

Junior Jury: Internet chatrooms

Children like chatting online - and say they're aware of the dangers, and the strategies they need to follow to keep safe.

This week Children's Express surfs the crowds to talk to young people about internet chatrooms

Craig Crouchman, 14, Gosforth

I did have a bad experience once. This guy, he was 20, was asking me rude questions, and I just went off.

I go on music chatrooms and I randomly chat to people about music and what's happening in the world. It's fun and it's harmless, if you play by the rules. I think almost anyone who has been on the internet must have used them. I feel safe because I don't talk to anyone about anything dodgy. I don't give out my details. I think you've got to be old enough, mature enough to use it and not be stupid - 12 onwards. There could be adverts on television, saying don't give out your details.

Micky Rogers, 13, Corbridge

I don't go on chatrooms very much and I've never had a bad experience. I wouldn't give out personal information because you might be talking to someone who's not the kind of person you think they are, and they might do something wrong. Somebody might be able to use the information against you. I just talk about things I like to do. I'd recommend them to my friends because they're easy to use and it's a way to talk to people. They're fun. There should be an age range for them - maybe just teenagers.

Jane Masterman, 13, Kingston Park

I only talk to my friends. They're fun. I don't give out personal information, in case someone tracked me down to my house. I talk about things such as my favourite bands and my favourite food. It's a good way to get know people. I've been asked to meet people, but I don't. My parents wouldn't allow it anyway. I think there should be a 13 - 16 age range for chatrooms.

Liberty Hall, 12, Benton

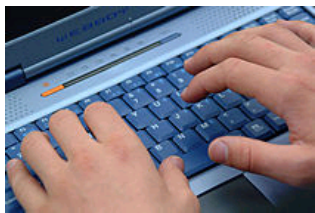
I've never had a bad experience on chatrooms, but I don't feel safe. There could be perverts. I don't give out personal information. I wouldn't recommend them to younger friends. I think they should be for people of an older age, 13 and above. I think there's enough warnings about safety.

Michael Kingett, 12, Corbridge

I talk to people on chatrooms and feel safe. I just talk to my friends, instead of ringing them up. I talk about myself and skating. I don't talk to anyone I don't know, pretty much. I did have a bad experience once. This guy, he was 20, he was asking me loads of rude questions, and I just went off. I don't give out personal information: if I don't know someone, I don't really want to. I don't think there should be any age limits. There should be more warnings, saying you're entering at your own risk.

Ciara Wood, 13, visiting Newcastle from Greater Manchester

My friends use chatrooms, and nothing bad has ever happened to them. I've been in chatrooms, but never had a bad time. I've never planned to meet anyone and I don't give out personal information. It's not safe and they could track you down.



People do ask questions about your age, your sex, your location, just to find out a bit about you, to chat. I think there should be age limits on using them, say from about 13. There should be more warnings, especially before you go onto a website.

Reuben White, 12, Jesmond

I sometimes chat to my friends in other countries. I talk about anything, but I don't give out my personal details. I've never had a bad experience and I feel safe usually, because I'm talking to my friends. They could put information about internet safety on during the football on television.

Siobhan Appleby, 14, Gosforth

I don't go on chatrooms. There's nothing to do in them. There could just be strangers and old people in them. There should be different parts for teenagers and older people. There should be more information on the television about the dangers.

About the team

Edited by Jade Henderson, 16. Reporters Melissa Skinner and Gavin Mather, 13. Junior Jury is a weekly column published in the Newcastle [Evening Chronicle](#).

1 comment

just dont use them

look i know you want to talk to your friends instead of calling them but get over it - pick up the phone - its safer. there are chat rooms that say teens only and are for specific ages but people dont care. there are too many pervs out there that will say they are 14yrs old and just want to talk or "hey lets meet for pizza" when really theyre some 30-40yr old who wants to kidnap you and do crazy stuff. i use to go into chat rooms all the time to try and meet new and interesting people, well a lot of guys would send me an invite to chat and when i opened it, theres this older naked guy... and even if i found someone who was supposed to be my age theyd ask really offensive, nosey, personal, and just slack questions with language no one would ever use in front of their own mother. the safest thing to do is just not use them. go to your friends house, text msg them, call them, send 'em an email... just stay out the chat rooms, and if you just cant - then

seriously report anyone who is taking things even the slightest bit too far!! be safe kids
Crystal (age 19) from south carolina, 08 October 2007 02:32

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