

Cyber Wellness

It's more than saying no to devices.

Why Should We Be Concerned about Cyber Wellness?

The data may surprise you.

Did you know?

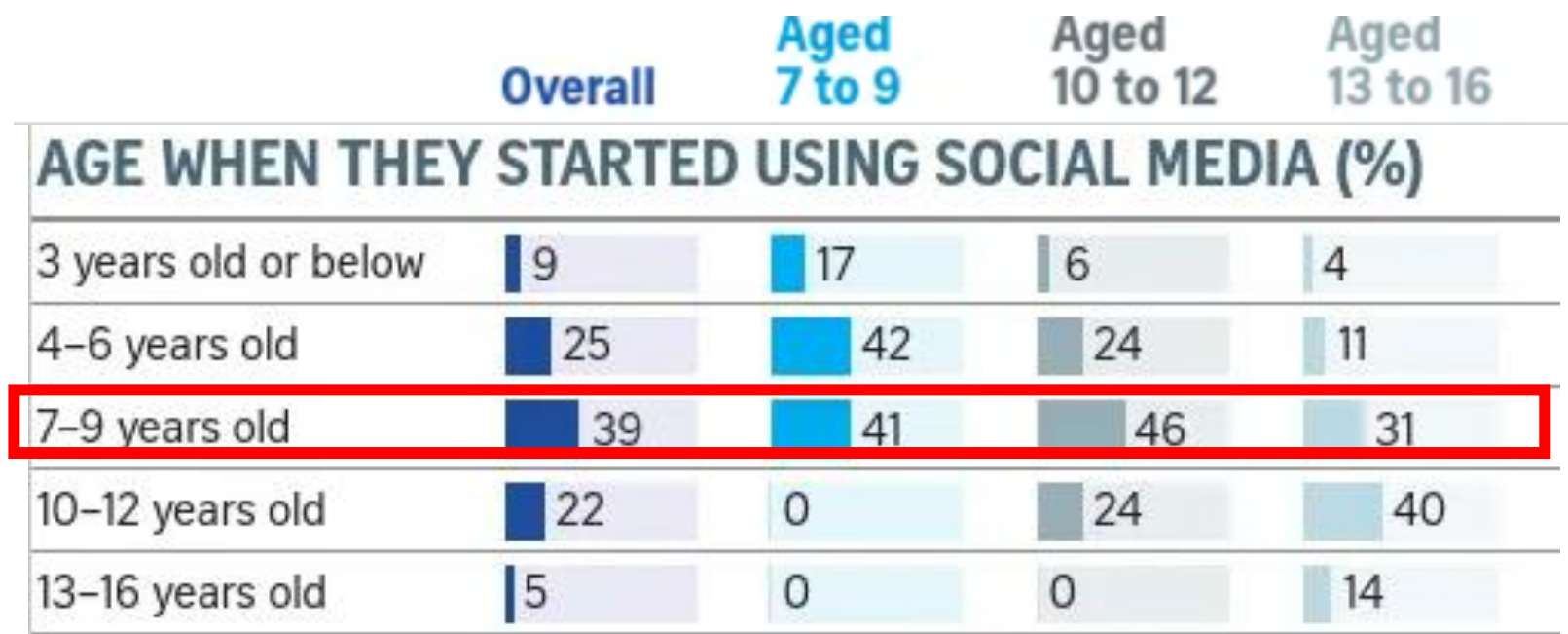
Our children are **going online from a younger age**.

67% of children aged 7 to 9, and **85%** for those aged 10 to 12 in Singapore use **smartphones** every day, and are active on **social media**.

However, research has shown that both **screen time** and **type of screen use** (educational vs recreational) can impact our **children's well-being**.

