## What do I do if something goes wrong?

Although we want the internet to be a fun, supportive and great space for children and young people, we acknowledge that things don't always go the way we want them to. If something goes wrong online it is important that you as a parent or carer have the right tools at hand to help support your child, whatever problem they may be facing.

Signs that something may have gone wrong include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in behaviour
- Changes in time spent online
- Reluctancy to go to school or spend time with friends
- Hiding their devices
- Being less willing to talk

There are some initial steps you can take if you think something has gone wrong for your child online.

## Start a conversation

An open and honest conversation is often the first step in keeping your child safe online, it also plays an important role in supporting them if something has gone wrong.
Talk to your child about what has happened, how they feel about it, and what the next steps are for you to take as a family. Keeping your child in the loop about what you are going to do to resolve the situation can help them to feel in control of it, and can help them to feel like they can come to you with any future problems.

## Be curious, not furious

Remaining calm and asking questions like 'how did you get to that?' or 'what did you click on?' will help you to understand how the content has appeared in the first place. Children will often remember the immediate response from an adult – remaining calm and open will show them that you are someone they can turn to for help.

## Try not to place blame

It may be that your child has clicked on something by mistake or even gone looking for the content on purpose, either way, it is still important to remain calm and be supportive. Children are curious and may hear about things from others that they later search for without realising what they will be exposed to.

## Know where to go to for help

Reporting content on the site where it is hosted is often the best step to take, however, sometimes  as a parent or carer you may need to take additional measures. These may include:
·       Escalating the report – if you feel like action has not been taken by the service or app you

have made a report on, you may wish to escalate the report to [www.reportharmfulcontent.com](www.reportharmfulcontent.com). You can also get advice about reporting the most common types of online harm through this website.

· Talking to your child's school – The designated safeguarding lead may be a good person to talk to about issues your child is facing, even if the situation does not include other children or young people from your child's school. This will allow your child to gain extra support when not at home.

· Talking to your local police force – If what has happened online has lead to harm, or if it includes illegal activity or actions from an adult towards your child, it is important to talk to your local police force for help and support.

## Get further help or support for your child

It's important to make your child aware of the different ways they can receive support if they experience something upsetting online.  In addition to family and school support, children and young people can contact the following helplines for advice:

· Childline – Childline is a confidential service offering support to children under the age of 19 with any issue they are concerned about either online or by phoning 0800 1111.

· The Mix – The Mix offer advice and support for anyone under the age of 25 either online or by phoning 0808 808 4994.

· Papyrus – Papyrus is a charity which seeks to support young people who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts 0800 068 4141.