Understanding Your Child's Digital World

1

WhatsApp isn't *just* messaging

WhatsApp is often thought of as a messaging app, but for young people it can function much like a social network. Group chats can feel like always 'being on'. Ofcom (2025) found that 63% of 8–17-year-olds had been added to a group chat in the previous four weeks.

2

Snapchat can share your child's location

Snap Map can show friends where your child is.



Top tip: Ask your child to show you their Snap Map settings and check together who can see their location.

3

'Disappearing messages' doesn't always mean gone

Screenshots, screen recordings and forwarding can make supposedly temporary content much less temporary.



Encourage your child to use a simple rule: "Would I be comfortable with this being seen outside the chat?"

4

Phones don't have to be in use to be distracting.

A phone lighting up or vibrating can be enough to interrupt attention. Notifications settings can be tailored to each child's needs. Take the time to review their settings with them!

5

Not all screen time is the same.

An hour spent messaging friends, watching videos, doing homework or scrolling social media can look identical in a screen-time report but the experience and impact can be very different.



→ Rather than focusing only on how long your child is on their phone, **ask what they're doing and how it makes them feel.**