



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education



Staying safe online



Published: July 2026

Before you start



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.

Some things you can do to make it easier are:



- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What you will find in here

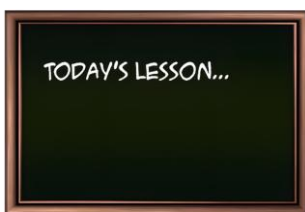
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About this Easy Read



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

This Easy Read is from the **Ministry of Education**.



The **Ministry of Education** is the part of the Government in charge of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.

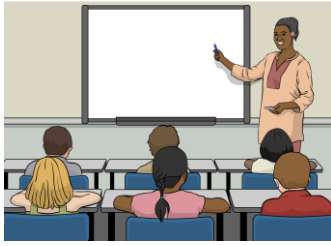


This Easy Read is about **digital safety**.



Digital safety means:

- staying safe online
- being kind to other people online.



This Easy Read talks about:

- what your child will learn about digital safety at school
- how you can support your child to learn about digital safety at home.

What is digital safety?



There are **risks** when people go online like:

- **cyberbullying**
- **scams**
- seeing things you do not want to see like videos about sex.



Here a **risk** is something that could harm someone.



Cyberbullying means using **technology** to be mean to someone.



In this Easy Read **technology** means tools people use to:

- talk to other people
- go on the internet.



Some examples of technology are:

- cellphones
- laptops
- tablets like iPads.



Some examples of cyberbullying are:

- sending mean texts to someone
- writing mean comments on social media.





A **scam** is when someone tries to trick you online.

The person doing the scam usually wants you to give them:

- money
- information like your password.



Digital safety is about knowing what:

- the risks are
- to do if something bad happens online.



Some of the main parts of digital safety are:

- protecting privacy
- knowing how to tell if something is:
 - a scam
 - misinformation
- understanding algorithms
- being kind online.



These things are explained on **pages 9 to 12** of this Easy Read.



Protecting privacy

Protecting privacy means keeping secret information secret.



Some things you can do to protect your privacy online are:

- using strong **privacy settings**
- thinking carefully before sharing:
 - photos
 - personal details like where you live.

A blue login form with the title 'Login'. Below the title is the instruction 'Please enter your email and password to log in'. There are two input fields: 'Email:' with the placeholder 'yourname@email.com' and 'Password:' with masked characters. Below the password field are links for 'Remember Me' and 'Forgot password?'. A blue 'LOGIN' button is at the bottom.

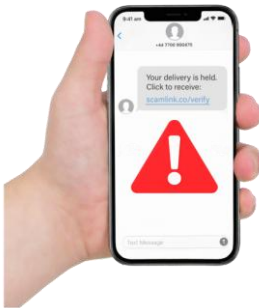
Privacy settings are tools you can use to protect your privacy when you are using technology like:

- using strong passwords
- only letting people you are friends with see your social media posts.



Knowing when something is misinformation / a scam

Misinformation is information that is not true.



Knowing when something is misinformation / a scam means knowing how to tell if:

- something is **fake news**
- someone is trying to trick you
- an ad is trying to get you to spend money.



Fake news is information that:

- looks like news
- is not true.

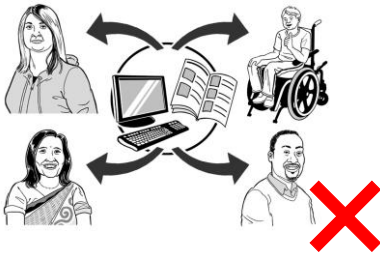
Understanding algorithms



Algorithms are how apps like social media decide what posts to show you.



Understanding algorithms means knowing that algorithms show you more of things you already like.



This can make it hard to see different ideas.

Being kind online

Being kind online means:

- not cyberbullying other people
- being nice to other people
- knowing who to tell if something bad happens to:
 - you online
 - someone else online.

