Live Streaming

What is Live Streaming?

Live streaming is one of the most popular forms of communication amongst children and young people. It is also, unfortunately, being used by paedophiles to groom children and live-stream child abuse. Referrals of child abuse images to the National Crime Agency have increased by 700% in the last five years and abuse of children under ten is being more frequently recorded.

Key Features of Live Streaming to be aware of

- Video streaming usually contains pre-recorded material, such as that seen on YouTube. However, video content can also be distributed as part of a live broadcast, such as in Live.ly and Periscope this is called Live streaming, it is when you broadcast in real time.
- Popular free live streaming apps include Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Periscope, TikTok and Live.ly. These apps allow the user to film and broadcast their own videos in real-time, as well as to view the live-stream videos of other users.
- On most of the live streaming apps it will allow viewers to like or comment on the content. This can be positive feedback and negative.

Enjoying Live Streaming safely and managing the risks

- **Do your homework** – Take time to research the specific app or service that your child would like to use. Read reviews as well as the Privacy Policies and Terms of Use to find out about privacy settings, managing inappropriate content and how app developers may use your personal information. You can also learn about 'acceptable use' policies of the app or service and find advice on securing online accounts and setting privacy settings on devices.

- **Communicate your expectations** – Make clear to your child what is and is not acceptable online behaviour. You need to accept that allowing your child access to online apps like these, requires trust and clear boundaries, for their own wellbeing. Ensure that they are clear about what content is acceptable to create, view and share and remind them never to share nude images.

- **Signing Up** – Some Livestreaming apps require the creation of an account. Encourage your child to keep log in details and passwords secure and share them with you.

- **Friends and following** – Some live streaming apps allow users to 'follow' or 'friend' one another. Encourage your child to use the apps' privacy settings to ensure that 'follow' and 'friend' requests require their prior approval. Remind your child only to accept 'follow' and 'friend' requests from people they know and trust in real life.

- **Location Settings** – Disable any location settings in live streaming apps that your child uses to ensure that they cannot be tracked to their location.

- **Streaming Apps** – If your child wants to use live streaming, help them to find and encourage them to try child-friendly apps such as YouTube Kids and PokémonTV. Remember even apps, games and websites that are designed for children can never be guaranteed as safe.

- **Comments and Likes** – Some live streaming apps allow comments and 'likes'. Ensure your child uses the apps' privacy settings so that their videos cannot be viewed or commented on by people unknown to them.

- **Sharing Information** – Check that your child conceals identifying information, such as their location or school when video streaming. Ensure they do not wear school uniform in any original videos and explain to them that this is because it could lead to strangers finding out their location.

- **Permissions and respectful behaviour** – Remind your child that creating video content whilst out and about should be carried out sensibly. Some public places may require specific permission to film and it may be unsafe to include details of location on videos. If other people are appearing in recordings, it is polite and respectful to ask their permission to post or live stream.

- **Blocking** – Some, but not all, live streaming apps allow users to block other users. Encourage your child to block any users that engage in bullying or harassment, as well as those whose videos contain inappropriate content.

- **Reporting** – Some, but not all, live streaming apps allow users to report others. Encourage your child to make use of this feature, if available, if they encounter any inappropriate video content.

- **Having the difficult conversation** – Educate your child in the correct way to communicate online. They should avoid writing or videoing anything inappropriate or entering any 'wrong' conversations. Talk about 'intuition' – the sense that something is not quite right. Encourage them to be alert to someone being 'too' nice or putting them under pressure to do something they are uncomfortable with. Explain why your child should not send rude pictures or share inappropriate videos. Talk this through with them and explain the possible consequences and how much trouble they can get into both legally and personally. At the same time, reassure them that if they make a mistake, you will always be there to support them and that they should always tell you if they are worried.

- **Model positive and safe online behaviour** – Safe behaviour online starts with us as adults. Following basic safety suggestions and demonstrating these will help your child to follow in your footsteps. You also have a better chance of staying safer online yourself.

- **Download and use the app** – Having a go at live streaming yourself as this can help you understand how the app and process works. Creating appropriate content together will help you and your child learn how to live stream safely. It can be fun and creative and its not difficult to see why it is so popular but follow the steps above to keep your child protected.

Create and stream appropriate content safely!