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Riverside FC Parents/Carers Guide to Helping their Children Stay Safe Online

Riverside FC recognises the need to keep our children safe whilst using the internet, social networking sites and mobile phones. With that in mind, the club would like to offer the following guidelines to parents to ensure their children stay safe whilst using online facilities.

Millions of children across the UK have access to the internet. It is now a normal part of life, and in some cases, it is central to how they stay in touch with their friends and family. However the internet is also a public place and while bringing many benefits and opportunities, also opens up new risks and challenges.

Football uses the internet to communicate to coaches, referees, medics, welfare officers, players, parents, fans, scouts and agents. We all need to understand how to make use of this technology appropriately to ensure our children stay safe.

- Children need to understand the risks they may face in an environment they may otherwise think of as being completely safe
 - Parents, Club Welfare Officers, Coaches, Referees and Medics need to understand how this technology can impact on their roles
1. Know what your children are doing online and who they are talking to. Ask them to teach you to use any applications you have never used, such as a social networking site or online chat rooms
 2. Help your children to understand that they should never give out personal details to online friends - personal information includes their instant messenger id, email address, mobile phone number and any pictures of themselves, their family or friends -if your child publishes a picture or video online – anyone can change it or share it and it may be online forever
 3. If your child receives SPAM/ junk email and texts remind them never to believe them, reply to them or use them
 4. It's not a good idea for your child to open files that are from people they don't know. They won't know what they contain – it could be a virus or worse. Help your child to understand that some people may not tell the truth online and therefore internet friends should remain online. They should never meet up with any strangers in the real world without an adult they trust being present.

5. Always make sure your child feels comfortable in being able to come to you or someone they trust if they are worried about anything online. Teach young people how to block someone online and report them if they feel uncomfortable. Reports can be made directly to the Club Welfare Officer if the incident is football related, or directly to the police.

Once you have placed something on the internet it is in the public domain – that means anyone can access it, change it and share it with others.

Your Club Welfare Officer is Julie King, contact 0115 9736261.