your mobile number private. Make sure it's got a PIN and don't reply to texts if you don't know who they are from.

Do surf the net safely
You can avoid appropriate content or unsafe sites by ensuring "safe searches" are switched on and sticking to trusted sites. If you do see something inappropriate, let an adult know.

Do learn together
You probably know more about the technology you are using than other adults and potentially, your peers. Keep them up-to-speed with how the technology works so you can enjoy the web together!

Don't's

Don't be a victim of online bullying
Just because someone is behind a computer screen, this doesn't make jokes, teasing or taunts at someone else's expense any less upsetting. If you feel you are being bullied, report it to the site's administrator and tell an adult at once.

Don't download the unknown
Do not open unknown attachments or downloads from emails or websites as they may contain viruses.

Don't arrange to meet online "friends"
There are no exceptions to this rule. People you meet online may not be who they say they are and could even be an adult pretending to be a child. Tell an adult immediately if this happens.

Don't say "yes"
If you are being pressured by an online contact to do something you are not comfortable with, no matter how friendly, persuasive or even threatening they may be, always say "no" and tell an adult. Stay safe when talking to online friends. Never be persuaded to send personal things like photos or videos, or personal information.

Don't be afraid
If something does go wrong, don't worry! Everyone makes mistakes. If you have seen something upsetting or worried you may have made a mistake, the best thing that you can do is to tell an adult and they can help to put it right.

2 | The Internet

With the infinite number of websites to choose from, how do you separate the good from the bad? By following these tips, you can navigate your way around the web as safety as possible and save a lot of time!

Tips for avoiding harmful websites

Internet filters
Ensure you have filters set up which will block sites that may be dangerous or harmful. Your parents/guardian can also contact your internet service provider (ISP) to ask about parental controls.

Never guess the address
Be specific about the website address you type when searching. This will ensure that you avoid harmful sites. If you don't know the address, then try a safe search engine.

If in doubt, don't click
If an address seems odd or is spelt wrong, don't click on the link – it's not worth the risk. See if you can find an alternative site which is trusted.

Tips for researching safely

Be 'search savvy'
Be as specific as possible when you search. Searching for "Magnetic Poles" will give better results than "Poles" for example.

Google tips
Putting search terms in quotation marks will ensure you get better results when searching for exact phrases.

Using the minus sign will eliminate certain words if you're trying to search a term that is generating lots of results.

Typing "sites:" after a search term and entering a website address will search for every time that site mentions your search term.

Check your spelling
Spelling or typing errors can affect your searches. Check your spelling before you start to get better results.

3 | Mobile Devices

The same rules and risks apply to mobile phone and tablet use as they would on a computer. Communicating by email, voice, or text message is just like using the internet on your computer, but there are additional risks.

Protect your personal details

Never give out personal details or your location when you are on your mobile. Keep your password, phone number and any PIN safe and never give it to anyone, apart from your parents/guardian.

Choose your apps carefully

Only install apps from a trusted source, such as those offered by your phone network, phone manufacturers or trusted app sites. Paid apps require a credit or debit card, always check with your parents/guardian before downloading or signing-up to any "in-app" purchasing.

Personal information

Profile pages can display personal information. Check the account and privacy settings to see what information is being displayed about you automatically. Why not play it safe and make your profile searchable and visible only to your friends?

Report inappropriate content

If you see content that is upsetting or unsuitable, always report it to your mobile phone provider, or a parent/guardian.

Be considerate

The golden rule is to pause before posting. If you are posting about someone else, think whether it would make you upset or embarrassed if it was about you. Remember that the internet is a public space, so only post comments and pictures that you would be happy for anyone to see.

Keep what you post between you and your friends

Most social networking sites have security settings that prevent strangers from seeing your profile or status. Of course, you want to talk to your friends, but make sure your profile is only visible to people on your friends list.

