

Online Safety for Mentors

As a Dojo mentor it is important to ensure that all ninjas are staying safe online. While the internet and other online technologies can open a vast amount of opportunities for young people, there are also risks associated with being online. As Mentors you must be aware of the risks online and proactive in looking out for your ninjas online safety.

The Risks and Dangers Online

→ Cyberbullying

[Cyberbullying](#) is bullying that takes place online either on social networking sites or through online gaming. [Read the NSPCC advice for parents about cyberbullying.](#)

→ Exposure to inappropriate content, inc pornography

Children and young people may see illegal or inappropriate content online, such as:

- pornography
- child abuse images
- dangerous advice encouraging eating disorders, self harm or suicide
- excessive violence or race hate materials.

Some websites can contain illegal materials, others may be legal, but could be meant for adults only. Children may access this inappropriate content accidentally, or intentionally through curiosity. They may also be enticed by promises of special offers or prizes, so it is important to be aware of this when giving them access to the internet.

→ Ignoring age restrictions

Some websites and games use age restrictions and checks to ensure that children don't see unsuitable content. Did you know that children must be at least 13 years or older to register on most social networking websites. The age limit is an important safety measure there for a reason and you should not be pressured into letting your child join these websites.

→ Young people 'friending' or communicating with people they don't know

Young people may chat or become 'friends' with people they don't know or have never met via social networks or online games. The percentage of online friends that children did not know outside of being online was:

- [12% for 8 - 11 years olds in 2012](#)
- [25% for 12 - 15 year olds in 2013](#)

→ Making online friends

This [video by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection \(CEOP\) Centre](#) describes what an online 'friend' is and how children are using social networking to communicate. [Privacy controls](#) can limit who can see your details, although making 'friends' will give someone access to your information which is problematic when anyone friends someone they only know from their online profile.

→ Further Online safety Resources

The NSPCC has a detailed online resource which provides further valuable information on keeping children safe online – available at the following link: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>