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Guidelines on keeping online environments safe for children launch in UK on Safer Internet Day (8 February)

Comprehensive guidelines for how to moderate online environments for children have today been launched by the [UK Council for Child Internet Safety](#). The guidelines have been drafted with input from industry, charities and child safety experts; and include specialist moderation advice from [eModeration](#), [Tempero](#) and [Chat Moderators](#). The launch co-incides with this year's [Safer Internet Day](#), which focuses on 'virtual Lives'.

The guidelines - [Good practice guidance for the moderation of interactive services for children](#) – are designed to give good practice guidance to the providers of interactive environments used by children, such as: social networks; Massively Multi-Player Online Games (MMOGs); forums and messages boards; chat and instant messaging (IM); and blogs and microblogs (such as Twitter).

The need for such guidelines reflects how the online world has changed since previous good practice guidelines were last produced by a Home Office sub-committee in 2005, when Facebook was a fraction of its size, Club Penguin was just launching (Moshi Monsters was still two years away), and Twitter didn't exist. New guidelines were needed to take into account the fast pace of change in technology and user behaviour over the last six years, and those released today are designed to create best practice principles that can be applied to new technology innovation as it occurs; and be updated as major changes take place.

Today's guidance provides a good practice 'risk assessment' framework on the moderation of interactive services aimed at, or likely to attract, children, to enhance the safety of children using these services. It:

- Describes the different types of user interactive services
- Informs organisations of the potential risks to children using interactive services, including: bullying; sexual exploitation and grooming; self-harm and destructive behaviours
- Informs organisations of the issues they should take into account when considering what safeguards to deploy
- Describes the types of moderation that can be used
- Helps organisations to develop, review or update policies on the recruitment, selection, training and supervision of moderators to safeguard against unsuitable individuals gaining contact with children; and reporting of incidents and concerns.

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The guidelines can be downloaded [here](#), or are available from <http://www.education.gov.uk/ukccis/groups/a0075834/self-regulation-of-industry>.

Children's Minister, Tim Loughton said: "We are working with business to make sure children and young people are safe online. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety are today publishing guidelines on keeping online environments safe for children. I warmly welcome this first step in industry self-regulation."

The full list of contributors is:

Project team

- Co-chair: Chris Atkinson – Online safety and content management consultant
- Co-chair until Nov 2009: Rachel O'Connell – Bebo (Chief Safety Officer)
- Co-chair from Jan 2010: Dawn Shackleton – British Sky Broadcasting Ltd (Head of Business Operations, Customer Information System)
- Trish Church – Everything Everywhere (Mobile and Broadband Services Safety Manager)
- Tamara Littleton – eModeration (CEO)
- David Lutman – Department of Education
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- Paul Wakely – BBC (Director, Moderation Services)

Contributors

- Charlotte Aynsley – Beatbullying (Director of Practice)
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