

Safe Device Guide

Smartphones, Smartwatches & Brick Phones

An East Dunbartonshire Council Guide for Parents & Young People

About This Guide

This interactive document supports families in making informed decisions about mobile and digital device use. It highlights safer options, digital safety strategies, and professional support networks.

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1 Key Digital Safety Tips

Establishing healthy boundaries early is the most effective way to protect young people online.

- ✓ **Screen Time Limits:** Set clear boundaries and avoid device use during school hours, bed-time, and family meals.
- ✓ **Supervision:** Supervise younger children closely and apply age-appropriate parental controls before handing over a device.
- ✓ **Family Spaces:** Keep devices in shared family spaces overnight to prevent unsupervised late-night browsing.
- ✓ **Open Dialogue:** Talk regularly about online privacy, content risks, cyberbullying, and the "think before you post" rule.

2 Brick Phones vs. Smart Devices

2.1 Why Choose a 'Brick' Phone?

Basic or "feature" phones allow calling and texting only, offering a much safer entry point for children.

Benefits of Basic Phones

- **No Apps or Browsing:** Zero exposure to social media algorithms or inappropriate web content.
- **Reduced Pressure:** Removes the digital peer pressure associated with smart apps.
- **Focus:** Dramatically reduces classroom and homework distractions.
- **Durability:** More affordable, longer battery life, and harder to break.

2.2 Smart Devices

If choosing a smartphone or smartwatch, active management is essential. Ensure you utilize built-in **Digital Wellbeing** tools to monitor usage.

3 Interactive Device Controls

Click the links below to access official step-by-step setup tutorials.

Apple (iOS)

- [Apple Screen Time Settings](#)
- [Apple Watch Setup for Children](#)

Android / Google

- [Google Family Link App](#)
- **On Device:** Go to *Settings > Digital Wellbeing* to set app timers and focus modes.

4 Legal & Safeguarding Responsibilities

4.1 Young Person's Legal Responsibility (12+)

In Scotland, children aged 12 and over may be held legally responsible for digital actions, including sharing explicit or harmful content.

- **Communications Act 2003:** Covers offensive and harmful electronic communications.
- **Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009:** Covers the sharing of indecent images.
- **Abusive Behaviour Act 2016:** Covers the sharing of private/intimate images without consent.

4.2 Parental Responsibility

Under the **GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child)** framework, parents are expected to monitor use and apply controls. Serious concerns should be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Safeguarding Note

Police, schools, and social work services may intervene under child protection protocols if risks are identified. Consequences can include school sanctions or being placed on the Child Protection Register.

5 Digital Learning & Support

5.1 Glow - Scotland's Learning Platform

Glow provides secure access to Microsoft Office 365 and Google Workspace for Education.

- [Login to Glow RM Unify](#)
- [Glow Connect Support](#)
- [Parentzone Scotland](#)

5.2 Online Safety Helplines

- **Emergency Services:** 999
- **Police Scotland (Non-emergency):** 101
- **Childline:** 0800 1111 (childline.org.uk)
- **ParentLine Scotland:** 0800 028 2233
- **NSPCC Online Safety:** nspcc.org.uk
- **Internet Matters:** internetmatters.org