

## Internet Safety Tips for Teachers, Parents and Carers:-

- All internet enabled devices (iPad, phone, iPod, Xbox) **SHOULD** be in a common area of the house **NOT IN THE BEDROOM!** Need an alarm - buy a clock radio!
- Parental monitoring is vital – walk past and see what your child is doing, who they are talking to and what sites they are on....be aware if their mood changes. This is NOT invading their privacy at all...it is parenting in the digital space
- Make sure there is no response to rude or harassing comments. (keep a record in case of further investigation)
- Advise your student/child to immediately exit any site that makes them feel uncomfortable or worried. Basic protective behaviour principles apply.
- If harassment continues....the current accounts can be deleted and a new one started. The new account details should only be given to a selected few.
- If receiving harassing messages on social media - have the sender blocked & report to the site.
- If you have found inappropriate content about your child or one in your care on a website or are informed about this situation please contact the ISP and or Police or advise the parent to do so a.s.a.p.
- Have a family internet contract and set house rules about what information your child can put onto websites or share with others, where they go online and what they do. You (adult) need to be in charge.
- Be aware the majority of children **WILL NOT** tell a parent/teacher if bullied or harassed online for fear that they will lose internet access!! NEVER threaten total disconnection!
- Make sure that your children understand that they will not get in trouble if they tell you about a problem.
- Parents must learn about the internet with their child – get students to share their knowledge of the internet with their parents in a fun environment
- Spend time online with children, just as you would with many other activities such as sport, board games and walking the dog - learn and explore together
- Install filters and other monitoring/blocking software to minimise dangers. This is already done in schools but homes should have up to date filtering software installed at home.
- Know the sites they are accessing to ensure suitability. Filters **CAN** sometimes fail to protect and can be bypassed by a 'tech savvy' child.
- Learn the lingo so that you can decipher some of the content if required. Advise parents to do the same.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCHANGE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION!**
- Children Under 13 **ARE NOT ALLOWED** on Facebook, Instagram, Kik, SnapChat, iTunes and many more. Don't support your child to break the rules & they won't be the only one without these accounts. Learn to say NO!
- Social Networking Profiles **MUST BE SET TO PRIVATE.** Use all the security settings available to make the site as safe as possible.
- Social networking site friends should be people that your child knows in real life. This is one way to reduce possible risks. Anyone can be anyone online.
- Teach children that information on the internet is not always reliable.
- Very close supervision for young children is recommended. There should be a limit to the number of people kids talk to online and the parent/carer should know who they are too. approved.
- Whatever your children use, you must use as well. Set up accounts on the same sites to ensure that they are suitable and the interactions appropriate. Engage with them online. This also allows you to know how these applications work.
- If your child is playing online games it is **YOUR** responsibility to make sure that **YOU** know how to play the game too in case of problems. Play online games together.
- Do not let young children 'google' aimlessly with no supervision. Children need to be taught about search engines and how they work.
- The internet and the various applications are a lot of fun and a wonderful tool.....maximize the benefits and surf safely together!

*Please note that this list is by no means exhaustive and that there is no guarantee that adherence to these tips will provide 100% protection or safety for those using the various applications of the internet.*

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## Signs a child may be being cyber bullied?

- Change in mood and/or behaviour
- Lowering of grades at school
- Not wanting to go to school / sport etc
- Not feeling 'well', headaches, stomach-aches
- Being extra secretive in online activities
- 'jumpy' when text messages arrive
- Not putting their phone down
- Wanting to be online all the time....or never
- Changes in their online habits
- Upset, angry, teary.....rebellious when not previously
- Change in friendship groups
- Spending more time with family instead of friends

## What can I do if my child is the cyber bully?

- Support the child, they are probably feeling awful too
- Talk to them about their actions
- Try and find out why they behaved in this way
- Ask them to imagine they were the victim...how would they feel (empathy)
- Work together to improve the situation....apology etc
- Work towards preventing further incidents
- Enlist the help of school, welfare staff, local GP or child psychologist