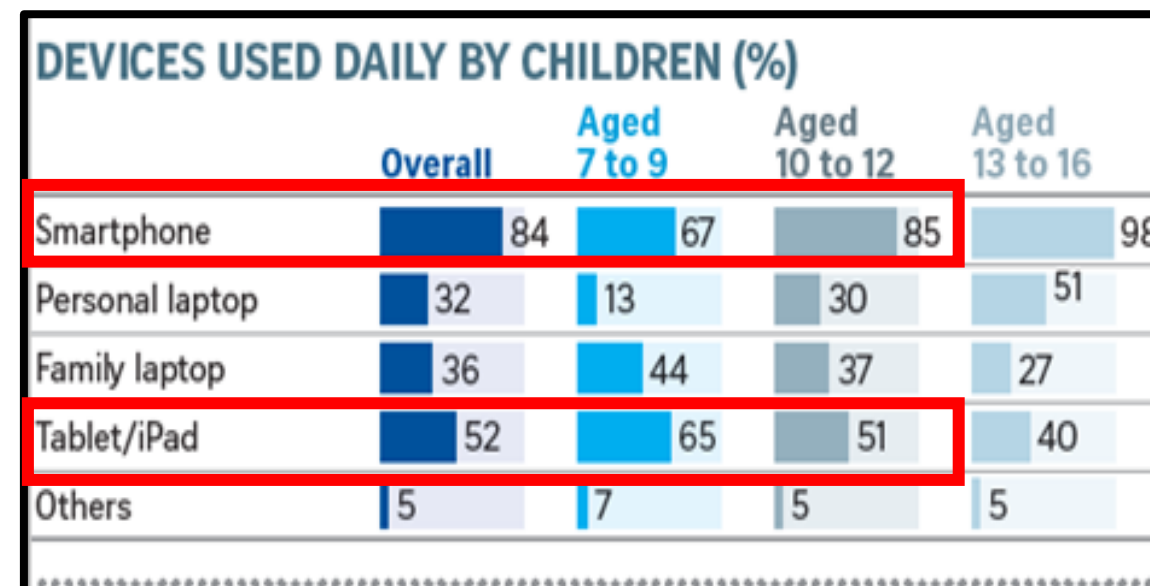
What does this mean?

We need to help our children achieve **balanced and purposeful** screen use.



CURRENT REALITY
Children are going online from a younger age

CURRENT REALITY
Two-thirds of these children use a smartphone and/or a tablet/iPad daily.



**Are you concerned about what your child
sees and interact with online?**

Did you know?

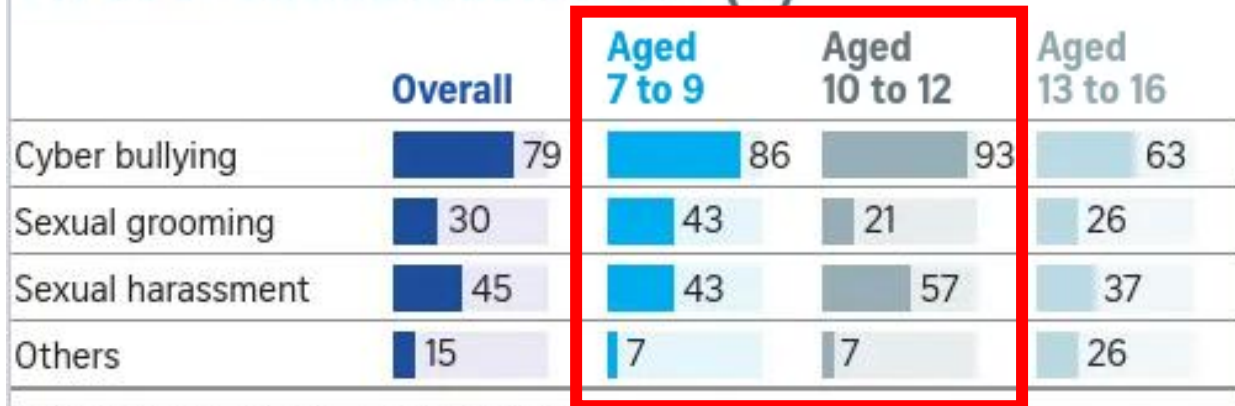
A survey of 600 parents in Singapore revealed the types and frequency of **harmful content** our children are exposed to, including cyberbullying, sexual grooming, and sexual harassment.

However, **not all parents are aware** of the **online risks**.

What does this mean?

We need to be **involved** in our children's digital lives, and put in **parental controls** to keep them safe and role-model for responsible use.

TYPES OF ONLINE HARASSMENT (%)



NOTE: This question was posed only to parents who reported that their children had faced online harassment. The poll is subject to a margin of error that is comparable with other research surveys.

Source: MILIEU INSIG
STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

CURRENT REALITY

Types and frequency of harmful content our children are exposed to

Source: Milieu Insights, [reported by the Straits Times](#) (Feb 2021)

Parents might not be aware, but...

1 in 3 children has chatted with strangers online

1 in 3 children has been exposed to pornographic materials

1 in 4 children has overshared their personal information

Source: [MLC-TOUCH Parent Child Poll Findings](#) (30 Nov 2023)



Source: [MDDI Survey](#) (Feb 2024)

Did you know?

