What have we achieved over the last year?

UK Safer Internet Centre Public Report
1 January 2021 - 31 Dec 2021

UK Safer Internet Centre

Executive Summary

The UKSIC is a partnership of three leading organisations: Childnet International, Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL). **Our mission is to make the internet a better and safer place for all**.

This report looks at our key achievements over the past year covering three key areas of our work:

1 Our **Awareness Centre** – how we educate and raise awareness for children, young people, parents and professionals about online safety.

2 Our **Hotline** - our work to take down or minimise the availability of child sexual abuse images and videos online, hosted anywhere in the world.

3 Our **Helpline** - how we help professionals working with children and young people with any online safety issues they may face themselves or with the children in their care. Giving individuals a platform to report harmful content online.

Our Work in numbers
January 2021 - December 2021

Despite all the difficulties caused by the pandemic we sent out

61,829
printed resources

Our **Safer Internet Day campaign 2021** reached

51%
of young people aged **8-17** and

38% of **parents and carers** in the UK

Our **Professional Online Safety Helpline** dealt with

3,841
emails and calls

An increase of 180% from 2020!

to resolve
1,754
cases where professionals had contacted them with an online safety concern

*Data: 1 Jan 2021 - 31 Dec 2021

Delivered **158 training sessions** which reached

6,934
children, professionals and **parents**

Over
2.4 million
views of the **Safer Internet Day** films

REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

Over **3,200** clicks from reporting buttons on websites across the UK since October 2021

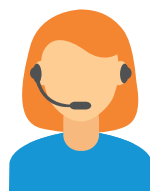**361,062**
Reports

Our **Hotline** which helps victims of child sexual abuse worldwide by identifying and removing online images and videos of their abuse **assessed 361,062 reports** and worked to have **criminal child abuse content removed from 252,189 URLs**

Childnet Digital Leaders

2,760
children and young people took active part in 53 Digital Leaders youth panel activities

More about our highlights from 2021

1 Awareness raising and education highlights

Safer Internet Day 2021

SAFER INTERNET DAY is an annual global campaign celebrated in over 170 countries. The UK Safer Internet Centre coordinates the campaign in the UK, and each February hundreds of organisations right across the UK get involved to help inspire the safe and positive use of technology.

Covid-19 once again had a significant impact on Safer Internet Day. The UK went into a lockdown at the beginning of January 2021, and most children were not in school for the period from January to March. This meant we needed to adapt and provide a different style of Safer Internet Day, and the results showed that this 'digital-first' approach was highly effective. Virtual assemblies for home-schooled children proved extremely popular, while our live online event for stakeholders had excellent viewing figures and allowed young people to be involved from their homes. Many lessons learnt from these adaptations have been incorporated into the planning of future Safer Internet Days.

Safer Internet Day 2021 celebrated the amazing range of information and opportunities online, and its potential to inform, connect and inspire us, whilst also looking at how young people can separate fact from fiction.

The campaign focused on how we can know what to trust online, supporting young people to question, challenge and change the online world. It explored how influence, persuasion and manipulation can impact young people's decisions, opinions and what they share online.

Safer Internet Day 2021 highlights:

- The campaign reached 51% of young people aged 8-17 and 38% of parents and carers
- Over 1.5 million downloads of our education packs
- Over 2.4 million views of the Safer Internet Day films
- 2,137 organisations supported the day including schools, businesses, police forces, charities and government departments
- The #SaferInternetDay hashtag trended at no.1 throughout the day
- Over 112,000 young people tested their knowledge with our online quiz
- Media reach of 126 million people, across outlets including the BBC, ITV News and Sky News Radio

Champions have engaged in a range of fantastic initiatives, such as writing blogs, consulting with industry, and taking part in media activities and sitting on the youth panel for the livestreamed Safer Internet Day event. Young people from schools around the country also took part in sharing their thoughts on the theme for films that were broadcast as part of the event.

Digital Champions sat on a roundtable with MPs in November, sharing their views on internet safety topics such as data and privacy, respect online (particularly racism in football) and misinformation.

Childnet Film Competition 2021

The 2021 Film Competition ran from February to June 2021, with the winners announced in an online Big Reveal premiere on July 1st. This year's theme was 'Separating fact from fiction. Finding trustworthy information online'.

The 2021 competition had a Primary category for 7-11 year olds, a Secondary category for 11-18 year-olds and a Storyboard category. There were 90 entries across the three categories with entries from a variety of educational settings across the UK.

