VS VICTIM SUPPORT

CYBER CRIME

How we can help you keep safe online

It is estimated that one in every ten people in the UK become victims to online crime every year. From phishing emails to romance fraud to identity theft, cyber crime is growing fast.

Whether you're a digital native or a bit of a technophobe, it's important to make sure that you take steps to stay safe online.

What you can do

- Be wary of opening links and attachments in emails. They might look legitimate, but may take you to a site that contains a virus or malware that spy on your online activity and steal your personal data.

- Check a website's security — especially for those holding your sensitive data, such as banks or shops.

  Remember to always look for a padlock and 'https' in the site's address bar — if in doubt, do not use the site.

- Make sure you have anti-virus software installed on **all** your devices. Thousands of new viruses are created every day.

At least once a week:
- Update your anti-virus software and check for any update to your device's operating system.

- Always ensure that your firewall is active and be suspicious of any suggestion or advice that you should deactivate your firewall, as this is an important tool that helps keep you safe online.

It is not just your laptop, phone and tablet at risk. Any devices that can connect online ('internet of things') are potentially open to attack, including smart TVs, smart fridges and even baby monitors that send images to your phone.

Remember, the more up-to-date your software is, the safer you are!

- When using social media, always be careful what you share and who you share it with!

- Take time to review your privacy settings, making sure you understand who you are letting see your pictures and status updates. A software update may change your privacy settings, so review this each month — don't set and forget!

Vet requests and ask yourself why a person you don't know might want to see your pictures and know your whereabouts. If in any doubt, never add unknown users.

Remember, it may be fun to announce your holiday or post that special holiday picture online but be aware that tells those with ulterior motives that you are not at home and can attract burglars.

- Avoid posting negative or derogatory comments on social media or forums, as this may attract unwelcome attention.

- Have different, unique passwords for your online accounts, particularly those of high sensitivity and importance, such as online banking or email accounts. In most cases,

password length is more important than its complexity. Aim for a minimum of 12 characters and think about using a phrase and not just one word. If you need to record your passwords, write them in a book which may prompt you but will be indecipherable to others. Avoid recording your password on your phone and don't use a password manager unless you know it is from a trusted provider.

- If you ever come across something online that you are unsure of, or you are being offered a 'once in a lifetime deal', do your research. A quick Google search may show there is a scam going on.

- Avoid open public Wi-Fi hot spots such as those in cafés and hotels when accessing sensitive documents, bank accounts, or when purchasing goods online.

Remember, cyber criminals can create fake hot spots. When you connect to these hot spots, they can see and access everything you can, including your passwords!

- Stay in control, "Take 5" (UK Finance led campaign) and **remember**:
  - Never disclose security details
  - Don't assume a text or email is genuine
  - Don't ever be rushed into any decision online
  - Listen to your instincts — if an offer, advert or site looks too good to be true, it might be fraud.

Reporting online crime

We understand that some people may not want to report online crime to the police – we will support you whether you have reported the crime or not.

However, you should report any fraud that you see or experience online to Action Fraud. You can do this via their website **www.actionfraud.police.uk** or by calling **0300 123 2040**.

After a report has been made to Action Fraud, it will be sent for assessment by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB). The NFIB's systems assess reports of fraud and cyber crime from across the UK, helping to build a national picture of where fraud and cyber crime is taking place and how. Experts review the data from these reports to decide whether there is enough information to send to a police force for investigation.

The NFIB will advise you what action has been taken on your report, for example if it has been sent to your local police force for investigation.

If you have experienced online bullying or harassment, in the first instance you should report the activity and individual directly to the website's support team and keep copies of all bullying emails or posts.

If you are physically threatened, or you witness someone who is physically threatened with immediate harm, please call the police on **999**.

For non-urgent police assistance (in cases other than fraud) please call the police on **101**.

If you do report the crime and the offender is tried and convicted, and if you fall under a vulnerable group, courts can take this into account during sentencing. This means a stronger sentence could be imposed. Victim Support can provide you with further information regarding reporting if you would like to do this.

How we can help

If you suffer an online crime, VS is here to support you and help you move beyond that crime. We support hundreds of people every day who are coping with the impact and effects of crime, helping them rebuild their lives and confidence to get back online.

Diversity matters and we value it

We are committed to supporting the needs of the diverse communities we serve. We can provide interpreters and information in alternative formats. If you have additional needs, please let us know so we can put the right support in place.

How to get in touch

Our contact details are on the back cover of this leaflet. You can call us weeks, months or even years after a crime.

We are always here to listen and help.

Visit **victimsupport.org.uk** for more information and to find services near you.

Where to go for support:

We are an independent charity offering free, confidential support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using Text Relay (add **18001** before any of our phone numbers)
- Online: **victimsupport.org.uk**

To find out how you can help us, visit **victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved**

victimsupport.org.uk

f **VictimSupport**

@VictimSupport

victimsupport_uk

Business Disability Forum
Building disability-smart organisations

Leaders in Diversity Award

Stonewall DIVERSITY CHAMPION