Most social media platforms and popular games have **App Store age-ratings**:

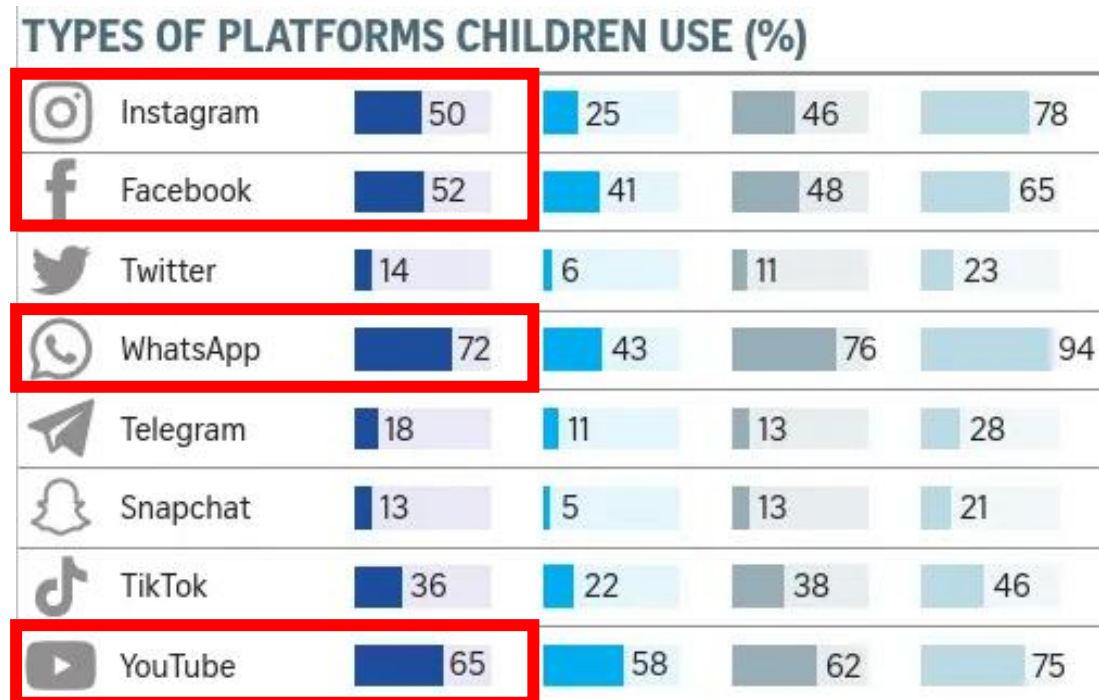
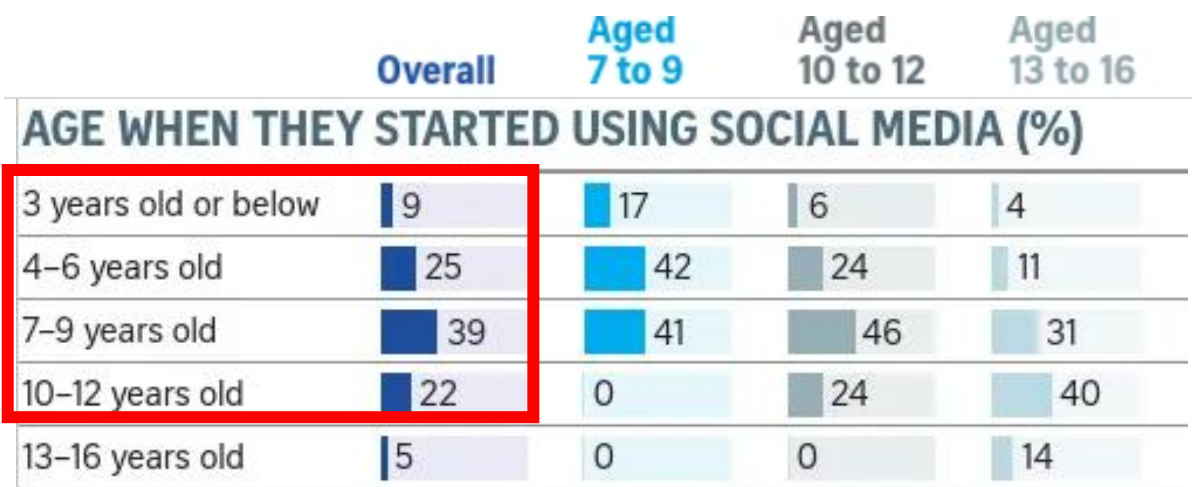
- **12+** : WhatsApp, Instagram, Roblox
- **17+** : Telegram and Discord

But the **majority of our children** have access to social media before the recommended ages.

Research shows that **screen use (smartphone and social media access) in young children** is associated with: insufficient good quality sleep, sedentary behaviours, obesity, and mental health and well-being .

What does this mean?

We need to ensure our children's use of devices and platforms are **age-appropriate**, and have **open conversations** with them about their digital habits.