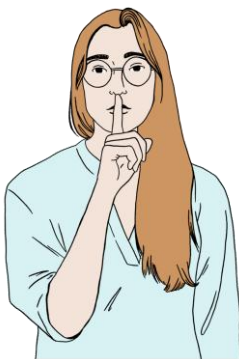


Why is digital safety important?



Your child will probably use technology every day to:

- learn
- talk to their friends
- have fun.



Learning about digital safety will support your child to protect their:

- privacy
- reputation
- mental health.





Your **reputation** is what other people think of you like if they think you are a nice person.



Mental health is how you feel in your mind.



Being a good **digital citizen** is also part of being safe online.

Here a **digital citizen** is someone who does things online.



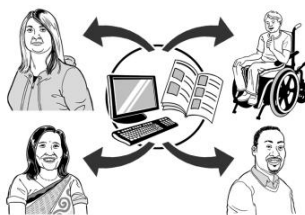
Being a good digital citizen means:

- following the rules when using technology
- making good choices online
- making sure the internet is:
 - safe for everyone
 - a friendly place that everyone can be part of.

What your child will learn about digital safety at school



Digital safety is an important part of **digital literacy**.



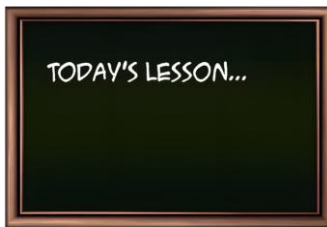
Digital literacy is knowing how to use technology to:

- find information
- use information
- create information
- share information.



People who have digital literacy skills:

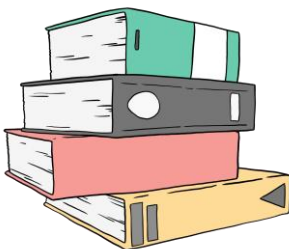
- know how to use technology well
- think carefully about how they use technology.



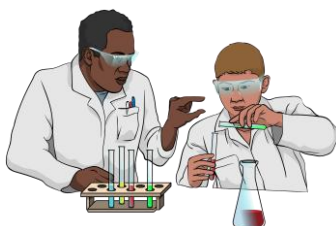
Digital literacy is taught in lots of parts of the **New Zealand Curriculum**.



The **New Zealand Curriculum** is a document that says what children will learn at school.



The New Zealand Curriculum has 8 **learning areas**.



Here **learning areas** are the subjects your child learns at school.



Digital literacy is an important part of these learning areas:

- health and physical education
- technology
- English.



Digital safety is also an important part of these learning areas.



Your child will learn about digital safety in a way that makes sense for their age.



In their first 3 years at school your child will begin to learn about things like how to look after:

- themselves online
- their **relationships**.



Here a **relationship** is any connection someone has with another person like being friends with them.



As your child gets older they will learn:

- harder digital skills
- more about digital safety
- **critical literacy**.





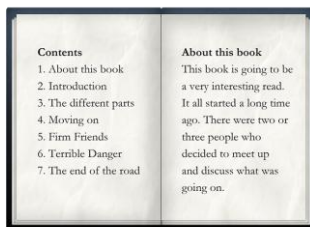
Critical literacy is about understanding that:

- different people have different ideas
- these different ideas affect what people say:
 - online
 - offline.



To teach critical literacy the school will teach your child to:

- think carefully about **texts**
- ask questions about who made the texts
- think about who:



- gets to have a say in the text
- does not get to have a say in the text



- think about what the text is trying to say.



Here **texts** are anything you:

- read
- watch
- hear.





At school your child will also learn about how to:

- be a good digital citizen
- think about if the information they find online is right
- protect their privacy online
- stay safe online
- use technology to make things.



How you can support your child to learn about digital safety at home



There are lots of things you can do to support your child to learn about digital safety at home.

Support your child to have healthy digital habits



A **habit** is something you do all the time without thinking about it.



For example you might have a habit of looking at social media when you wake up in the morning.



