

Online Addictions - Advice for parents during Covid-19

With pupils spending whole days at home, with only limited time outdoors, it is “natural” that they will take to their bedrooms, and devices, for distraction; and of course they may not have the same restrictions and regulation as when at school, using the school’s internet with its associated firewall.

This guidance outlines some of the potential pitfalls and proffers advice to parents and guardians on what to look out for, and how you might respond.

It is worth being aware that the current situation will be seen as an opportunity for gambling, gaming and pornography providers to find new “users”, and addictions are easily formed. Extra vigilance is helpful wherever possible. Emerging research suggests that addiction to pornography, for example, can lead to serious problems (social, physical and sexual) in the short and long term - so it’s important that we safeguard our children here.

Please refer to the [Phones and Social Media](#) document for advice on how to restrict and monitor your children’s use of their devices.

Gaming

- Read this article on [Child Gaming Addiction](#) which explains what you might look out for and how you can help.

Gambling

- There is a good deal of research into young people’s gambling habits online e.g. [The Gambling Commission](#)
- It is important to monitor your child’s use of the internet, and indeed their spending (if they have access to a card / bank account) to protect them.
- Think about the amount of time they are online: are they open with what they are doing? Can you see their browser history?

Pornography

- Read this article on [Pornography Addiction](#) - how to identify and manage it.

Be Alert to Harmful Content (indecent images, potential online grooming etc.)

If you become aware that your child is viewing, being sent, or just stumbling across harmful content, you should report this:

[Report Harmful Content](#)