

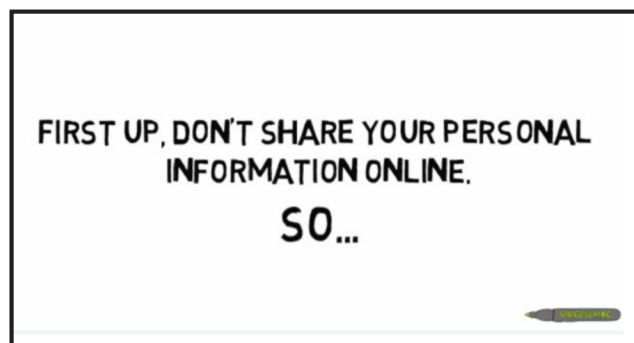
eSafety Newsletter

Autumn 2013

Ask.fm

Many of you will have seen the news stories over the summer about young people being bullied and harassed on social networking sites and this leading to tragic events. One of the sites involved is Ask.fm, in which people can ask and answer questions to each other, often anonymously. This anonymity is open to abuse and the site is frequently used for posting hurtful or obscene messages. Herts for Learning has created some guidance for young people and their parents and carers about the use of Ask.fm and similar websites. It includes a helpsheet and a video which shows how to switch off anonymous posting, report a concern or disable your account if you no longer wish to use it. The information is available here:

www.thegrid.org.uk/eservices/safety/social_networking/askfm.shtml



The over 13 rule

It's easy to ignore the terms and conditions of websites and services when we sign up for them, but when we click 'accept' we are saying that we have read and understood them. One of the common terms of social websites is that children under 13 may not sign up. This is true of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and many others, as they are complying with a United States law known as COPPA, or the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. This act states that the personal information of children under 13 must not be collected by entities under U.S jurisdiction, which many of the biggest websites and online services are. Whilst this may not be legally enforceable in the UK, it is nevertheless a violation of the terms of the site in question. **There are many additional reasons why in Britain we would be concerned about under 13s using these websites. These are explained in our guidance:**



www.thegrid.org.uk/eservices/safety/social_networking/documents/facebook_the_magic_13v2.pdf

Snapchat

A popular service on many young people's mobile phones and devices is Snapchat. This allows people to snap and send photos or videos to each other, but which disappear from the receiver's device after a short time. Thinking that their photo will disappear, never to be seen again, may lull people into a false sense of security, leading them to send photos which they really would not want shared. It is easy for someone receiving a Snapchat image to capture it permanently on their phone. Whilst the sender may be alerted if this happens, it nevertheless means the picture could be shared beyond its intended audience. 'Leaked' sites have emerged where embarrassing or compromising images from Snapchat are published to the world. The advice must be, very strongly, never to send anything that you would not want to be completely public.

It's good to talk

Talking to children and young people about their internet use is so important, but it can be difficult. Sometimes it seems they speak a different language and know so much more about it than we do. To help you, Herts for Learning has a downloadable sheet entitled "Mind the gap" with a series of questions and prompts to help you start this essential dialogue. It can be accessed from here: www.thegrid.org.uk/eservices/safety/documents/mind_the_gapv2.pdf

Communication Apps



You may have decided that your child will not have a mobile phone until a certain age, but you have allowed them to have a portable gaming or media device. It's important to remember that most of these now go online and have virtually the same functionality as mobile phones. For example, through most tablets or media players (eg iPod Touch) you can send text messages and images, talk to someone via webcam and access social networks. Many of the communication apps available are not aimed at children. For example, the popular 'WhatsApp' messaging service requires users to be over 16. So always check the age requirements and the nature of any app that your child wants on their device.

Anti Bullying Week

This year National Anti-Bullying Week falls on week commencing 18th November. It is a great opportunity to raise awareness about the problems of bullying, both online and off, and to work with children and young people to make a stand against it. Throughout the week, Herts for Learning is offering a series of pupil workshops and awareness sessions for staff or parents. To find out more, visit: www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/hwb/bullying/news/antibullying_week.shtml

Safer Internet Day 2014: Let's Create a Better Internet Together

This falls on 11th February 2014, and it's not too early to start thinking about the activities you could run for pupils and parents. For inspiration, visit the Safer Internet Day website (www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2014) or contact the Herts for Learning eSafety team.



CEOP warns of webcam abuse

The Children's Exploitation and Online Protection agency (CEOP) is warning people about the rising use of webcams by sex offenders to blackmail children and young people. They are asking schools to run assemblies/lessons to raise awareness about these types of crime, and have produced new resources for teachers which can be downloaded from here: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers/resources

For further eSafety advice, resources or to report an incident please contact

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