To support your child to have healthy digital habits you can create clear **boundaries** together.

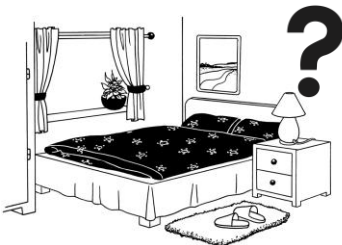


Here **boundaries** are rules.

Some boundaries you could have are:



- only using technology in shared rooms like the living room



- talking about when it is okay to use technology in private rooms like bedrooms



- taking breaks from using technology to:

- stretch
- move
- go outside



- planning how much time you will spend having fun using technology.



It is a good idea to follow the same rules as your child.



This shows that everyone in the whānau / family is working on having healthy digital habits.



This **website** has more information about setting boundaries with your whānau / family:

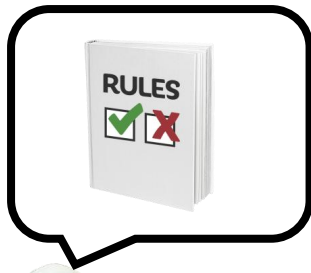
<https://tinyurl.com/c2rw3jep>



This website is **not** in Easy Read.



To support your child to have healthy digital habits you can talk about what being online is like for them.



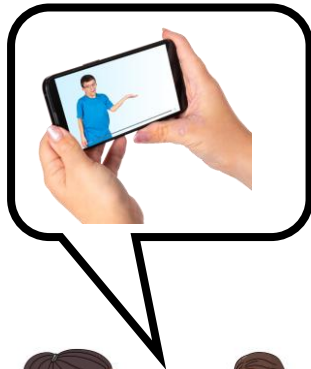
You can talk about why you have boundaries.



You can tell your child that the boundaries are to keep everyone safe.



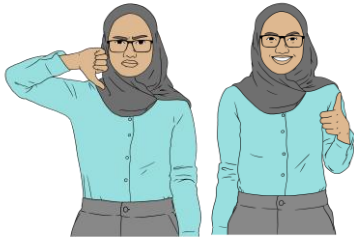
Having boundaries does not mean your child is in trouble.



You can talk to your child about what you are both:

- reading online
- watching online
- doing online.





You can talk about what:

- is okay to post online
- is not okay to post online.



For example you might decide it is only okay to post photos online if everyone in the photo is happy for the photo to be online.



You can notice how your child feels after they have been online.



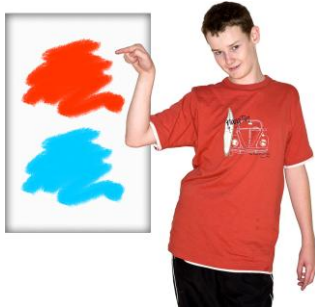
You can talk to them about what happened if they seem upset.



To support your child to have healthy digital habits you can support them to be more **independent** as they grow up.



Here your child being more **independent** means they do more things for themselves.



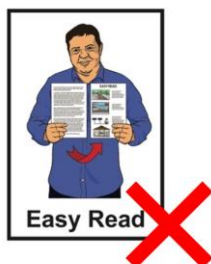
When you think they are ready you could:

- let your child make their own choices about how much time they spend using technology
- support your child to make their own choices about things like taking a break from using technology.



