

## Purpose of this guide

Significant concerns have been raised about the potential negative consequences of smartphones for children.

- US Surgeon General Dr Vivek Murthy indicated in a recent advisory that “children are exposed to harmful content on social media, ranging from violent and sexual content, to bullying and harassment. And for too many children, social media use is compromising their sleep and valuable in-person time with family and friends. We are in the middle of a national youth mental health crisis, and I am concerned that social media is an important driver of that crisis – one that we must urgently address.”
- The recent Global Education Monitoring report funded by UNESCO warned that “the use of technology is associated with negative impacts on physical and mental well-being and increased susceptibility to online risks and harms, which affect academic performance in the long term”.

As such, this guide has been prepared for parents of primary school age children who wish to come together to support their child/ren’s online safety through creating a voluntary agreement around the use of smartphones and other devices.

It is recognised that schools have an acceptable use policy in place regarding the use of the internet and digital technologies within the school, including online and offline usage.

It is important that parents are aware of how to keep their children safe online and the supports that are available. This resource has been developed to support parents in this regard: <https://www.webwise.ie/download/78727/>.

An essential resource for parents and parents associations is also the website, [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)