

# Contact the Professionals Online Safety Helpline...



The Safer Internet Centre has been commissioned by the European Commission to set up and run a pilot helpline for professionals working with children and young people, specifically tackling the area of e-safety. The helpline aims to support professionals with issues around protecting their reputation online. We offer advice on issues professionals and the young people they work with encounter such as misuse of social networking sites, cyber-bullying, sexting, online gaming and child protection online.

Research, published by the University of Plymouth to coincide with the launch of the helpline, sadly confirmed that abuse of professionals (and volunteers) online, is a significant issue **with over 1 in 3 experiencing or witnessing such an incident**. The research also concludes that 30% of incidents did not receive any resolution from senior management. We aim to plug this gap and support workers and volunteers to regain control over their professional identity, provide advice on e-safety issues affecting young people, and help staff embrace the digital world in a positive way.

Since the launch of the **Professionals Online Safety Helpline** on 16 March 2011 we have been able to help a variety of people out with an array of issues. The majority of these enquiries have been complex and very enlightening to the behaviours of some people online.

The helpline has built strong relationships with several of the most popular social networking sites and phone companies and is consistently building relationships with others. The mediation aspect of the helpline has proved very successful and helpline users have reported the service as invaluable.

The service is contactable via email 24 hours per day, and by telephone and Skype (professionalshelpline) during office opening hours 10-4, Monday to Friday. It is anticipated that all queries will be responded to within 3 hours (during the office opening times), however to fully resolve issues may take longer. The helpline will keep customers updated throughout the process. It is primarily a signposting, mediation and advice line.



**UK Safer  
Internet  
Centre**

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<http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>