E-safety Factsheet for Parents

Positive and Negative Aspects of the Internet:

Positive aspects of the Internet and apps:

- Great for research and creativity
- Cheap or free communication and collaboration
- Easy to create and publish content and get it noticed
- Great for children to develop future job skills as fun hobbies
- Introduces children to the world of commerce and business
- Encourages creativity and individualism
- Children feel they have 'ownership' of the Internet

Negative aspects of the Internet and apps:

- Cyber bullying and the lack of appropriate rules
- Online privacy and personal information and the increasing likelihood of being hacked
- Reputation management and 'digital footprint'
- Sexting, grooming, pornography and inappropriate material
- Illegal downloads and copyright infringement
- Spam, phishing, viruses and malware
- Children lying about their age to get onto social networking platforms with a 13+ age limit
- Pressure to respond to comments 24/7

The positives need to outweigh the negatives in e-safety education:

The best outcome regarding e-safety incidents, cyber bullying and online harassment with school-aged children is always to persuade the pupils to see the consequences of their actions and remove the material of their own accord. It is important to promote positive digital citizenship and ensure that children treat peers with respect.

Much better outcomes are seen when children decide for themselves what is and is not appropriate and self-regulate their actions. Schools and parents have a huge role to play in providing this guidance first, rather than imposing rigid rules and sanctions as an initial measure.

Minimum age limits:

Most social networking sites and apps are based in the US and under privacy laws in this country, you have to be 13 years old to register. There is no legal violation if you use these sites or apps if you are under 13. The only rule you are breaking is the terms and conditions set up by company that owns the site or app.

Many children and young people have become savvy to this and use sites below the age of 13. The important issue around this is that they can then put themselves in potential danger as predators can target them when using this sites/apps. With the development of video streaming and photo apps, children need to be aware of the pitfalls.

Also, parents need to be aware of back channeling which is when conversations take place along side an activity e.g. playing video games.

Statistics:

Social Networking Use

- Facebook now has 2.2 billion monthly active users.
- There are 83 million fake Facebook profiles.
- Photo uploads total 300 million per day.
  Source: https://zephoria.com

- Instagram has a much younger audience, 40% of its UK users are aged 13-24.
- 56% of Instagram users are female (vs 43% of Facebook users).
  Source: http://www.rosemcgrory.co.uk/

- 71% of Snapchat's users are under 34 years old. Roughly 70% are female
  Source http://www.omnicoreagency.com

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- YouTube has over 1.5 billion users – and each day, 5 billion videos are watched
- Each day, YouTube is viewed on a mobile device 500 million times
  Source http://www.omnicoreagency.com

Sexting

- Six out of 10 teenagers say they have been asked for sexual images or videos
- 40% said they had created a sexual image or video, and about a quarter said they had sent one to someone else by text.
- Of those who had sent an image or video to someone else by text, 58% said the image had been sent to a boyfriend or girlfriend, but a third said they had sent it to someone they knew online but had never met.
- About 15% said they had sent the material to a stranger.
- Of those who said they had sent a photo to someone, 20% said it had then been shared with other people, while 28% said they did not know if their picture had been shared with anyone else.
- More than half (53%) of those questioned said they had received a sexual photo or video, a third of whom had received it from a stranger.
  Source: NSPCC/Childline

Online behaviours

- One in five 12-15s and one in ten 8-11s who go online say they have seen something online in the past year that was worrying or nasty.
- Although Facebook remains most likely to be children's main site, use of other social media services is growing.
- One in five of all 5-15s only go online using a device other than a desktop or laptop.
- The number of children with a social media profile doubles between the ages of 10 and 11.
- One in ten 11-15s are still communicating via social media at 10pm.
- Five per cent of 8-11s and 14% of 12-15s use chat features in online gaming to talk to people they only know through the game.
- Photos, videos and avatars are the most popular online creative activities.
- 12-15s say they are cautious about the sites they use and the data they give away.
  Source: OFCOM, 2016

Children and parents:media use and attitudes report

Every autumn, Ofcom publish an extensive media useage report. This report examines children's media literacy. It provides detailed evidence on media use, attitudes and understanding among children and young people aged 5-15, as well as detailed information about the media access and use of young children aged 3-4.

The report also includes findings relating to parents' views about their children's media use, and the ways that parents seek – or decide not – to monitor or limit use of different types of media.

The report can be downloaded from the Ofcom website: https://www.ofcom.org.uk

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Key tips:

- Know what your children are doing online.
- As they get older, ensure that they become more resilient to the pressures associated with the Internet.
- Be aware who your children are talking to online. Make it clear that people that they don't know are strangers.
- Explain why your children should not give out personal details online.
- Emphasise that having many different 'followers' or 'likes' does not necessarily make them popular.
- Explain to your child that nothing is private on the Internet – anything can be copied, whether it be private pictures, comments or messages.
- Point out that your child should always consider what an employer or partner might be able to find about them on Google in 5 to 10 years' time.
- Avoid replying to junk, spam or phishing emails, or opening attachments which might contain viruses or malware.
- Make sure that children become better critical thinkers and can evaluate content on the Internet such as propaganda.
- Ensure your child does not meet up with online friends.
- Creating a positive environment where your child can be open and inquisitive and feel confident discussing their online experiences, whether positive or negative.
- Teach your children how to block and report any behaviour or content which makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Investigate ways in which you can set parental controls on devices and home broadband.

Useful links:

- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.internetmatters.org/
- www.commonsensemedia.org/
- www.childnet.com/
- www.safeguardingessentials.com