Mind the Gap
Conversation Starter Kit

Questions you may want to ask your children, and use as a way of starting a conversation about internet use and staying safe online.

- What do you like to do most online?

- Do you play online games with friends you know in the real world, or do you play with anyone?

- What do you write on your Moshi Monsters pinboard? Who can see your pinboard?

- Do you tell your online friends your secrets or things you wouldn't tell them in the playground?

- What is the age rating of the game you are playing?   Can I play/watch the game with you?

- The minimum age to be able to open an account on Facebook, Instagram and many other social networks is 13 years. Ask your child/ren what age they pretended to be and why?

- Do you know your online friends in the real world? Are you always nice to your online friends?

- If someone online says or does something to frighten or upset you would you know what to do?

- Would you let a stranger in the street ask you personal questions in the real world? Do you let a stranger online ask you personal questions? If yes, is it time to change?

- Can you show me how to change Facebook privacy settings?   Are your settings as private as possible?

- Has anyone ever said something nasty to you online?
    - Were you frightened or scared?
    - Would you know what to do?

- Do you know or can you show me how to report nasty comments, images and videos on (Moshi Monsters/ Instagram / Facebook and so on). Are you aware that you can usually do this anonymously?

Once online – always online. Ask your child/ren if they are happy for those comments, images, videos to be online forever?   This online content could have a long term negative impact such as not getting a job interview or generally being unhappy about what was said and done several months/ years ago.

Here are some things you may want to do to help your child/ren 'Stay Safe' in the online world

- Set ground rules and with younger children agree which websites they can visit. *Remember these will vary depending upon the ages of your child.*

- Agree time limits and regular breaks. *Remember letting children play video games just before bedtime may stop them sleeping well and have an impact on their learning.*

- Find out how to set the parental controls and safe search. Contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to see what controls they may offer as part of the service. *Remember none of these are 100% effective and supervision is always advised.*

- Check the home page of your child's favourite social network, game and so on. Is there a section with information for parents? This will give you an overview of the website and its suitability.

- Spend 30 minutes watching your child play an online game so that you can see the content and be happy that it is suitable for them.

- Check the age ratings of games at PEGI **http://www.pegi.info/en/index/** *Remember video games ratings are all about the content and not the difficulty of the game.*

- Say **NO** to your child playing any game that has a rating of 18 years and above or using websites that you think are unsuitable.

- Talk you child about their privacy settings and ask them to show you how to change these settings. Encourage your child to only have online friends that know in the real world.

- Tell your child what to do if they ever feel frightened or scared when online or using their mobile phone. *It is important that your child know they **can always talk to you** and you will help them (you may not know the answer but by talking to the school, other parents, ThinkUknow FAQs, mobile phone provider and so on you will be able to find a solution.)*

Visit **ThinkUknow** www.thinkuknow.co.uk and look at the parents section. Show your child the **'Report Abuse'** button and together click to see the advice and links.

Visit **Childnet** and have a look at the parents section http://www.childnet-int.org/safety/parents.aspx

Visit **Internet Matters** (www.internetmatters.org) which contains lots of useful information and guidance, including how to set up parental controls.