CURRENT REALITY

About
a third
of parents



with children aged
seven to 12 said they
had Instagram accounts

Source: Milieu Insights, [reported by the Straits Times](#) (Feb 2021)

What is Cyber Wellness?

Cyber Wellness is the ability of our children and youth to navigate the cyberspace safely.

This is done through our **Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) curriculum** which aims to:

- **equip students with the knowledge and skills** to harness the power of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) **for positive purposes**;
- maintain a **positive presence in cyberspace**; and
- be **safe and responsible users of ICT**.

Through the curriculum, your child learns knowledge and skills to have **balanced screen use, be safe online, and exhibit positive online behaviours**.

Resources

Scan here to find out more about MOE's Cyber Wellness curriculum:



<https://go.gov.sg/moe-cw-education>

What Will Your Child Learn in School?

Find out what your child will learn about **Cyber Wellness** during **CCE (FTGP)*** lessons and other programmes.

***Character and Citizenship Education (Form Teacher Guidance Period)**

Primary 1 and 2

During
CCE(FTGP)
lessons,
students will
be taught:

Basic online safety rules

- Talking to only people you know

Cyber Contacts

- Understand that the profiles of strangers that we see online may not be their real identities
- Recognise the dangers of chatting with strangers online

Importance of a balanced lifestyle

- Especially in exercise, sleep and screen time for health and well-being

Protecting personal information

- Understand the risks of disclosing personal information

**Family Chat Time!**
Share with your family members:

- What are the safety rules I must follow to keep myself safe online?
- What do I know about tricky people?

My child/ward knows how to keep safe in the cyberworld!

Parent's / Guardian's signature



Explore Cyber Wellness messages with your child through the **CCE (FTGP) Journal** by participating in “**Family Time**” activities in the journal.

How Can We Partner Up?

Together, we can raise happy, kind and confident children, ready to thrive in the digital world.

3 areas we can work together on to foster School-Home Partnership

1 Respectful Communication

Our children do best when schools and parents work hand in hand to support them.

2 Role Models

3 Real Connections



Respectful Communication

Listen, understand, and foster kind words and actions between you and your child.



Have regular and genuine conversations with your child

- to better understand what they do online,
- how to stay safe,
- how to use technology in a responsible manner.

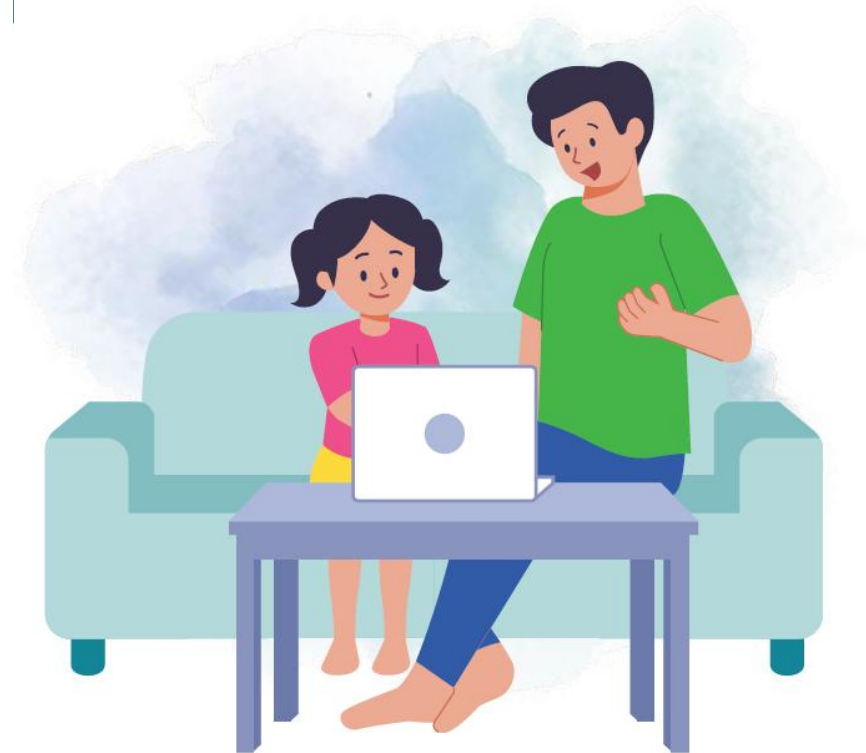


Communicate your actions and rationale.

- Let your child know **you care for them** and **want them to be safe online.**



Discuss with your child as you set parental controls to manage device use and stay safe online.



Role Models

You play a key role helping your child establish healthy digital habits and learn to use technology in a positive and meaningful way.



