

# THE TEA ROOM

A friendly space for young people with epilepsy

Safety for Parents

## How to help you child use this site safely

The TEA Room is for the use of young people aged between 13 and 19 years old who have been diagnosed with epilepsy. When signing up to The TEA Room each young person is asked to state their date of birth and will only be granted access to The TEA Room should they fall into the above age bracket.

The TEA Room is linked to CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre); an internet safety advice and help service. The CEOP link appears on The TEA Room website.

The TEA Room takes the safety of its users very seriously and will make a significant effort to take down any objectionable material that may be posted on the site. We encourage users to report offensive profiles, messages, groups, notes and photos. Reported items will be reviewed by our Fieldworker and removed.

All abuse reports on The TEA Room are confidential. The user that you are reporting will not know that you have reported him/her. After the report is submitted, we will investigate the issue and makes a determination as to whether or not the content should remain on the site. This may result in the person in question being banned from the site.

We advise parents to talk to their children and teach them about Internet safety. Remind them to:

- Never share their password or contact information with anyone (except parents).
- Report people that use inappropriate content, or make inappropriate comments, to our Fieldworker. This user can then be blocked from using the website.
- Make sure they really understand the basics of safety and privacy.
- Keep their contact information and location private.
- Never send pictures to strangers.
- Remember that people aren't necessarily who they say they are in cyberspace
- Have an agreement about what it is okay to post. Teen years are full of self-expression and rebellion. Just make sure that your kids know your rules about suggestive material, alcohol, and drug references.
- Help your teen be a good digital citizen. Online cheating is still cheating. And flagging inappropriate content isn't being a telltale – it's keeping the Web a place where people want to hang out and where they can feel safe.

Other useful advice:

1. The Golden Rule applies online – “If you wouldn’t do it in real life, you shouldn’t do it online”. No humiliating or cruel posts, no hate speech or groups, no compromising pictures they wouldn’t want the world to see. Besides, sites have Terms of Service and these actions are violations that will result in your teen’s account being removed.
2. Agree on downloads. What apps are okay? Which video sites? What games?
3. Encourage critical thinking. They should ask "who posted this? and why?" This will help them find trustworthy information, and it will also help avoid online scams that deliver spyware and viruses directly to your home.
4. Stay in safe neighborhoods. Just as your teens learn not to walk down dark alleys alone at night; they need to know how to avoid negative places online. And if they do venture there, remind teens that unpleasant or suspicious communications should get trashed immediately.
5. Parents need to view their own habits carefully. You are the ultimate role models.
6. Keep channels of communication open. Better safe than sorry. Make sure kids are comfortable telling you if anything menacing or cruel happens – no matter what site they were on.

#### **Useful websites**

<http://beatbullying.org/>

<http://childnet-int.org/>

<http://www.connectsafely.org/>

<http://www.ceop.gov.uk/>

While Scottish Epilepsy Initiative can address problems and abuses reported to them (click the link in the ‘Keep it Friendly’ section) it is ultimately up to us to protect ourselves in cyberspace and for parents to protect their children.

If you have any further questions about the safety of The TEA Room then please contact our Fieldworker:

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