Disable Bluetooth

When Bluetooth is activated, you could receive unexpected and unwanted messages, and personal information may be visible.
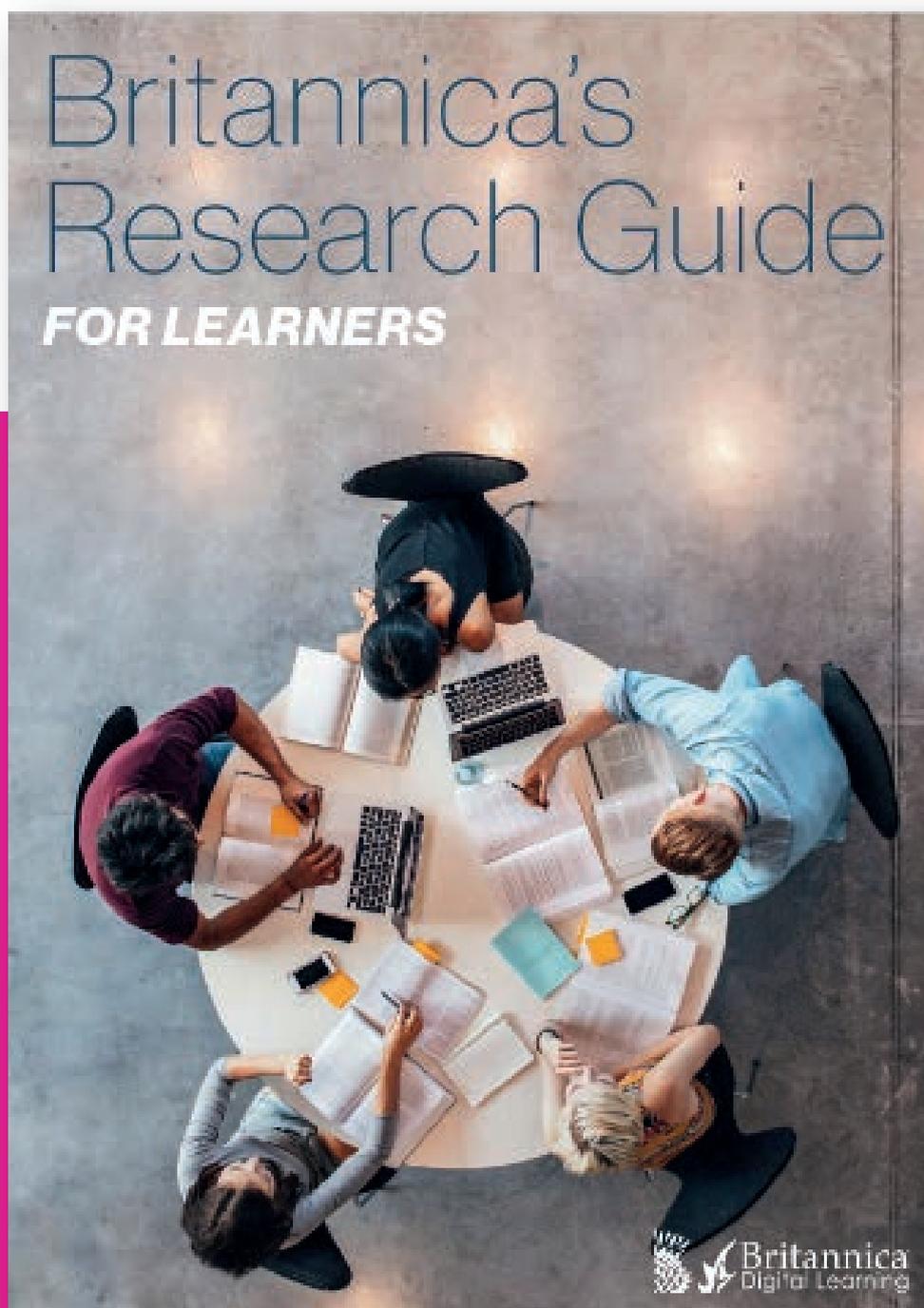
Consider insurance

Accidents happen from time to time, so talk to your parents/guardian about getting your mobile devices insured.

Messages and notifications

Be very careful with emails, files or pictures sent to you by people you don't know. They could contain viruses or malware. Similarly, if you receive a message from a friend which doesn't sound like them, don't click on it – they may have been hacked!

Passwords

Hackers take over social media accounts to post spam. Avoid this by giving your account a strong password and change it on a regular basis. Also, you should have a different password for different accounts to avoid patterns. Never show or share your password with anyone outside your family.

4 | Research Tasks

Research skills can be a difficult skill to master and without the right resources, almost impossible!

Download Britannica's Research Guide for step-by-step tips on how to complete a research task safely and effectively.