Role model healthy use of devices and social media, and good online behaviour for your child/ward.

- E.g. parents/guardians not using devices during mealtimes, respectful online communication



Role modelling respectful conversations.

- You are in the best position to role model these skills through daily interactions with your child.
- **Listen to understand first**, instead of jumping straight into giving advice and solutions.





Watch this video <https://go.gov.sg/video-opencommunication> on YouTube about having conversations grounded in love and respect that can help your child feel heard.

[Timing Matters: It's Not Just What You Say](#)

Real Connections

Cultivate strong relationships and healthy habits in this digital age.



Provide a safe space for conversations

- Children may hesitate to share their true thoughts and feelings with their parents, as they fear being judged or misunderstood.
- Let your child know that it is **normal to feel or think the way they do**. Help them **feel safe** expressing themselves with you.



Provide a balanced mix of engaging online and offline activities

- **Discuss and develop a timetable** with your child to moderate their time spent on screens.
- Children aged 7 – 12 should have **consistent screen time limits** (less than 2 hours daily, excluding school work).





Watch this video <https://go.gov.sg/video-familyscreenuse> on YouTube about setting routines and family agreements that will help your child learn when to switch off, and how to stay present: **[Ctrl + Alt + Disconnect: Press Pause Together](#)**



Unlocking their First Smartphone or Watch

How can we prepare ourselves and our children?

At what **age** should I give my child their first smartphone or watch?

Based on MOH's Guidance on Screen use in Children, parents should not give children mobile devices with unrestricted access to internet and applications. Parents can **delay the provision of smartphone and smartwatches** to their children.

Consider these questions:

Are they ready?	Can your child: • keep track of their belongings independently? • handle their own responsibilities without constant reminders? • obey rules and guidelines set in place? • differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate content?
Are you and your family ready?	Can you be a good role model for your child, and establish and enforce rules with your child's smartphone usage, including monitoring apps, screen time and internet use?

If you answer 'no' to any of these questions, it is wise to wait until your child is older – **ideally when your child is in secondary school**. Children who are already facing challenges (such as low self-esteem, poor self-control, bullying, or high stress) are more vulnerable to problematic screen use.

How do I **prepare** my child for their first smartphone or watch?

If you determine that you and your child are ready...

Tips	Conversation starters
Reflect on safe and responsible smartphone use	“How will you show me you will use your smartphone responsibly, respectfully, and safely?”
Co-create a family screen use plan	“Let’s come up with a set of family rules on how we should use our smartphones.” “Let’s think about what should happen if anyone breaks any of the rules.”
Include the setting of Parental Controls in your conversations	“The online space can be dangerous, and we would like to keep you safe. These parental controls that we put in will help to protect you. Let’s set a date in 6 months’ time to see if we should adjust the controls.”

If you think you and your child might not be ready yet,

here are some alternatives:

- Basic phones/Smartwatches offering calling and texting functions without internet access or apps (**please check Student’s Handbook on school’s policies on usage in schools**)
- Set a date/age to review your child’s readiness for a smartphone/watch.

How do I **monitor** my child's online activities and keep them safe?

When you decide that your child is ready to own a phone, it's important to **provide structure and support** and not simply hand over the device.

Experts recommend that parents:

- build on having a warm relationship with their child,
- **set and communicate limits** regarding phone use,
- pair rules with active supervision, and
- have regular conversations about your child's phone use.

In addition to these strategies, **take time to set up parental controls** on your child's device. Most phones allow you to:

Limit usage times	Control what time of the day and for how long the phone can be used. To be turned off during school hours.
Restrict content	Block access to content that is not age appropriate.
Manage activities	Allow only certain games or apps to be used, decide who can be added as friends, and determine whether private messaging is allowed.
Safeguard against unwanted spending	Restrict app store and in-app purchases.

It's important that you **actively monitor and discuss these controls** — especially at the beginning.

How do I **prepare**
my child for their
first smartphone
or watch?



Your child's smart use of their phone
starts with you

#9 Watch this video to discover how to have conversations with your child about their first smartphone/watch.

[Their First Phone: A Big Call for Parents](#)



Cyberbullying

Building Resilience and Character
while creating safe spaces for our children

Did you know?

A 2025 Digital Parenting Survey (MDDI) found that **more than 50%** of parents are concerned about cyberbullying.

MOE supports parents with resources related to children's mental well-being, cyber wellness, and strengthening parent-child relationships.

Through **CCE lessons**, students understand that bullying and cyberbullying is wrong, and acquire skills to:

- cultivate empathy and be kind
- manage differences and resolve disagreements respectfully
- be assertive, manage negative influences and seek help
- stand up against bullying and support peers affected as upstanders and peer supporters,

Source: [Channel News Asia](#) (12 Sep 2025)



What are hurtful behaviours and bullying?

