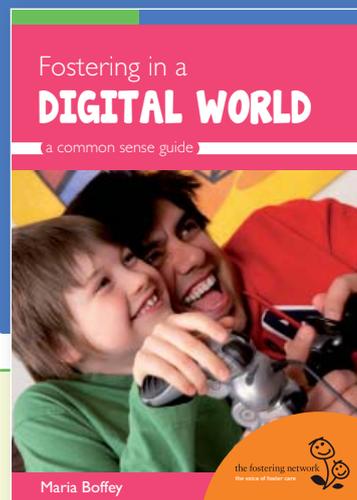# TOP TIPS
for fostering in a digital world

Fostering in a Digital World: a common sense guide focuses in detail on one particular aspect of safer caring: how to keep fostered children and young people as safe as possible in an increasingly digital world. Technologies and online services are developing at an ever-increasing pace, and this raises many questions for fostering:

- How can foster carers be empowered to take appropriate decisions about online contact, interacting on Facebook or Twitter, or taking part in online gaming?
- How can we enable fostered children and young people to take some risks as part of learning and growing up in a digital world?
- Where do fostering services and birth parents stand in all this?

Fostering in a
DIGITAL WORLD
(a common sense guide)

Maria Boffey

To get you started, we'd like to share these 5 TOP TIPS for fostering in a digital world

1 Regularly **chat together about the kind of websites that your fostered child or young person visits**. Know how to set safety features on internet services and digital devices that they use (this includes computers, mobile phones and games consoles).

2 Enable the **parental controls** on all the wireless-enabled devices at home. Parental controls are a good way to stop the majority of inappropriate and harmful content coming into your home.

3 Advise your fostered child or young person to set their **social network profile settings** to private, so that only their friends can see who they are, their pictures and their updates.

4 Discuss with your fostered child or young person **what happens when images are shared online** – there is no control over where they go. Just because a photo is deleted on their mobile phone or social networking site, doesn't mean that it isn't stored elsewhere on the internet.

5 Reinforce the message that **online relationships are no different from real-world relationships**, so fostered children and young people should treat people online with the same respect as they would face-to-face: 'if you wouldn't say it, don't send it'.

To find out more about keeping fostered children safe online, order your copy of *Fostering in a Digital World: a common sense guide* today:

www.fosteringresources.co.uk

the fostering network
the voice of foster care

More about the guide

Fostering in a Digital World: a common sense guide is a comprehensive, practical guide providing foster carers and other professionals with essential information and tools to enable fostered children to benefit from using laptops, gaming consoles, tablets and mobile phones, while managing risk sensibly and effectively.

The guide includes clear, relevant advice on:

- the growth of digital technologies and online safety, including social networking, for fostered children

- understanding the managing the risks, including grooming, cyber-bullying, gaming and sexting

- what foster carers and other professionals need to be aware of as the digital world evolves.

The guide also includes *What You Can Do* checklists, interactive online templates, signposts to other useful resources and a handy jargon buster.

Fostering in a Digital World has been written primarily for foster carers, but will also be of interest to a wide range of people who work with looked-after children and young people. It is crucial reading for children's social workers, supervising social workers and all those working in fostering services, as well as staff of children's homes. It will also be useful to anyone who is becoming a special guardian or adopter.