

Who knows what about me?

A Children's Commissioner report into the collection and sharing of children's data

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Ten top tips for children and parents

While much more needs to be done by Government and industry, our message to children and parents is that they are not powerless in this situation. There are steps they can take, now, which will significantly reduce a child's data footprint – some of which are very simple. CCO has brought the key steps together below.

For children

1. Stop and think when you're about to share some personal information. Ask yourself, "Do I need to share this"? If you can't do what you want (e.g. play a game) without giving away this information, ask yourself, "Is it worth it?" – sometimes it is, but lots of times it isn't.
2. Read our Digital 5 A Day guide if you spend lots of time online and on social media, to help you think about other ways you can spend your time: connect, be active, get creative, give to others and be mindful.
3. Look through terms and conditions to understand what data is collected when you use social media, websites and gadgets. We've simplified some here.
4. Mute smart speakers when you don't want them to listen to you.
5. Talk to an adult you trust if you are worried about someone else knowing something about you, or if you want to learn more about your data rights.

For parents/carers

1. Don't post photos and videos which reveal personal information about your children online. Sometimes it isn't obvious – for example, tagging a child at home on their birthday gives away their date of birth and home address.
2. Change the default passwords on all the gadgets your children use – whether it's a smart speaker, internet-connected toy or location-tracking watch. Don't forget the router!
3. Make sure the gadgets you buy your children are genuine. Counterfeit versions can be less secure than the originals.
4. Watch out for security updates and install them as soon as you are prompted.
5. Talk to organisations that hold information about your child about what information they collect and why, including schools, online services and retail loyalty schemes. Raise any concerns you have.