Entries were judged by Lisa Prime, Children's Events Programmer at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA); Catherine McAllister, Head of Safeguarding and Child Protection, BBC Children's; David Austin OBE, Chief Executive at the BBFC; Mark Reid, Head of the Education department at the British Film Institute (BFI); Jim Filippatos, VP Global Public Policy at Disney; and Stan McCoy, President and Managing Director at the Motion Picture Association (MPA).
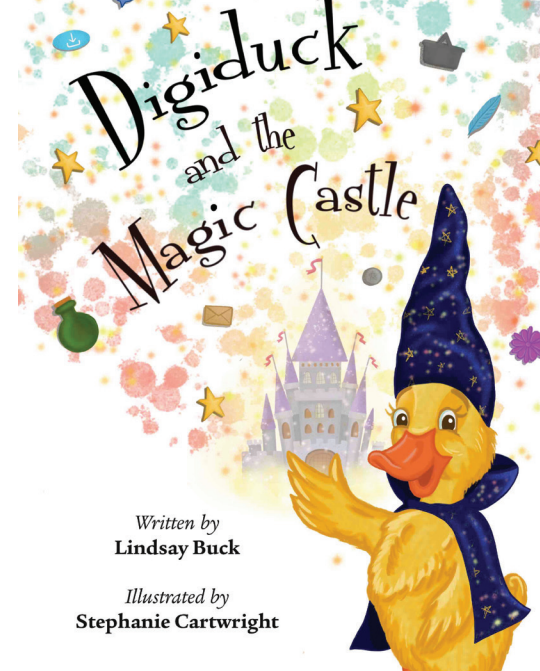
The campaign had a hugely positive impact. 82% of young people who heard about the day said they felt more confident about what to do if they were worried about something online, while 85% said they know what to do if they or someone else sees misleading or unreliable content online. 63% had a conversation with a parent or carer about online safety, while 26% said they spoke to someone about something that had been worrying them online.

70% of parents and carers who heard about the day talked to their child about using the internet safely. 61% say they have a better understanding of how to identify misleading or unreliable online content, and 70% felt more confident about what to do if their child came to them with a problem they had online.

New UK Safer Internet Centre Website

In November, we launched our new UK Safer Internet Centre website, improving and making our information, resources and guides more accessible. Our website now includes new sections for online issues as well as new pages for Safer Internet Day, our helplines and other guides and resources.

Youth Participation - Childnet Digital Leaders Programme

This innovative peer-to-peer programme empowers young people to champion and promote the safe and positive use of technology in their school. The programme has now trained more than 10,000 young people as Digital Leaders during its lifetime.

Regular youth participation activities were organised throughout 2021. The programme's Digital

UK

CHILDNET FILM COMPETITION 2021

New **knowledge map features**

sign up for free

projectevolve.co.uk

Digiduck
and the
Magic Castle

Written by
Lindsay Buck

Illustrated by
Stephanie Cartwright

360 Degree Safe Self-review Tool

14,000 schools across the UK continue to use our free 360 self-review tool which reviews and allows schools to assess their online safety policy and practice. There is a 360 safe Scotland as well as 360 safe Cymru version available for schools in Wales. There is also 360 Early Years as well as 360 Groups for more specific settings.

The data from the 360 tool enables us to see the national picture of online safety in schools, specifically where the strengths are as well as the areas where schools need more support.

ProjectEvolve - Knowledge Map Feature

ProjectEvolve is based on the digital literacy framework by the UK Council for Internet Safety's (UKCIS) Education for a Connected World.

ProjectEVOLVE resources each of the 330 statements from the Framework with perspectives; research; activities; outcomes; supporting resources and professional development materials. This year, the innovative new Knowledge Map feature was launched allowing professionals to open active discussion in the classroom around their students' digital lives and assess where gaps in their understanding are using the analytics tool.

Data has shown that over 10% of UK schools have signed up to the toolkit.

Digiduck

We have written and illustrated the fourth and fifth instalments of Digiduck's adventures. Digiduck and the Magic Castle focuses on playing games online. Other themes within the book include peer pressure, password sharing and in-app purchasing. The fifth story, Digiduck Saves the Day, focuses on positive uses of the internet to help others.

Responding to Digital Ghost Stories - A Guide for Professionals

The Professionals Online Safety Helpline released an informative video around how professionals should respond to harmful online challenges, viral hoaxes and digital ghost stories. Included is information and guidance on best practices around de-escalating incidents and how to respond effectively.

Social Media Checklists

We added to our most popular printed resources with an updated TikTok checklist that includes the latest information on TikTok's privacy and security settings. Available to purchase or download online.

Test Filtering

Test Filtering continues to be used as a tool to ensure that harmful online content is blocked from a school's internet connection. The simple facility allows schools to test if their internet connection filters child sexual abuse content and terrorist content.

Online Safety Training

The UK Safer Internet Centre offers bespoke online safety training to schools and organisations. We deliver this training face-to-face as well as remotely and can tailor the training to specific needs. During this one year period, we delivered 158 sessions to nearly 7,000 professionals, children and parents/carers.

