ONLINE SAFETY NEWSLETTER.

TEEN SLANG, EMOJIS, & HASHTAGS

With constant access to social media and messaging apps, teens often use slang, acronyms, and emojis to communicate in ways that aren't always clear to adults. These meanings can change quickly—and vary by school or location—making it hard to keep up. SmartSocial.com offers an updated guide to help parents and educators stay informed about trending terms, hidden emoji meanings, and risky hashtags, supporting safer, more open conversations with young people.

430+ Teen Slang, Emojis, & Hashtags Parents Need to Know

KEY INSIGHTS FROM OFCOM'S LATEST REPORT ON CHILDREN'S ONLINE LIVES

Ofcom's latest annual report offers a valuable overview of how children and young people are using digital technology, highlighting current and emerging trends. **Notable findings include:**

● A continued rise in social media use among 3–5-year-olds, with four in ten now using these platforms—some independently, according to parents.
● Increased awareness among young people of how algorithms and recommendation systems shape their online experience.
● Half of 8–17-year-olds now using AI tools, reinforcing the need for education on safe and responsible use, along with increased staff awareness.

Children's Media Literacy Report 2025

CHILDLINE - BEHIND THE SCREEN

Sexual extortion (blackmail) is a growing concern. *Behind the Screen* is a free campaign and information pack from Childline, offering guidance for staff, parents, and young people on its impact, language, and support strategies.

Some important areas covered in the guide include:
- How to Spot the Signs
- Common Language & Tactics

- Impact on Young People.
- How to Support Young People
- Where to Get Help

Childline reach: behind the screen

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NEW GUIDANCE: BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING IMAGES AND VIDEOS ON SCHOOL WEBSITES

The UK Safer Internet Centre, in collaboration with the Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH) and the UKCIS Early Warning Working Group, has released guidance to help educational institutions protect students and staff from potential misuse of digital media.

New Guidance: Best Practices for Managing Images and Videos on School Websites - UK Safer Internet Centre

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CHILDREN'S WELLBEING IN A DIGITAL WORLD 2025

This report from Internet Matters provides key insights into the impact of digital technology on children's wellbeing. It explores both the benefits and challenges of growing up in a connected world, highlighting areas such as mental health, online relationships, screen time, and digital resilience. A useful point of reference for school staff, the report offers evidence-based findings and practical recommendations to help support children in navigating the online world safely and positively.

Children's Wellbeing in a Digital World - Index Report 2025 - Internet Matters

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The information in the newsletter is given to help promote the safety of children and young people online.

Every care has been taken to ensure the information and any recommendations in the newsletter are accurate at the time of publishing. Schools must make their own judgements when sharing our recommendations with parents and carers and, where appropriate, always risk assess with their pupils and whole school community in mind.

This newsletter is brought to you by the HFL Education Wellbeing team as part of their online safety support for schools and settings in Hertfordshire. Contact the team at **wellbeing@hfleducation.org** or call 01438 544464.

HFL Education is a leading national provider of school improvement and business support services, training, and resources, which enable schools, educational settings and multi-academy trusts to deliver a great education.

We support those we work with to achieve successful long-term outcomes for their children.

We believe that every young person, through access to a great education, should be able to realise their potential, regardless of where they live, their background or circumstances.

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