

# Cotham School

## Online Safety Newsletter

Academic Year:  
2025/2026

Term: 2  
Date: 01/12/2025



### Newsletter Topic:

1. What is: Digital Anxiety (**Part 2 of 2**) - What can I do?
2. Social Media Focus: WhatsApp - Chat with Meta AI?

### Recap: What Is Digital Parenting Anxiety?

Digital parenting anxiety isn't just typical tech-related concerns—it's an intense, sometimes sleepless worry over whether you're guiding your child correctly in their digital life. While a little anxiety can be normal and even useful, excessive fear may push parents to make decisions based on panic rather than reason.

### Healthy Digital Boundaries

Anxiety often leads to overly strict rules, but balanced boundaries build trust and confidence. Focus on:

- **Device-free times/spaces** - Like no phones during meals or in bedrooms at night.
- **Clear expectations** - Explain the "why" behind rules.
- **Personalized rules** - Align guidelines with your family's values and needs.
- **Gradual independence** - Adjust privileges based on responsible behavior, not just age.
- **Flexible adjustments** - Adapt rules based on your family, not fear or headlines.

### Productive Tech Talks

Open conversations ease worries by keeping you informed. Try these approaches:

- **Acknowledge both benefits** (learning new skills) and risks (social comparisons).
- **Ask open questions** - "What's fun about this app?" works better than grilling them.
- **Listen first** - Respond calmly to concerns; thank them for sharing.
- **Normalize safety chats** - Treat online safety like street safety: practical, not scary.
- **Stay engaged** - Show interest in their digital world—it builds trust for bigger talks.

### Managing Your Own Digital Wellness

Your approach to technology impacts how you support your children. Try these strategies:

- **Set limits on your own screen time**, especially during family activities.
- **Step away from social media and news** when feeling overwhelmed.
- **Prioritize reliable sources** over sensational headlines.
- **Demonstrate the tech habits** you want your children to adopt.

### Celebrating Digital Parenting Wins

Recognizing small victories strengthens trust and communication.

- **Appreciate moments when your child opens up** about online experiences.
- **Keep track of positive interactions**, such as calm discussions about screen time.
- **Celebrate small achievements**, like device-free family activities.
- **Acknowledge the progress** you're making to build confidence.

### Creating Sustainable Digital Habits

Success comes from consistent, adaptable tech practices:

- **Regularly review family digital guidelines.**
- **Encourage positive online behaviors** and learning opportunities.
- **Keep discussions about technology ongoing.**
- **Focus on critical thinking**, not strict rules.
- **View mistakes as valuable learning experiences.**

### Looking Ahead

Children's digital needs evolve—prepare by:

- **Remaining flexible with rules** and expectations.
- **Guiding independence** step by step.
- **Prioritizing long-term digital literacy.**
- **Maintaining open conversations** about online experiences.

### Remember...

Your concern comes from wanting the best for your children, and managing your stress benefits both you and them. Small steps toward confident digital parenting help safeguard your kids while fostering independence, making adaptation a natural part of growing together.



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### Social Media: WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a popular messaging application used worldwide. It enables users to send text messages, make voice and video calls, share multimedia content such as photos and videos, and use group chat features, all through an internet connection

 Meta



### Age Requirements:

13+ (reduced from 16+ in April 2024)

### Key Features:

- Messaging and Group Chats
- Voice and Video Calls
- Media Sharing
- End-to-End Encryption

### Safety and Privacy Features:


- Last Seen and Online Status
- Profile Photo and Info
- Block Unknown Calls
- Block/Report Contacts
- Group Invites
- Two-Step Verification
- Read Receipts

### About Meta AI

Meta AI through WhatsApp is an optional service from Meta that can answer your questions, teach you something, or help come up with new ideas.

### You can:

- Have conversations with Meta AI
- Chat with Meta AI in existing group chats
- Ask questions and get helpful recommendations
- Talk about shared interests
- Interact with their content
- Create AI-generated images in chats
- Forward messages to Meta AI to ask questions or learn more

The blue and purple  circle meta ai (multicolored ring) on the Chats tab is one of the ways to access Meta AI through WhatsApp. You can also choose to ask Meta AI questions through the WhatsApp search bar or by mentioning @Meta AI in a chat.

### When you chat with AI you can:

- Ask questions
- Receive recommendations
- Talk about interests

Messages from Meta AI are generated by artificial intelligence (AI), using a technology from Meta. Some messages generated by AIs might not be accurate or appropriate.

AI chatbots can be risky for children. They may confuse machine replies with human ones, share personal information without realising the consequences, or encounter inappropriate content if filters fail. Relying too much on chatbots for companionship can also reduce healthy social interaction, making parental guidance and safety measures essential.

