

I am a mother of two small children. They don't yet use the internet and so I have a few more years to prepare. What am I preparing for?

I talk to parents of older kids and I hear these things:

Children today who are "unpopular" get to watch their friends having fun at parties and outings to which they have not been invited.

Children today watch thousands of images of models, compare themselves to these people, and believe that they too should look like these images.

Children today watch pornographic content from a very young age, and believe that the content they watch portrays real and normative sexual relations.

Children today are being bullied online and are bullying others online.

I don't have statistics, this is just what I hear from parents, but it has made me concerned. Children today are exposed to disturbing and hateful words, fake images and videos and so much content that we were not exposed to as children. That means that I can't call on my own experience to teach my children to protect themselves from harmful content online. I have to learn about it.

What else can I do? I need to know what legislators and politicians are doing to protect my children from online content that they should not be exposed to, or from being targeted by organizations on social media. I need to know what the education system is doing to prepare my children for a world in which they are exposed to media that is no longer being checked or edited by anyone. Should they be exposed to such media, should we? I need to ask myself these questions.

So, that's how I'm preparing. What are you doing to keep your kids safe?