



## ESFA guidance for parents and carers- Responsible use of text, email and Social Networking sites

Whilst the internet brings many benefits and opportunities it also opens up some new risks and challenges. That's why The FA has teamed up with the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre to promote online safety and vigilance.

We would ask that you as a parent/carer to be aware of the following best practice promoted within football:

- Ensure you are aware of how coaches, managers and other members of the Association should communicate with your son/daughter
- Show an interest in the communications between the Association, you and your son or daughter. Open communication about Association activities/issues often mean concerns are picked up early and issues can be resolved easily
- Familiarise yourself with The ESFA/FAs guidance for Associations in relation to websites, text messaging and social networking sites
- Familiarise yourself with the social networking sites your child is using. Did you know children U13 are not supposed to use Facebook? 13-17 year olds are given different 'set up' security features within Facebook so please ensure that they are set up correctly using their real DOB and haven't bypassed this
- If you are not getting copied into Association text messages or emails raise this with the Association and ask that you are added into these communications immediately
- Know who your Association Welfare Officer is and how to contact them if you have any concerns about the content of Association's web pages or in relation to the welfare of your son/daughter
- Ensure you tell your child to tell someone they trust about communications that make them feel uncomfortable or where they've been asked not to tell their parent/carer about the communication
- Remember as a member of an Association you are responsible for and need to abide by Association protocol/policy and ESFA/FA Rules and Regulations regarding comments that you place online about the Association, players, managers and/or match officials
- Look at the guidance offered by the Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP) Centre; they provide guidance for parents/ carers, children and young people. They also provide the most up to date guidance for online environments

- The ESFA/FA Respect Codes of Conduct give guidance on appropriate behaviour which can be related equally to match day, training and online environments <http://www.thefa.com/Leagues/Respect/CodesofConduct>
- Follow the guidance given by the Government's 'Click Clever Click Safe' campaign; **ZIP IT - BLOCK IT - FLAG IT**. This simple 3 point guidance provides an everyday reminder of good behaviour that will help keep young people safe online
- If your son or daughter receives images or messages which are offensive, threatening, or unsuitable please copy and save them elsewhere or print them off before removing or destroying them. They may be needed as evidence by the Association Welfare Officer or other agencies involved in the protection of children and young people online
- If you have serious online concerns for the welfare of your son or daughter report it directly to CEOP using the report button below and speak to the Association Welfare Officer as soon as possible. Look at the guidance offered by CEOP. They provide guidance for parents/carers, children and young people on how to stay safe online. This can be found via: <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents> and <http://www.ceop.net> You may also want to look at the Click Clever Click Safe guidance <http://clickcleverclicksafe.direct.gov.uk/index.html/>

Further ESFA/FA guidance is available on the following areas:

- 1 Social networking, websites, mobile phones, and email communications
- 2 Running a website - Do's and Don'ts
- 3 Responsible use of Social Networking sites
- 4 Communicating responsibly with Young Leaders, Coaches and Referees Under 18
- 5 Using Texts and Emails with U18s – Do's and Don'ts
- 6 Guidance for parents/carers - Responsible use of text, email and social networking sites
- 7 Guidance for U18s using: Association WebPages, Social Networks, Email and Texts

#### Acknowledgements

The ESFA/FA would like to acknowledge that the development of this guidance has been assisted by guidance written by the Amateur Swimming Association, England and Wales Cricket Board, Child Protection in Sport Unit and Child Exploitation Online Protection centre.