This **website** has more information about supporting your child to stay safe online:

<https://tinyurl.com/mprezpcb>

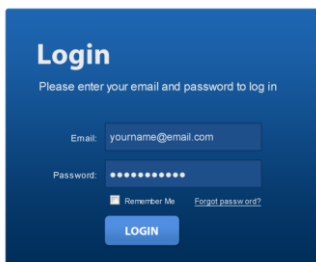
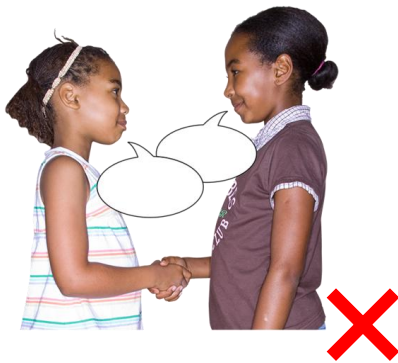


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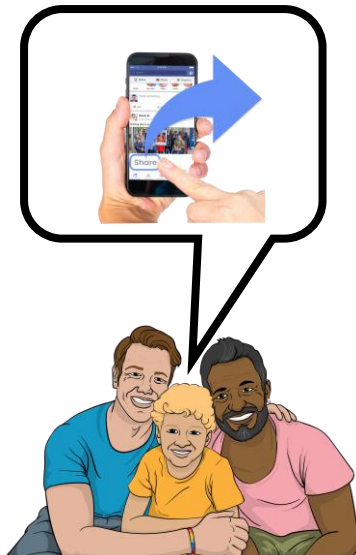


Support your child to protect their privacy

To support your child to protect their privacy online you could:



- support them to create strong passwords
- make sure they use a different password for each thing they have a password for
- remind them not to tell their friends their passwords
- remind them to log out when they have finished using shared technology like a school computer
- look at their privacy settings together.



To support your child to protect their privacy online you could also:

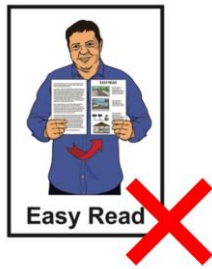
- talk about what they:
 - feel safe sharing
 - do not feel safe sharing
- talk about why keeping their information private keeps them safe
- say they should not post anything unless they would be happy for their:
 - grandparents to see it
 - teachers to see it
 - boss to see it when they have a job
- remind them that it is very hard to take information off the internet.





This **website** has more information about how you can support your child to protect their privacy online:

<https://tinyurl.com/nhjcap8k>



This website is **not** in Easy Read.

Support your child to have a good time online



You can support your child to have a good time online by supporting them to:

- be kind online
- be safe online
- make things to post online.





Remind your child that:

- the things they post online can change how other people think about them
- the things other people post about them can change how other people think about them
- it is okay to stop to think before sharing things online.

Tell your child you are proud of them when they are kind online.

Remind your child that:

- it is okay to take a break from being online
- people who are really their friends will not mind if they take a break from social media.



Tell your child they can talk to you if they see anything online that makes them uncomfortable.



Talk to your child about online:

- **trends**
- **challenges.**



An online **trend** is something that is popular online.

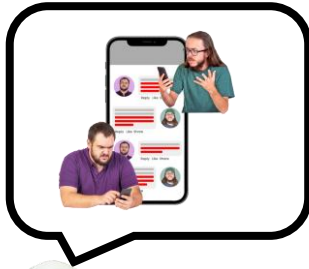


An online **challenge** is an online trend that asks people to join in with something:

- silly
- dangerous.



Tell your child that sometimes people feel like they have to join in with online trends / challenges even if it feels wrong.



Talk to your child about what they can do if one of their friends posts something:

- unkind
- dangerous.



Support your child to use technology to be creative like by making a:

- short video to share
- story to share
- artwork to share.





Remind your child that it is important to mostly use their own ideas when they make things.



They should say thank you if they use ideas from other people.



Show your child you are interested in the things they make.

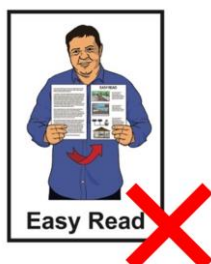


Tell your child you are proud of the things they make.



