

This guide has been created to support you in your role as a parent/guardian to ensure your child can participate safely in online motorsport activities and groups. It discusses some of the risks that children can be exposed to online, how you can mitigate these risks, and what you can do if you're worried about your

How could my child use the internet as part of their motorsport activities?

There are a number of ways in which Motorsport UK clubs, communities, and teams use online spaces and services. This includes:

- Groups on sites such as Facebook - these are typically closed spaces where members of the committee/team can share information and advertise upcoming events.
 - "Pages" on sites such as Facebook – these are typically open spaces, where clubs or teams can advertise information and events with a wider audience.
 - Online chats with peers, whether individually or as groups, this might be on apps such as Snapchat.
 - Messaging services such as WhatsApp, Discord, or texting to contact club/team members.
 - Sim racing titles and online games such as iRacing and rFactor2.
-



What are the risks to my child online?

As with all online activity, there are a number of risks to be aware of when children use online services to take part in motorsport. This includes:

1. Harmful Content

Being exposed to inappropriate content online could include racist, misogynistic, anti-Semitic, or homophobic language. It could also include seeing content that is not appropriate such as sexual images.

These types of risk may occur via WhatsApp groups, Snapchat conversations, or social media pages.

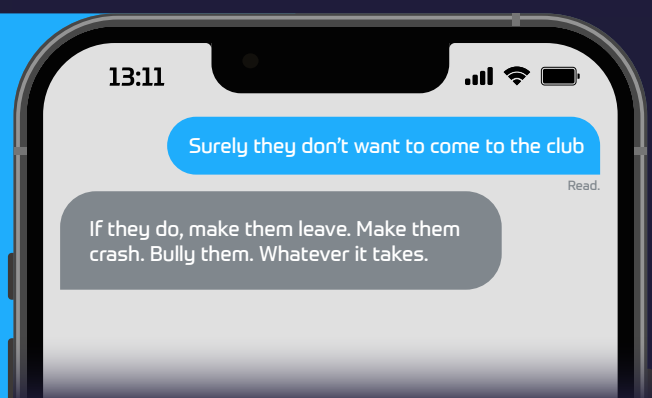
2. Harmful Contact

There is the risk that your child could experience harm through the contacts they make online. This can include behaviours such as coercion or grooming. Unfortunately individuals may try to obtain your child's contact details and message them with the intention of building a relationship with them. This can occur through social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram and also from taking details from WhatsApp groups.



3. Harmful Conduct

Online bullying is a form of harmful conduct. This includes children being subjected to or targeted by hurtful messages in groups such as Snapchat or WhatsApp. It can include children creating videos or memes of other drivers with the intention of threatening, teasing, or embarrassing/humiliating another child.



4. Harmful Commerce

It is not as common for children to be targeted for financial gain however it is important to be aware of online scams or phishing emails. These can target children via social media pages or directly by email.

What can I do as a parent/guardian to help keep my child safe?

There are some steps every parent/guardian can take to help mitigate these risks to your child. The most important is to have open conversations with your child about what they see and experience on social media so they feel comfortable talking to you if they witness or experience anything which doesn't feel right.

1. Content

When your child joins a new club or team, ask the club or team about how they communicate online, including what social media and messaging platforms they use. Each club or team should ask for your consent before they communicate online with your child, whether by email, WhatsApp or social media groups.

All club should also have a social media policy which outlines how they expect their members to behave online. Ask the club if you can see a copy of this.

2. Contact

Speak to your child and ensure the people that they are talking to online are appropriate. Children use social networking sites to talk to their friends in healthy and positive ways, however, there are people who don't know your child and may approach them online.

Your child might want to be 'friends' with mechanics, team members, or other adults in motorsport, it is recommended that friend requests are only sent to professional social media accounts and not to personal social media accounts. It is important to keep this professional boundary in place, to ensure all communications comes through official club, team or coach accounts

3. Conduct

Promote the values of Race with Respect with your child, Race with Respect is based on the principles of **respect, integrity, fair play, self-control, and good manners**. These behaviours apply equally online as they do in the physical motorsport environments.

Ask your child's club or team if they have a social media code of conduct for online behaviour and read through this with your child. It is important that your child understands their responsibility when they are online and also knows to speak up if they witness or experience anything which does not meet this standards.

4. Commerce

Check the settings on your child's devices. Regularly checking your child's social media privacy settings is vital to keep their personal information, physical location, and passwords safe and secure.

Childline has developed guides on social media privacy settings.

What can I do if I'm worried about my child?

If you are worried that your child is experiencing harmful online behaviour, report the behaviour to an appropriate person.

If your child is a member of a **Motorsport UK club**, the **Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO)** is there to support you by offering advice and guidance. The CSO can work with you and your child to resolve the issue, either locally through the use of education, Race with Respect warnings, or referrals to statutory bodies.

If the risk is within a **Team environment**, speak with the **Team Manager** in the first instance.

If **you, the Club Safeguarding Officer or Team** requires further support or information, you can contact the **Motorsport UK Safeguarding Team** Monday-Friday via safeguarding@motorsportuk.org or call **01753 765056**. Further information and a reporting form can be found on the website at motorsportuk.org/the-sport/safeguarding