

## Staying safe on-line

There are always those who will seek to take advantage of people when they are on-line. Some will deliberately target older or more vulnerable people. However, there is no reason to be fearful of the internet if it is used safely and securely. These simple rules may help:

### Spam

'Spam' is junk, unsolicited emails promoting products such as loan consolidation offers, 'miracle' drugs, sexually-explicit products and websites. These are usually scams and as a general rule **should always be avoided and ignored**.

### Email scams

Some spam emails ask for personal information, such as bank details. This is called 'phishing' where someone will claim to be from your bank. The advice from banks and building societies is that they will never ask the customer to provide information in this way. **Be careful when giving information online.**

Some scams include offers of discounts, free gifts, prizes, holidays, or claim 'You're a winner!'

Adults at risk can report fraud including online or internet crimes using the Action Fraud Reporting tool or phone **0300 123 2040**

- Some emails may contain a link or file attached which may be harmful to your computer. If you see a suspicious email, don't reply with your details or open any links or documents, **just delete the email straight away.**
- If the email claims to be from an organisation from which you currently receive services, **phone them directly using the number found on their official website.**
- Be cautious when entering your personal/financial details on websites. **Don't risk having your details stolen.**

### Relationship scams

- Scammers can use social networks such as dating websites or chat rooms.
- Once they've gained your trust, they'll start asking you for money often telling you an emotional or hard luck story.
- Trust your instinct.
- If something feels wrong, it probably is.
- These tricks are hard to spot so talking to a friend / relative can help.
- Never send the person money or give them your account details.
- Be careful if the person starts moving away from the chat room or dating site to communicating by email or text message.
- If you arrange to meet, make sure it's in a public place, tell someone where you're going and don't give away information too quickly.

### Health scams

False claims about health products, such as miracle cures and fake online pharmacies, can result in poor quality medicines which may be harmful to your health. Check if an online pharmacy website is legitimate by going to the [General Pharmaceutical Council](#) website.

Please find below the links to the Safeguarding Board websites for children and adults:

<http://www.sewsc.org.uk>

<http://www.gwasb.org.uk>

### **Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying/trolling is any form of bullying which takes place usually using emails, text messages or social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter. **'Stop, block and tell!'** Don't answer back (as this will only feed the abuse), block the person or message, and tell someone you trust.

Please find below the links to the Safeguarding Board websites for children and adults:

<http://www.sewsc.org.uk>

<http://www.gwasb.org.uk>