

24 October 2024

This is a message from West Midlands Police for parents, carers, and older brothers or sisters.

Police and schools across the West Midlands are committed to working together to protect our young people from becoming victims of robbery and violent crime, but to do this we need your help.

As we head into October half term, we are urging everyone to talk to their child about increasing their phone security and their safety during Halloween and Bonfire Night.

We have seen an increase in criminals targeting young people who carry iPhones or iPads. Thieves are forcing young people to log out of their iCloud to prevent the phone being tracked after it's stolen. By enabling two-factor authentication on iCloud or your child's phone, can make thief loose interest in taking their phone.

### **Increasing the security on your child's iPhone and iPad:**

1. Firstly, talk to your child about enabling two-factor authentication on their devices to help keep them, and their phones, safe from theft and exploitation.
2. Reassure them that turning on location and enabling better privacy settings allows them to communicate with their friends and family safely and securely.
3. Turn on two-factor authentication for your child's Apple Account: On your iPhone or iPad: Go to Settings > [your name] > Sign-In & Security. Tap Turn On Two-Factor Authentication. Then tap Continue and follow the onscreen instructions.
4. Discuss with your child who they would like to add to their 'trusted contact list' and encourage them to save these numbers in their emergency contacts list in case they get into trouble.
5. Add your child's devices to your 'Family' by heading to your Apple ID settings and adding the devices.
6. Make sure all the latest software is updated across the devices you're adding
7. From the 'Family' group you can enable content and privacy restrictions and two-factor authentication, as well as location sharing.

For further information about parental controls and privacy guidance please visit: [Use parental controls on your child's iPhone and iPad - Apple Support](#)

Please note, if your child has an Android phone there are additional security settings you can put in place to make sure the location of their phone and data is secure. Visit your phone provider website for further crime prevention advice.

### **Reducing antisocial behaviour and keeping young people safe:**

We want everyone to go out and enjoy the festivities of Halloween and Bonfire Night, but this can be a worrying time for those most vulnerable in our communities. Before your child heads out with their mates, be sure to talk to them about how to respect others and how to get help if they find themselves in trouble.

Your schools' officer will be able to provide you with a parent's guide to Halloween and firework safety but here are some top tips:

1. Plan a safe and familiar route and stick with friends
2. Make sure phones are charged, location on, and kept out of sight
3. Wear high-visibility clothing or something recognisable so friends and family can spot you in a crowd

4. Attend a public firework display when you can and never allow children to handle fireworks
5. Organise a meet-up place in case you lose each other
6. Talk to your child about the dangers of pointing fireworks at people, animals, and roads.
7. Tell them that police can arrest and prosecute anyone using fireworks dangerously
8. If someone has a 'no trick or treating' card in their window do not approach the property or ring the bell.

**What to do if you are concerned about your child or a young person you know:**

Talk to them in a safe and quiet location that feels comfortable for both of you.

You may wish to contact a member of the Pastoral Team at school if you feel your child isn't listening or is at risk. You can reach out your school's officers to seek advice. They can talk through your concerns and plan a way forward together.

If you or your child has been a victim of crime or their life is in danger, call 999 immediately. Alternatively, you can call 101 if the crime has happened and you want to report this to the police.

You can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or via [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

Thank you, **West Midlands Police.**