

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Developing online safety awareness

Children are increasingly using technology in their daily lives. An Ofcom survey on digital access showed that during 2022, 99% of households with children (aged 0-17) had internet access and used it in the home.

There are lots of benefits from using the internet but it also comes with risks - unintentionally viewing inappropriate adult material, increased amounts of sedentary screen time and being accessible to adults who may be looking to groom children.

Start a conversation about staying safe online with the children in your setting with this activity.



Learning aims

- Understand why safety is an important factor when using connected devices
- Express their thoughts and ideas
- Understand simple rules for staying safe online
- Understand the purpose of digital devices
- Develop vocabulary.

Resources

- Space for children to sit and listen to the story
- Link to Smartie resources
- Paper or card and colour printer (optional to print off the story and make a book)
- Computer to view the PowerPoint story.

Activity outline

1. Prior to the activity, view the content of the recommended story to ensure it is developmentally appropriate for the children in your setting and decide the relevance of the various topics the stories explore
2. Bring children together and look at some of the devices you have in your nursery setting. Ask the children what the capabilities are in terms of access to the internet, games ,etc, and talk about devices they use at home

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3. Watch Smartie the Penguin on a computer (choose topics from Story A or Story B). Each of the penguin stories has three topics and you can choose which you feel are appropriate for your group of children, just finish your story at the end of the relevant section, or piece two separate stories together
4. The story is on a power point presentation but if you don't have access to a computer or table to watch the story then you could print it off in colour and put it together as a book. Print it off on A3 and back it onto card to make it more durable. Make several copies and have a couple in your home sharing library so children can take them home to read with parents
5. Talk to children after the story and ask them what they would do if they have a problem online (ask parents or family member for help). Sing the penguin song and encourage children to click their fingers and tap their feet as they sing, tap and click
6. Take part in online safety campaigns to keep safety at the forefront of practice such as Safer Internet Day on 14th Feb 2023.
7. Memories.

Extension ideas

The best way to build children's knowledge of online safety is by talking to them about it. With younger children you may talk about how to stay safe online and teach safe protocols, e.g. always look online with an adult.

Extending the activity

- FREE online training course: [Online Safety in Early Years](#)