Download Here

Britannica's Research Guide FOR LEARNERS
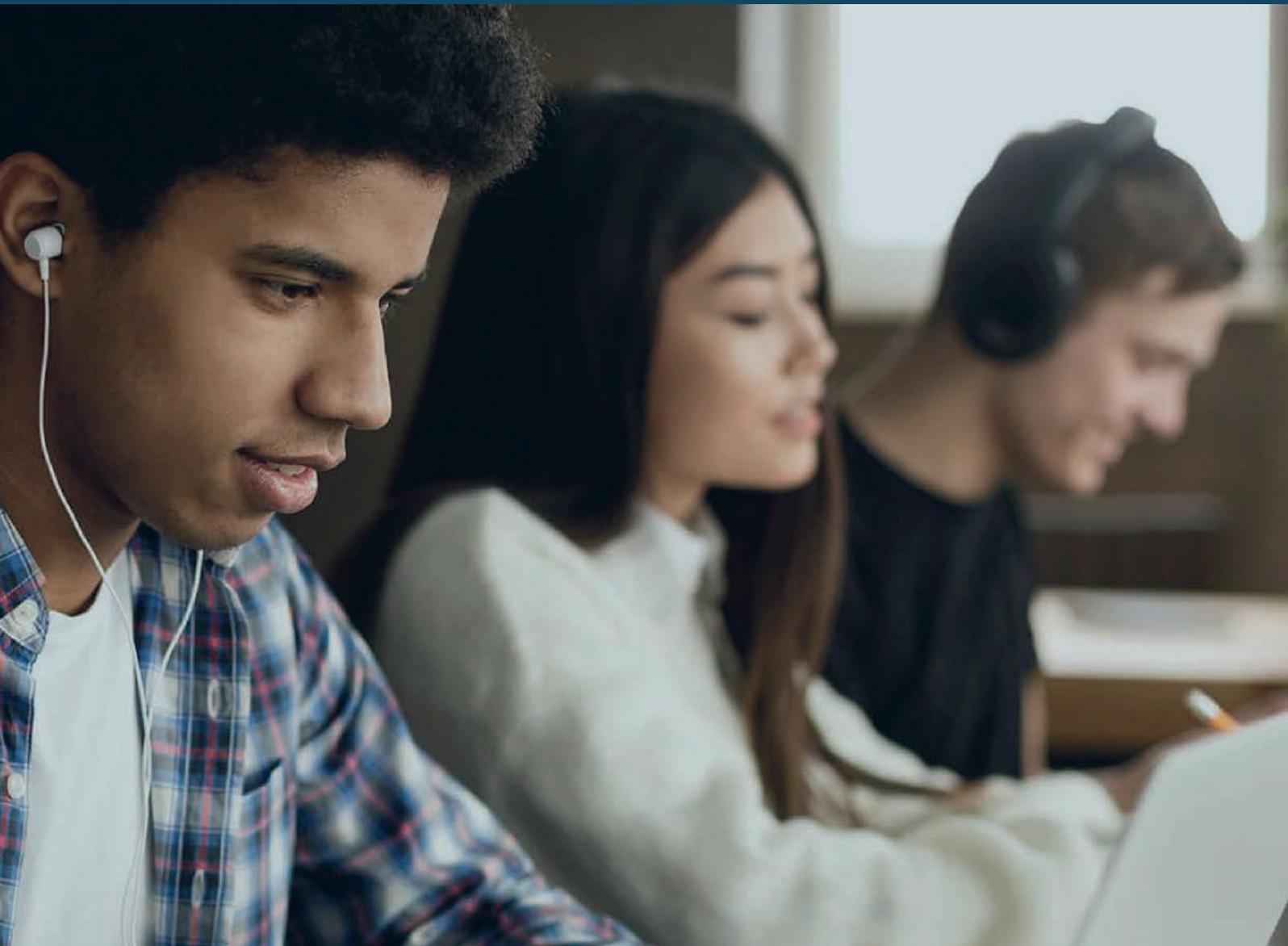
Britannica Digital Learning

5 | Finally, don't be afraid!

No matter your age, the internet is virtually inescapable!

If you were to read the papers or watch the television, you could be forgiven for thinking that the internet is a dark place, full of risks and dangers. However, it is used every day by millions of people of all ages for banking, shopping, travel, researching, keeping in touch and much, much more, without them coming to any harm!

Keeping you safe online is not about attempting to limit the time you spend online, or to police every page you visit or message you send. This guide isn't intended to scare or worry internet users, but to provide advice which will allow you to understand what the risks are and how best to reduce them.

More important than any list or rules, however, is to encourage you to think and to remember that being safe online is always important!

6 | Useful Sites

Check out the following sites we have used through this guide for more important on staying safe online:

- **Busy Teacher**
  http://busyteacher.org

- **Childline**
  www.childline.org.uk

- **The Internet Watch Foundation**
  www.iwf.org.uk

- **Virtual Global Task Force**
  www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

- **Child Exploitation and Online Protection**
  www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

- **Cyber Mentors**
  www.cybermentorplus.org

- **Childnet**
  www.childnet.com

- **Digizen**
  www.digizen.org

- **The Department for Education**
  www.education.gov.uk

- **Keeping Safe Online**
  https://hwb.gov.wales/keepingsafeonline

7 | Glossary

Here's a list of some words and phrases which you may or may not be familiar with:

- **Anti-virus software**
  A protective program that checks the files on your computer and anything sent to you in email, chat or on a web page for viruses and other malware.

- **Block**
  Prevent a computer accessing something on the internet, or stop a program running.

- **Bluejacking**
  Sending anonymous texts to strangers using Bluetooth-enabled devices is called 'bluejacking'.

- **Content filter**
  A filter that prevents access to material on the internet by checking it is suitable before it is shown to the user.

- **Downloading**
  Copying something over the internet.

- **Firewall**
  A program that checks all the information passing between your computer and the internet to see if it is safe and permitted.

- **Malware**
  Bad software that can change your computer (viruses) by stealing your personal information (spyware) or exposing your computer to hackers (trojan horses).

- **Virus**
  A malware program that can hide itself on your computer by making changes to another program. A virus can delete your files, steal your data or even take over your computer and let hackers control it.

- **Webcam**
  A camera that is plugged into or built-in to a computer and used to send images and video over the internet.