In the current situation, the majority of us are going to be accessing online services from home more than usual, so here are some tips around a question I get asked a lot. Hope they help.

What can I do to support my child?

There are lots of things you can do to support your young child. This is not a complete list, but a range of strategies you can use to improve your child's online experience:

1. **Explore together**: Explore your child's favourite apps and websites with them. This can be a fantastic way to find out what your child enjoys doing online, as well as having fun and learning together.

2. **Talk to your child about their online experiences**: Start and continue regular conversations with your child about what they enjoy doing online, introducing online safety messages. These conversations can be a great way to reinforce the message that if your child sees anything online which makes them feel worried, they can tell you or another adult they trust.

3. **Supervise your young child while they're online**: Keep the devices your child uses in communal areas of the house such as in the living room or kitchen where an adult can supervise. Children under 5 should not access the internet unsupervised in private spaces, such as alone in their bedroom or bathroom.

4. **Parental controls**: Make use of the parental controls available on your home broadband and any internet enabled device in your home. You can find out more about how to use parental controls by visiting your broadband provider's website, or by viewing advice/step-by-step guides available on the internet matters site.

5. **SafeSearch**: The use of 'SafeSearch' is recommended for use with young children. Most web search engines will have a 'SafeSearch' function, which allows you to limit the material your child can see when they're online. Look out for the 'Settings' button on your web browser homepage, which is often shaped like a small cog. It is important to understand that no 'SafeSearch' function is 100% effective, and this cannot be used alone to protect your child from being exposed to age inappropriate material.

6. **Set boundaries**: As a family you can agree a set of rules, such as locations in the house where devices can be used, times of day your child can use devices, or which age appropriate apps or websites they can access.

7. **Lead by example**: Modelling the digital habits you expect from your child (for example, no tablets during meal-times) can be an effective way of supporting young children to develop their own positive digital behaviours from an early age.

Please remember to visit our online safety page on our school website as there are lots of links to good websites that may help or answer a question you may have.

Keep well and safe, Kirsty McIntosh, Computing Learning Dimension Leader