Online Safety Live

Online Safety Live is the biggest outreach programme focusing on online safety in the UK. We deliver 1.5-hour long briefings full of the latest online safety news, updates, trends, emerging technologies, legislation, research, resources and support aimed at any professional working with children and young people. During 2021 we ran 23 virtual events attended by nearly 2,000 teachers, police officers, social workers, health workers, youth workers and so on.

New Childnet Website

In order to meet the needs of key child, parent and teacher audiences, the Childnet website has been redeveloped. This new platform provides clearer navigation thanks to a site structure with a clear hierarchy and better accessibility to users. It also incorporates a new dedicated 'Help & Advice' section, enabling key audiences to reach the Childnet website via topic-based searches and find the support and guidance they need.

Moving on up

A new resource called 'Moving on up!' has been created specifically to support young people aged 10-13 when moving from primary to secondary education, which in the UK usually happens at the age of 11. The resource comprises five videos, covering issues from dilemmas with friend requests to feeling pressured to fit in. The resource has lesson plans and slides for both primary and secondary, as well as a guide for educators. It also has a checklist and an online leaflet for parents and carers.
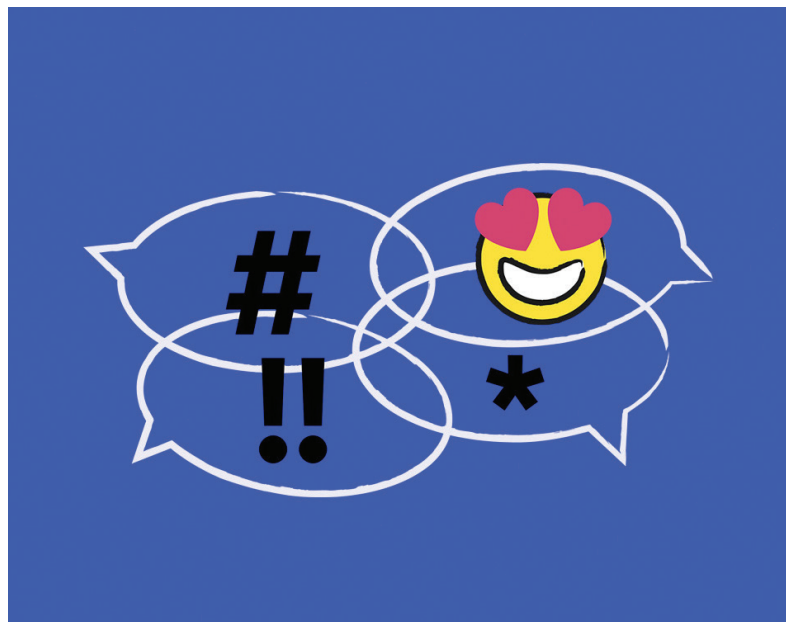
2 Hotline highlights

Reports Received

Our Hotline continues its core work of assessing and removing online child sexual abuse material. We've processed 361,062 reports from 1 January - 31 December 2021. Reports come to us from the public, police, tech companies, and we also proactively search for child sexual abuse images and videos online.

Content Removed

Not all of the reports sent to us fall within our remit, which is why we always perform a detailed assessment against UK law. Throughout 2021, child sexual abuse content found on 252,189 webpages has been removed. Each webpage could show one, to many hundreds or thousands of criminal images.

Reporting Portals

Since 1 January 2021 we've launched six reporting portals (Kenya, Guatemala, Morocco, Tunisia, Argentina, and the joint IWF-ICMEC portal), bringing our total to 49 across four continents, providing 2.6 billion people with a reporting mechanism for child sexual abuse imagery.

Self-generated Content Trend

In 2021, 72% of all the child sexual abuse reports we took action on included self-generated child sexual abuse imagery - a rise of 28 percentage points - created using webcams or smartphones and then shared online via a growing number of platforms. In some cases, children are groomed, deceived or extorted into producing and sharing a sexual image or video of themselves.

IWF Blocking Services

The IWF provides a range of services to industry to block and disrupt child sexual abuse material (CSAM) online. These services help keep people safe from stumbling across child sexual abuse images online, while our hotline works through the process to have them removed. We currently work with over 180 tech companies from a diverse range of sectors, to make the internet a hostile place in the UK and further afield for perpetrators to access CSAM.

IWF URL List

In 2021, 203,234 unique URLs of child sexual abuse were included on the IWF URL List, one of IWF's services to industry. The IWF List is a dynamic list of webpages which are blocked and filtered by companies all over the world for their users' protection.

3 Helpline highlights

We operate the Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH) and the online reporting platform Report Harmful Content (RHC).

Professionals Online Safety Helpline

The Helpline has continued to support the children's workforce in the UK with online safeguarding issues. From 1 Jan 2021 to the end of Dec 2021 we have handled 3,841 contacts with a total number of cases at 1,754 which is a 180% increase on the same period for 2020. The majority of clients contacting the helpline were teachers (82%). 78% of contacts related to an 'Online Reputation' issue. 54% of cases had content that required escalation to a social media platform.

