The Facts

- E-safety will never be "done".

- **Your child's school(s) can contact the East Sussex e-safety team and arrange a wide variety of input for parents from discussions to workshops. All you have to do is engage with the school.**

- Having an external consultant visit your school can be the best way forward on many levels. Messages can be put across firmly, yet sympathetically without harming working relationships.

- **East Sussex County Council have a qualified e-safety consultant who is CEOP trained, and who leads on e-safety for the Local Safeguarding Children Board.**

- We need to establish a dialogue and keep it going. Questions, answers, working together and working across the community is the best way to make E-Sussex e-safe.

- **There are no "no-go" areas in e-safety. That is what the abusers want. We can and will address any area of e-safety, no matter how uncomfortable it may appear to be.**

Behind Closed Doors?

A guide for parents and carers.

East Sussex
County Council

What do you mean, "Behind closed doors?"
There can be many closed doors these days, and the doors closed by passwords on the internet are some of the more difficult to penetrate.

Do all children hide like this?
As part of good practice, we teach children to take care of their online identities and this includes password-protecting their online accounts. As children grow, they want more privacy, and this has now extended to the online world as well as the physical world.

Frankly, I think I am better off NOT knowing!
But then again, your duty of care for your child, and their duty of care towards you means that you do need to understand what they are doing online. After all, it is YOUR internet connection they are using, and you love them, of course. You would not want to see them exploited or harmed by their online activities. Sometimes, children and your people do not realise, or even accept that there can be harm in what they are doing online….until it is too late. This is not about knowing what to do when the chips are down, it is more about making sure the chips stay up!

So? What's the way in?
Your child will have had e-safety lessons at school. The school will definitely have an **Acceptable Use Policy** and it is this that can be a really good way in. You need an acceptable use agreement in the home too. You need to agree things that are and are

not ok to do online, and what "monitoring" will look like.

"Monitoring?" Isn't that an invasion of privacy?
No. Your child's internet use is already monitored at school, and will be monitored in college and eventually, in the workplace too. In fact just about the only place that their internet use isn't monitored is likely to be at home. It is perfectly acceptable to monitor your child's access to the internet. It is, after all, not a right, it is a privilege. You are paying for the internet connection, (including the mobile phone) and you are responsible for the traffic that occurs on it.

Does monitoring equate to spying?
Not at all! Monitoring can be by agreement. Saying you will look at the internet history folder from time to time, is not unreasonable.

But what if I find things there I don't like?
Remember that before the internet ever existed, many people used to look up rude words in the dictionary. This behaviour hasn't changed, but its vehicle has. Now, they use Google! Children, more than ever now, are inquisitive and highly comfortable in the online world. It is to them as the school playground or the walk to or from school was to us of an older generation. We knew our way around our world, and they do to. Their world, however, is growing minute by minute. Another good reason for monitoring. And if there are things there that make you uncomfortable you have a right to ask about them. It is, after all, better that you know than you don't know. Most children, however, do not use the internet for

purposes that their parents would not like. (Well, not too often anyway!)

Talk Talk Talk
Never forget that those who would abuse others on the internet absolutely hate us talking about e-safety. They rely on the fact that their activities are either too embarrassing, to scary, or to uncomfortable to talk about. So the more we do talk about them and bring them into the light of day, the better. All parents and carers have to be pretty good actors at one time or another! So, no matter how it makes you feel inside, when we have e-safety items on the news, even the more horrid ones, talk about them. Questions like "Why did that young person get abused?" "What happened that they got into that position?" are important as it will help your youngster to understand that in most cases, the youngster concerned went against the advice they have received.

But it's changing daily isn't it?
The pace of change in IT is fast and it will never slow down. With each new gadget or programme comes a raft of potential abuses. Some are unimportant, but others can be devastating. Another good reason why we have to talk and keep talking. Never assume that e-safety is ever a tick-in-the-box "done" item. It isn't.

Where do I get advice.
Your school has access to the East Sussex E-safety team and they can put on regular events for you as parents. All you need to do it get the ball rolling. Some schools now have an e-safety committee to drive this forward.