

UPSKILLING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FOR DIGITAL FUTURES

Guide for Child Health Colleagues

The problem

- Inequitable digital access and insufficient digital skill development, limits young people's access to education, services, and wellbeing support.
- The digital divide reinforces existing inequalities, especially for children in low-income families, rural communities, and minoritised groups.
- A lack of collaboration between health and education sectors is hindering children's long-term health, learning, and socioeconomic outcomes.

What you can do as a child health practitioner

- **Partner with schools to deliver digital literacy and safety education**, particularly around screen use, online harms, and critical thinking, and advocate for policies that support children
- **Support families with digital navigation and signposting**, including access to digital devices, safe internet use, and online health services.
- **Advocate for the use of public health and education data to identify local digital access gaps** and co-develop targeted responses with schools and local authorities.
- **Champion the inclusion of digital wellbeing within all consultations**, especially for children and young people (CYP) affected by online abuse or exclusion.
- **Collaborate with local organisations and tech partners** to deliver or signpost place-based digital upskilling initiatives for CYP and their families.

Evidence-based insights

Digital skills shortages cost the UK **£63 billion annually**, with projections suggesting **5 million workers** will be under-skilled by 2030.

1 in 5 children lacked internet access during the pandemic, with long-lasting consequences for education, mental health, and opportunity.

Examples of good practice that you may wish to explore:

Living Well Schools

A digital hub connecting schools to tailored health and wellbeing services, helping address the digital divide and health inequity in education.

#Speakout

A student-led campaign tackling online harassment through education, surveys, and youth-informed digital safety strategies.

Impact Gamers

A non-profit organisation engaging young people in digital creativity by teaching game development and integrating tech skills into the curriculum.

NCCE West Yorkshire Computing Hub

The hub upskills teachers and provides support to schools to help prepare students for a digital future.

Check out the innovative approaches outlined in this briefing and **consider taking inspiration from these approaches to reflect on how you can help create positive change.**



Scan the QR Code for the report

Please share this guide and start a discussion with your colleagues about how we can all play our role in building a country that works for all children and young people.