A parent and carer's guide to sharing information and images online

Many parents and carers like to share information about their children and families online. It is an easy way to record important milestones and keep long-distance friends and relatives up to date.

The media has termed this 'sharenting', and according to Ofcom, 42% of parents and carers do share images of their children with half of these sharing images at least once a month.

Sharing too much personal information including photos, videos and images online can compromise your children's right to privacy. It is important to take care about what you share and with whom.

This article will use the term 'oversharing' to outline the effect on a family's digital footprint and provides tips on what to consider before posting information and images online.

What are the issues with oversharing?

By sharing too much information, parents and carers can compromise their children's privacy and inadvertently provide advertisers and data collectors with private information. North Wales Police warn parents and carers to keep personal information safe and there are simple steps you can take to avoid oversharing and preserve your children's digital records.

These are:

- **avoid tagging.** Tagging is a way of identifying your child or others in a social media post, as this Facebook article explains. Not tagging your children can help to protect their identity online
- **turn off location sharing.** Most social media sites offer the ability to share your location – and some parents and carers may have this enabled without realising it. To avoid revealing where you and your family are at any given time, you can simply turn off location sharing. The Help Centres of the social media sites you use will explain how to turn off location sharing, like this Instagram article for example
- **think carefully before posting.** Once an image is posted, you have no control over how that image is shared, viewed or re-posted. That means other people can copy the image, tag it or use it – which is why it is important to take great care over what images you post.

Safeguard your family's digital footprint

Before sharing information online, think about the impact it will have on your family's digital footprint. Your digital life is both public and permanent. Everything you and your children do online creates digital footprints that leave a lasting online trail.

Steps to take before sharing information and images online

- Would I talk about this information, image or video at work?
- Given what I know about my children, will they be embarrassed if they knew I posted this?
- Would I be okay if someone stole this image, video or information?
- Does this image create a positive online identity for my child?
- If I saw this image, video or information of my child on a public notice board, would I be okay with that?
- Do I need to share the location of this image?

To stay up to date on online safety news please visit the **Online Safety Zone** on Hwb. You will also find a section containing all the parent and carer resources in one place.