In Singapore, local studies show that verbal/social bullying forms the bulk of the types of bullying experienced in schools and they often start as 'harmless teasing' or leaving someone out but escalate into bullying.



Hence, **we need to take a serious view of all forms of hurtful behaviours and bullying**, starting from once-off insensitive remarks before they become normalised or escalated.

Hurtful behaviours

Unkind and hurtful acts that include insensitive words/actions, even physical violence.

Bullying

Happens when a person behaves in a way that hurts someone **repeatedly and on purpose**

Forms of hurtful behaviours/ bullying

Physical

Hitting someone or damaging someone's belongings, tends to occur alongside other forms of hurtful behaviours

It can extend from offline to online platforms, amplifying its visibility

Social

Leaving someone out of a group or things on purpose

Verbal

Name-calling, spreading rumours or making threats

Cyber

Hurtful behaviours/ bullying that occurs when online technology (e.g. mobile phones, computers or social media) is used as a means to **hurt or upset someone on purpose and repeatedly** (through sharing and/or resurfacing a post)

Multiple forms of bullying could be experienced by the same student at the same time or sequentially.

Some common forms of cyber bullying include flaming, harassment, cyber stalking, denigration, impersonation, exclusion, trickery and doxxing.

How can I guide my child to be kind and respectful online?

Ask your child if what they are about to post or share online is... **Truthful, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, and Kind (T.H.I.N.K.)?**



IS IT TRUE?

Is this a fact or just an opinion or feeling?



IS IT HELPFUL?

Does it help you, them, or the situation?



IS IT INSPIRING?

Would it encourage, motivate, and make someone feel better?



IS IT NECESSARY?

Does it really have to be said, or you just want to or feel like saying it?

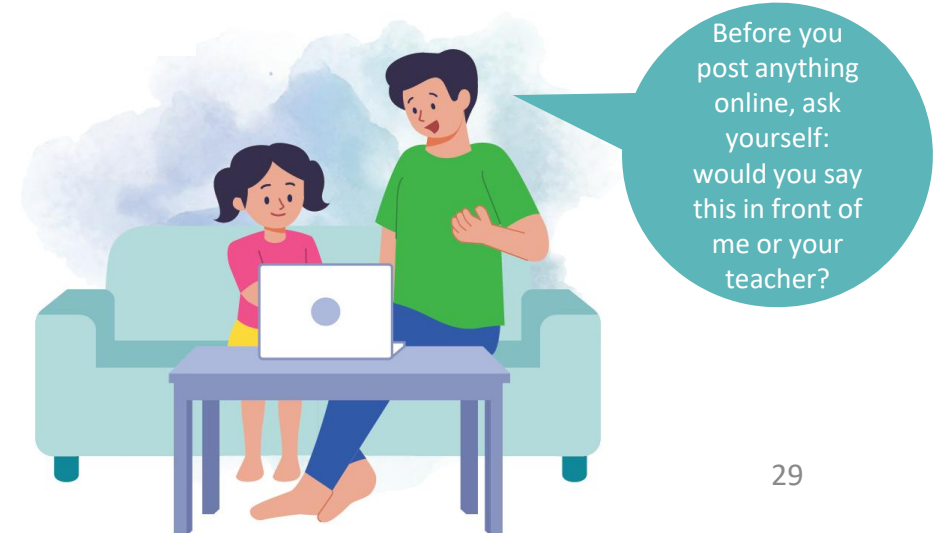


IS IT KIND?

Are you saying this with the intention to hurt someone's feelings?

If the answer to any of the above questions is “No”, they should not post or share the content online, even if it is intended for their private social media account or private group chat.

By guiding your child to make it a habit to T.H.I.N.K. before posting or sharing anything online, your child learns to be kind and avoids hurting others with their online behaviour.

