

6 THINGS FOR PROFESSIONALS TO CONSIDER IF CONTACTING/SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN SELF-ISOLATION

1 WORK WITHIN POLICIES

Always refer to policies, particularly ensuring that you adhere to the 'Acceptable Usage Policy' and ensure digital communication with young people falls in-line with your organisation's 'Safeguarding Policy'.



2 SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

Avoid any one to one contact to help safeguard the young person and yourself, in line with safer working practice. Do not use personal devices to contact young people, only using devices provided by your organisation.



3 ONLINE CONTACT

Consider if the contact system being used includes an online chat feature and if this can be moderated or turned off. Also consider the security of devices, in particular cameras and microphones and whether these can also be disabled.



4 CLEAR BOUNDARIES

It is vital that you use your own organisational email account as data protection laws still apply. It is vital that you establish ground rules; creating safe spaces and highlighting these at the beginning of every session/contact – this should be no different to normal standards of behaviour and contact.



5 LIVE STREAMING

If you consider using live-streaming services for contact, exercise caution given requirements for accounts, personal data and privacy questions. Be aware that video can use high levels of mobile data and that the young person and their family aren't incurring surprising costs. There should be careful consideration of the location that everyone uses. For example, there is a possibility that the young person may be in their bedroom whilst in contact with you and this may not be appropriate.



6 REPORTING CONCERNS

As in any situation; report any safeguarding incidents or potential concerns emanating from this form of contact to your relevant safeguarding lead. It is also essential to signpost young people to where they can access support, if required.

But also make sure there is support in place for you and that you ensure you find time for yourself also, whatever that may be!!