In November 2021 the POSH helpline worked in collaboration with TikTok in the removal of online videos and fake accounts that were targeting schools and teachers in a harmful 'viral' trend that was seen throughout the UK. POSH worked with unions and TikTok to ensure that schools had the correct awareness and information around how to report and effectively remove content online.

POSH also worked on a new resource for University students around Good Online Sexual Health (GOSH) as well as produced an informative video around how professionals working with children and young people should respond to harmful online challenges.

In December 2021 POSH released their second annual report.

Report Harmful Content (RHC)

Launching just before a global pandemic in Dec 2019, Report Harmful Content (RHC) has dealt with 3,988 contacts to resolve 1,600 reports during the period 1/12/19 – 31/12/21. 290 pieces of content have been escalated with industry partners for actioning with 217 actioned (e.g. removed, regained access to or sensitivity filters applied), a 75% success rate since the platform started receiving reports from the public.

The most common content reported and actioned in 2021 was regarding:

- Harassment
- Pornography
- Impersonation
- Abuse

RHC released its second annual report in 2021: Through These Walls, exploring the types of harmful content online experienced and witnessed by clients during the platforms second full year of operation (January 2020 - December 2020). In the year analysed, the RHC website received 17,315 visitors and practitioners dealt with 644 unique cases. Of the content escalated to industry, 90% was successfully actioned (e.g. removed/ restricted/ regained access to).

Download our new RHC button to give your users easy access to our reporting wizard

REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

Report Harmful Content Online Using The RHC Button

- Threats
- Online Abuse
- Impersonation
- Violent Content
- Bullying and Harassment
- Unwanted Sexual Advances
- Self Harm or Suicide Content
- Pornographic Content

#lawfulbutawful   #RHCbutton

REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

In 2021 RHC announced 2 new partnerships with Yubo and Pinterest and launched a report button towards the end of the year. This can be embedded on websites to enable users with easy access to reporting routes for many commonly used social networks, messaging and dating apps, gaming platforms and streaming services. In 2021, there were 2,607 unique visits to RHC's reporting pages from buttons embedded on external websites across the UK.

4 Impact of Covid-19 and the UK Safer Internet centre

Throughout 2021, the UK Safer Internet Centre continued to advise those needing support from the impact of COVID-19 through our guides and resources. They are hosted on our Safe Remote Learning Hub. Some examples of these resources are:

Safe Remote Learning Guidance for Schools

A helpful brief guidance to help schools consider how to prepare schools for closures and set up remote learning safely.

SMART Video Resources to Use During Remote Learning

This resource is made up of six easy-to-follow videos designed for parents or carers to work through together with their children. Each of these videos has simple, clear online safety advice specifically tailored for children aged 6-9.

Remote Working for Education Professionals

Guidance for education professionals on setting up remote learning whilst considering safety and wellbeing.

Online Tutoring

Safeguarding considerations when appointing new tutors online.

Online Performances

Safeguarding considerations and guidance when hosting virtual performances.

Contribution to the European Network

The UK Safer Internet Centre is part of a European network of 31 Safer Internet Centres – co-financed by the by the European Commission's Connecting Europe Facility Programme and cooperating under the Better Internet for Kids core service platform. We take a very active role in the work of the network by sharing best practices and resources, attending network events, exchanging expertise and knowledge and providing data and stats about our work.

References

UK Safer Internet Centre website

Partner websites – SWGfL, Childnet, and IWF

Professionals Online Safety Helpline

Report Harmful Content (RHC) platform

Report Harmful Content Button

To report criminal online child sexual abuse content to IWF

To subscribe for our monthly newsletter

UK Safer Internet Centre resources for children and young people

UK Safer Internet Centre resources for professionals

UK Safer Internet Centre resources for parents & carers

Safer Internet Day 2021 info pages

UK Safer Internet Centre research hub

Digital Leaders Programme

STAR toolkit

Myth vs Reality Toolkit

Childnet Film competition 2021

Detective Digiduck

ProjectEvolve

Safe Remote Learning Hub

Test Filtering

Online Safety Live

Online Safety Training

360 degree safe

360 degree safe Scotland

360 degree safe Cymru

360 Early Years

360 Groups

Social Media checklists – Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Tiktok, Roblox and Netflix

Appropriate filtering and monitoring for schools

Education for a connected world framework

www.saferinternet.org.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre Contacts

📞 0344 8002382

✉ enquiries@saferinternet.org.uk

🐦 @UK_SIC; @UK_SICHelpline
Report harmful content on Twitter @reportHC

📘 /saferinternetuk

▶ user/UKSIC

📷 @uk_sic

UK Safer Internet Centre

www.saferinternet.org.uk