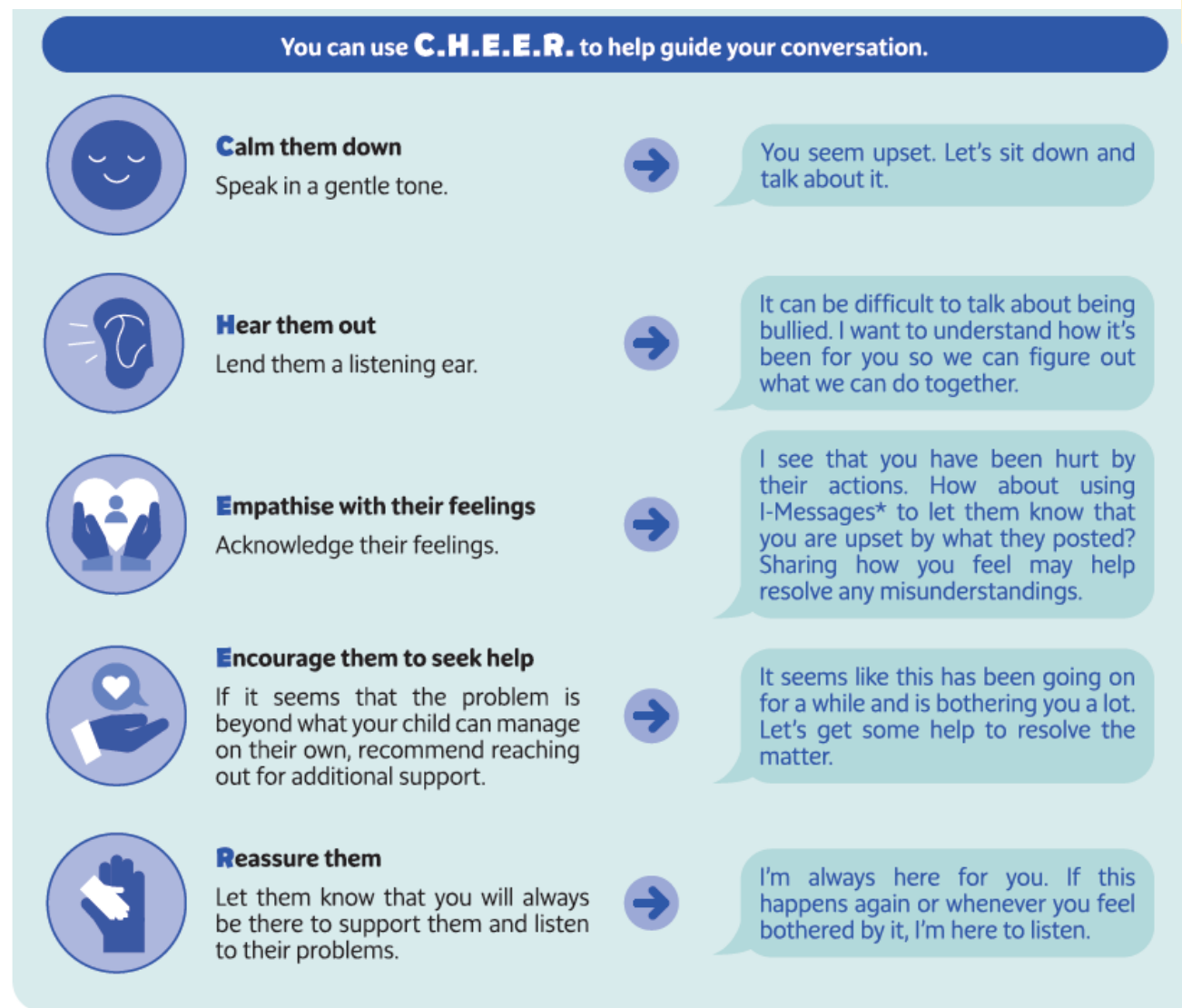


How can I help if my child is a victim?

Have a conversation using **C.H.E.E.R.** as a guide to understand what they are experiencing.



Remain calm to assess the situation and provide emotional support to your child.



**I-messages are used to communicate one's feelings and needs to others clearly and respectfully. For example, "I felt upset when you posted that photo of me making a funny face that made me look silly. I would need you to remove that photo, please."*

How can I help if my child is the bully?

If you suspect that your child is cyberbullying others, remain calm. You can:

- Ask questions to understand what happened.
- Let them know that bullying is unacceptable. **Encourage them to apologise sincerely and make amends to repair relationships.**
- **Monitor their online activities** e.g. their social media posts
- Reach out for extra support from school.



Parents, your child's **behaviour change takes time** and requires consistent effort. You can build their character by **setting clear expectations** about treating others respectfully and **role-modelling** positive behaviours in your interactions.



How can I help to guide my child to be an upstander?

If your child is involved in a cyberbullying incident as a bystander, **help them feel safe and supported**.

Remind your child **not to like, share, record or repost** the online message or media.

Guide your child to take on **upstanding behaviours** by:

- asking your child whether they want you to listen, to help with more ideas about what to do / how to support the victim or to help them to report the incident.
- letting your child know that it is okay if they don't feel safe or confident to stand up to bullying.



If you come to know that the hurtful behaviour continues, please approach the school and continue to support your child.



