

Safeguarding Updates

Information	Link
<p>Online safety: private messaging Source: NSPCC Learning Date published: 13 November 2025</p> <p>NSPCC Learning has published a new report examining the technologies available to combat online grooming, and the role the UK government, Ofcom and tech platforms can play to protect children. The report looks at how existing tools and interventions could be applied to private communication, as well as emerging technologies that could address harm in end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) environments. Data was gathered by digital transformation partner PUBLIC through a literature review, expert interviews, and feedback and testing workshops. Findings show that the migration of conversations to private or E2EE channels is a challenge for protecting children online against grooming but introducing interventions across different stages of the grooming lifecycle would help to reduce risks to children. The report calls for a systems-based approach where different stakeholders work together to build a more secure online world through collaborative infrastructure, interoperable technology, and user empowerment. The NSPCC news story also shares figures provided by 44 UK police forces which show 7,263 Sexual Communication with a Child offences were recorded in 2024/25.</p>	<p>Read the news story: Data shows how criminals are using private messaging platforms to manipulate and groom children</p> <p>Read the report: Tools to combat online harms: protecting children in private messaging spaces</p>
<p>Bullying Source: NSPCC Date published: 10 November 2025</p> <p>The NSPCC has published a news story on contacts to Childline about bullying. New Childline data shows that in 2024/25, Childline delivered 6,617 counselling sessions where the young person's main concern was bullying. Concerns included: seeing hurtful posts about themselves online; receiving verbal and/or physical bullying; and being left out or excluded. The news story includes advice for parents, carers and young people experiencing bullying.</p>	<p>Read the news story: Bullying was the main concern for over 6,500 counselling sessions delivered by Childline last year</p>
<p>AI-generated child sexual abuse material Source: Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and IWF Date published: 12 November 2025</p> <p>The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) has announced plans to change the law to help tackle AI-generated child sexual abuse material. Tabled as an amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill, designated bodies like the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), as well as AI developers and other child protection organisations, will be empowered to scrutinise AI models and ensure safeguards are in place to prevent them generating or proliferating child sexual abuse material. Currently, criminal liability to create and possess this material means developers can't carry out safety testing on AI models, and images can only be removed after they have been created and shared online. This announcement comes alongside new IWF data which shows: reports of AI-generated child sexual abuse material rose from 199 in 2024 (January to October) to 426 in the same period in 2025; and the material being created has also become more extreme.</p>	<p>Read the DSIT press release: New law to tackle AI child abuse images at source as reports more than double</p> <p>Read the IWF news story: AI imagery getting more 'extreme' as IWF welcomes new rules allowing thorough testing of AI tools</p> <p>See also on NSPCC Learning > Protecting children from sexual abuse</p>

<p>Child sexual abuse: end-to-end encrypted messaging services Source: IWF Date published: 10 November 2025</p> <p>The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has published a news story about child sexual abuse on end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) messaging services. A survey of 1,796 UK adults explored attitudes towards the use of end-to-end encryption to detect and remove content showing child sexual abuse. Findings show: 92% of adults in the UK are concerned about the sharing of child sexual abuse on E2EE messaging services; and 88% agree that the UK government should require companies to use the upload prevention method to detect content showing child sexual abuse before they are sent through E2EE services. The IWF says the upload prevention safety method is a technically feasible way to detect child sexual abuse in E2EE spaces that preserves privacy and upholds the rights of victims and survivors. The IWF's latest paper on E2EE environments provides an overview of how E2EE messaging can be protected from child sexual abuse through this method as well as a snapshot of how this issue is approached globally.</p>	<p>Read the news story: High public concern at spread of child sexual abuse images and videos in end-to-end encrypted spaces</p> <p>Read the paper: Preventing the upload of child sexual abuse imagery in end-to-end encrypted environments</p>
<p>Girls in custody Source: Ministry of Justice Date published: 11 November 2025</p> <p>The government has published its response to the independent review into placements and care for girls in custody in England and Wales published earlier this year in March. The response was developed in collaboration with the Youth Custody Service, Department for Education, Department for Health and Social Care and NHS England. It does not take account of aspects relating to devolved policies in Wales. Looking at each recommendation, the response sets out what the government is committed to achieving and actions that have already been taken, including: ceasing the placement of girls into young offender institutions; and establishing the Girls in Youth Justice Advisory Board (GYJAB) to provide dedicated and strategic oversight of girls' experiences in the youth justice system.</p>	<p>Read the paper: Delivering the best for girls in custody: government response</p>
<p>Youth custody Source: Children's Commissioner for England Date published: 11 November 2025</p> <p>The Children's Commissioner for England has published a report looking at children's experiences of custodial remand. The report analyses Department for Education data on looked after children, alongside interviews with children on remand and staff working with children on remand in the secure estate. Key findings show: although the use of remand fell over the last decade, the average length of time spent on remand has been rising over time; evident ethnic disparities across the justice system; and children's concerns included feelings of uncertainty and anxiety around their court hearings and the potential length of time in custody. The Commissioner is calling for a redesign of the secure care system and a youth justice system based primarily upon a rehabilitative model of care.</p>	<p>Read the report: "A production line of pointlessness": children on custodial remand</p>