This **website** has more information about how you can talk to your whānau / family about staying safe online:

<https://tinyurl.com/y57ejx73>

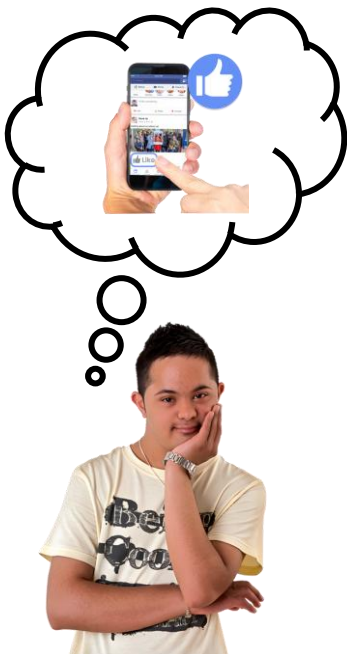


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Support your child to use critical literacy when they are online



You can support your child to use critical literacy when they are online by reminding them to think carefully about the things they see online.

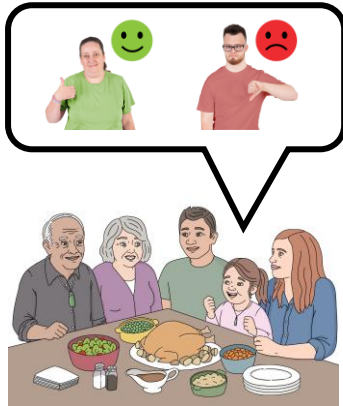


You can remind your child to stop to think before they:

- click on something online
- like a post
- share something online.



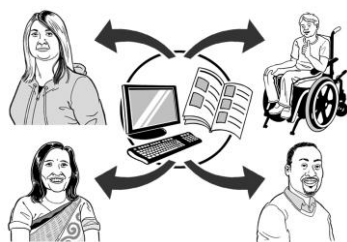
You can talk to your child about where information comes from.



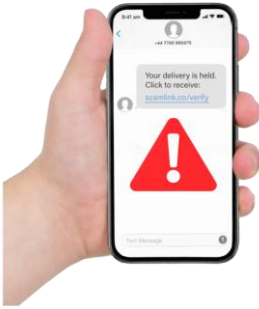
You can:

- watch things online with your child
- read things online with your child
- talk about how the things you watch / read make you feel.

You can:



- remind your child that apps like social media use algorithms to show you more of things you already like
- support your child to find information from different places so they see what different people think about things.

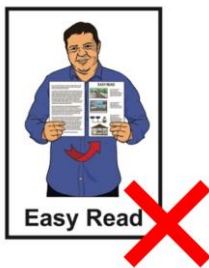


Remind your child to be careful if they get a message from someone they do not know.



This **website** has more information about critical literacy online:

<https://tinyurl.com/kvr8uyp>



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Show your child how to be a good digital citizen



You can support your child to be a good digital citizen by being a good digital citizen yourself.



Your child will probably copy the way you behave online.



You can show your child that you:

- are kind online
- follow the rules online
- protect the privacy of other people online
- use critical literacy to think about the things you see online
- use technology to have good relationships with other people
- protect **rights** online like the right to **freedom of speech**.



Rights are important things that everyone should:

- have
- be able to do.



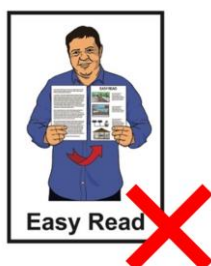
Freedom of speech is a right.

Having freedom of speech means the Government cannot stop you from saying things.



This **website** has more information about how to support your child to be a good digital citizen:

<https://tinyurl.com/mupxf936>



This website is **not** in Easy Read.

More information



These **websites** have more information about digital safety:

<https://netsafe.org.nz/>

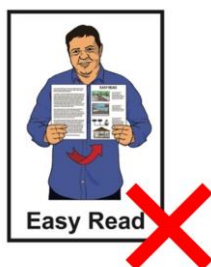


www.hectorsworld.com/nz/parents

keepitreasonline.govt.nz/parents



www.kidshealth.org.nz



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