Additional Resources:

Parenting for Wellness



For more bite-sized, practical tips and strategies on building strong parent-child relationships, supporting your child's mental well-being and parenting in the digital age, scan the QR code above to download a copy of the **Parenting for Wellness Toolbox for Parents**.

You can also access the **Parenting for Wellness website** on Parent Hub (hosted by HPB) for personalised access to the full content!

Scan here to
access the PfW
Toolbox for Parents:



Positive Use Guide on Technology and Social Media

Scan here to access
the Positive Use Guide:



The **Positive Use Guide on Technology and Social Media** draws on research to support families as they navigate the digital landscape together. It offers strategies for balanced screen time, how to build healthier digital habits and provides tools like self-check worksheets and curated resources. Scan the QR code on the left to access the guide on the Digital for Life website.

Positive Use Guide

Evidence-Based Insights on the Impact of Digital Devices
on Child and Adolescent Wellbeing



Compilation of Useful Resources

You can access more digital parenting resources by scanning this QR code or click [here](#)!

These resources focus on:

- Managing Device Use
- Respectful Communication
- Role-modelling healthy habits
- Fostering Real Connections
- Unlocking their First Smartphone or Smartwatch
- Playing Online Games
- Accessing their First Social Media Accounts
- Cyberbullying
- Parenting for Wellness
- Positive Use Guide
- Grow Well SG

#15 Resources on tips and strategies to support your child when they might be a cyberbully are available at the end of the presentation.



<https://go.gov.sg/cwresources-parents>

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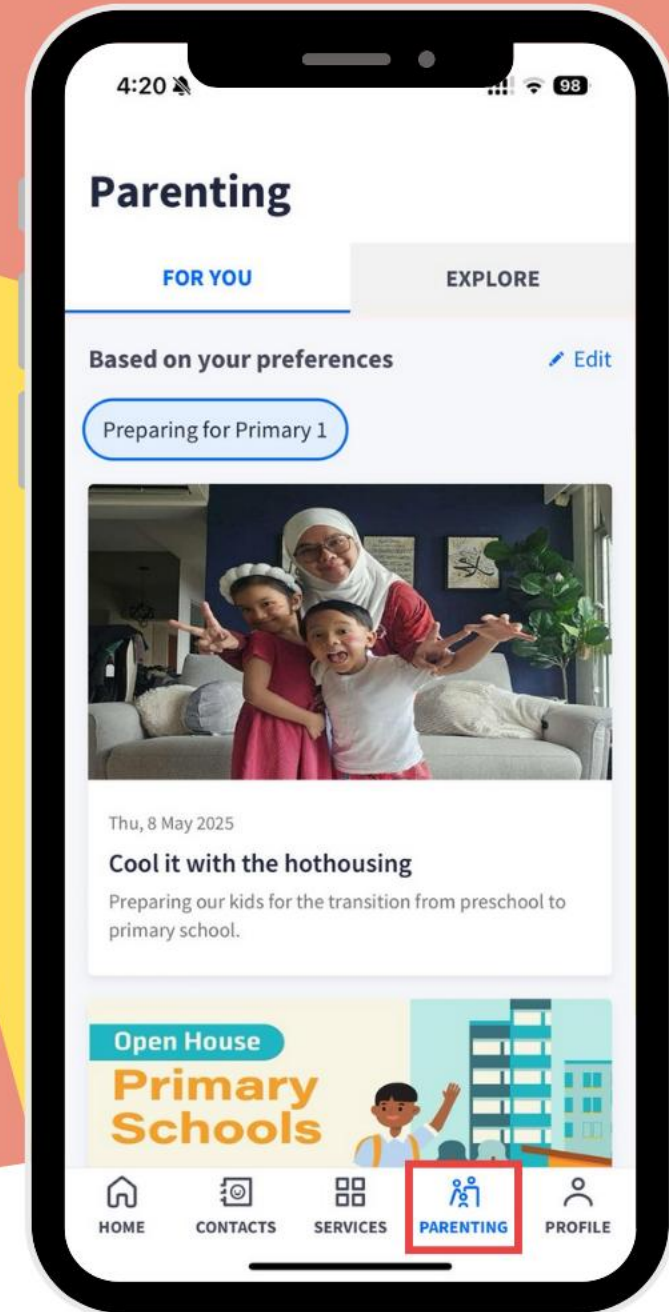




Parenting Resources on Parents Gateway (PG)



Discover rich and customisable parenting resources on topics such as preparing for Primary 1, forging parent-child relationships and education pathways.





Begin your parenting journey with us

@parentingwith.moesg

Follow us on Instagram for bite-sized and actionable parenting tips to tackle the everyday demands of parenting.

