**New badges linked to Safer Internet Day February 2020.**

**Message from Scouts Digital**

This Safer Internet Day, we’re launching two new activities and a Fun Badge to develop young people’s online skills. Created in partnership with Nominet, these new resources are vital for gearing up young people for the future.  Eleanor Bradley, MD of Registry Solutions & Public Benefit from Nominet, tells us more about the resources and the role they play in making savvy digital citizens and keeping young people safe.

Today, internet safety is a priority on the list of life lessons for young people, but it can be one of the hardest for parents and teachers to instruct. The generation that grew up in an analogue world often struggles to influence those who are growing up digitally. I speak from experience: my children are much more digitally ‘savvy’ than me, adopting new trends and mastering apps so quickly, that it’s easy to forget that they may lack the maturity to understand the risks or recognise the dangers they can present.

That’s why [Safer Internet Day](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2020) is such an important date on the calendar. Established in 2011, this international day is spearheaded in the UK by Childnet International, Internet Watch Foundation and South West Grid for Learning, while being part-funded by the European Union and a section of the Insafe-INHOPE network.

At Nominet, we mark the event each year by sharing advice and highlighting the importance of internet safety for young people. As guardian of the .UK namespace, promoting safety and security is paramount. And it’s an increasingly complex challenge. As a registry, we collaborate with the Internet Watch Foundation to tackle child abuse images and videos and work with law enforcement agencies to suspend domains used for criminal ends.

But we know that to tackle a challenge as huge as internet safety requires savvy citizens. And so, for this year’s Safer Internet Day we’ve developed a specific [Scouts](https://members.scouts.org.uk/) badge to help reach more young people with these important messages.

The Safer Internet Day Badge helps young people develop two all-important skills – spotting fake news and being aware of their digital footprint. Classed as a Scouts ‘Fun Badge’, it can be completed in a single, interactive session. Importantly, it’s been carefully developed to build the critical thinking skills and nurture the resilience required for a young person to be aware of online risks and to then put them into practice.

With over 400,000 boys and girls part of UK Scouts, this badge is a powerful way to spread awareness and will, we hope, start to form new habits and behaviours amongst our younger digital citizens.

It’s also complementing the ongoing work at the Scouts to be more digitally-minded, transforming an organisation that was established for a very different world in 1922. Lara Burns, Chief Digital Officer at the Scouts, is spearheading this transformation and has incorporated some of the badge’s curriculum into staff training too. As Lara says, “Scouts aren’t the only ones that need these skills – digital skills are life skills now.”

That said, young people are a critical audience because their youth and relative naivety can place them in greater danger online. As they grow up, young people don’t always listen to their parents, and teachers can only do so much, so an organisation like Scouts can provide the sort of input that this demographic may not get, or be receptive to, from other sources.

We can’t deny the increasing role digital devices and the internet play in young peoples’ emotional growth, relationship forming and learning. All we can do as responsible adults is to provide them with the tools and information to behave as good citizens, online as well as off. The Safer Internet Day Badge is a small part of making that happen.

But it’s worth remembering that adults don’t always have all the answers. Scout or not, perhaps we can all take a moment on Safer Internet Day to consider our own behaviours online, and focus on being good, safe digital citizens.

Give your young people the skills they need to safely navigate the online world by sharing these activities; [Yes, no, maybe](https://scouts.org.uk/activities/yes-no-maybe/) and [Digital detectives](https://scouts.org.uk/activities/digital-detectives/), and helping them achieve their [Safer Internet Badge](https://shop.scouts.org.uk/new-in/safer-internet-day-woven-fun-badge).