



SAFEGUARDING

NEWSLETTER – MARCH 26

WhatsApp concern

Concerns have emerged again regarding a type of WhatsApp group known as 'Add Everyone', with hundreds of children as young as 11 and 12 being affected. Schools and regional police forces across the UK have warned that these groups can expose children and young people to explicit and harmful material.

What Are 'Add Everyone' Group Chats?

These WhatsApp groups are spaces where children and young people are invited to join a chat that contains content such as sexual images, material promoting self-harm, sexual violence, racism and other inappropriate content.

These chats may be created by adults seeking to connect with younger users or by young people themselves as a seemingly fun activity.

It is difficult to control who becomes a member of these groups, which means that access to children and young people can easily fall into the wrong hands.

Why Would a Child or Young Person Want to Join the Group?

Children and young people might be drawn to such groups out of curiosity or a desire for social connection. Unfortunately, these groups often exploit this curiosity, presenting harmful content and access to strangers as if it were normal or acceptable.

NEXT STEPS AND FURTHER ADVICE

To protect the children in your care, consider these steps

Encourage Open Communication

Approach the topic with curiosity and openness.

Set Privacy Settings

Work with your child to set privacy settings that ensure only their contacts can add them to groups and view their information.

Adjust Auto-Saving Settings

WhatsApp can automatically save images to the user's camera roll unless adjusted in the settings.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Screenshot, Report, and Block

If a young person is added to an inappropriate group chat, take a screenshot of the evidence* and report it directly to the platform.

Encourage them to block any concerning users and to speak to a trusted adult or an organisation like Childline on 0800 1111.

***NEVER screenshot an indecent image of a child.**