Link to website to access the different chapters:

https://tutorful.co.uk/guides/how-to-keep-kids-safe-online

How To Keep Kids Safe Online

The internet has transformed the way we all live, learn and communicate. For children and young people the digital revolution has created so many opportunities. But it has also created risks. For every new piece of technology a new danger may present itself in a way that children, families and society may not immediately understand.

Children going online risk, among other things, seeing inappropriate material, becoming a victim of cyber-bullying or being coerced into sexting by their friends. The internet allows children to feel in control of situations, something they may not have in the real world, which can result in them being less inhibited and therefore more open in their communication and contact with others. Yet, children do not always comprehend the consequences of their actions and the pressure to be continually online may mean that children act in ways that are risky.

At Barnardo's, we have been supporting victims of sexual exploitation for the last two decades, yet in the last few years our services have seen a change in the way children are being sexually exploited. Children are increasingly being contacted online and groomed into exploitative relationships. They are sometimes manipulated into sending sexual images of themselves or into meeting the offender(s) in person. All children online can be at risk, even those in the home. They may be online and enjoying communicating with new 'friends' and trying out apps that have few safeguards, with family and friends oblivious to the risks they are taking.

Whilst these risks may appear frightening to parents/guardians, there are many resources available to help them feel more confident and informed about the digital world children and young people live in. Children and young people are technologically and digitally savvy, often knowing more than their parents about new apps and technology. The focus of online safety should be on helping children understand the risks of going online and develop the tools to build their knowledge of the dangers and their understanding and resilience to it. This is a role that adults, and particularly parents/guardians, can play in helping keep children safe online, as they would in the offline world.

Materials and websites like this can only add to our ability to protect and support children and young people in our ever developing world of digital communication.