## Signs

- *Loosing track of time online*
- *Having trouble completing tasks on time (homework / chores)*
- *Isolation from family and friends (replacing real friends for only online friends or other gamers)*
- *Feeling guilty or defensive about the time you spend online - "I don't have a problem, you are the one with the problem"*
- *Feeling only happy when in the 'gaming' environment.*
- *Withdrawal from daily activities (school refusal / withdrawing from sport teams)*

**Physical Symptoms can include:-***Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (pain and numbness in hands and wrists), dry eyes or strained vision, back aches and neck aches, severe headaches, sleep disturbances, pronounced weight gain or weight loss*

## What can you do?

Acknowledging that your child has a problem around their use of online games can be very confusing. It often moves from a manageable stage to one that appears hopeless. Making sure that from the very first game your child plays online you play too. You need to see the content of the game to ensure suitability and also to understand the way the game works. Make sure the content is age and developmentally suitable for your child. The fact that others in your child's grade play the game is *not* a good guide as to its suitability for your child. Check not only the 'rating' of the game, view the content as well. World of Warcraft or WOW for short, is noted by researchers and practitioners around the world as the most psychologically damaging and addictive game on the Internet. Set very clear rules about your child's online gaming and have strict time limits. If you see you're child continually trying to push the boundaries, staying online for longer than allowed or logging on when you are out or asleep, then do not ignore these signs. There are four defined levels of Pathological Internet Use or PIU and corresponding treatment options: -

**Level 1** – *Mild impact / early problems*

*Treatment - in house efforts, family support, self-help*

**Level 2** – *Increased impact /social circle notices (school, peers)*

*Treatment - Associates, school counsellor*

**Level 3** - *Clinical impact, specific interventions indicated*

*Treatment - Clinical Psychologist*

**Level 4** - *Addiction or PIU, major or whole social role impacted (takes over their life to the exclusion of all else)*

*Treatment - Psychiatric / inpatient plus medication considerations*

For further information please visit [NIIRA.org.au](http://NIIRA.org.au) which, is the only organization in Australia devoted to the issue of Problematic Internet Use (Internet Addiction). You can download a self-assessment tool called *i.m.p.r.o.v.e.* that will help you to identify the level of problem you may be experiencing within your family.

# cybersafetysolutions

## Further Resources

This is my website....

Good info for schools and parents. Excellent cyber safety program for young children called Hectors World.

Excellent cybersafety program from the UK. I prefer this website to the Australian version

Excellent bullying and cyberbullying site run by Bill Belsey, a Canadian Gr 5 teacher

Comprehensive internet safety portal by expert Parry Aftab. Love her work!

A public service website run the internet industry. Good solid info. USA based but relevant info for Aussie parents

[www.cybersafetysolutions.com.au](http://www.cybersafetysolutions.com.au)

[www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au)

[www.NetSmartz.org](http://www.NetSmartz.org)

[www.netsafe.org.nz](http://www.netsafe.org.nz)

[www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)

[www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)

[www.thinkyouknow.org.uk](http://www.thinkyouknow.org.uk)

[www.bullying.org](http://www.bullying.org)

[www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org)

[www.digizen.org.uk](http://www.digizen.org.uk)

[www.GetNetWise.org](http://www.GetNetWise.org)

[www.communications.gov.au](http://www.communications.gov.au)

Australian Govt. Site.

Most popular internet safety education program in USA schools Regularly updated. Excellent content. My favourite.

Great information and the best video resources. Follow on Twitter or Facebook for regular updates

One stop shop for video games & apps ratings and reviews. Sign up for regular newsletters or follow on social media.

Let's Fight it Together video and other good resources.

Aust. Govt site. Download the cybersafety help button and a list of apps/websites/games & their age restrictions.

*This is a short list from the 100's internet safety websites available. By visiting these you will obtain a greater appreciation of internet safety. All are good sites, but as with everything, each of you will find one that you prefer, or you may like different areas of several sites. Happy surfing!*



A must read for all teenagers! The reality of cyberbullying exposed.



A graphic but excellent book about the online grooming of children.



Self-help book for parents, packed with practical advice.



The author draws on her own experiences to write a truly gripping novel about the dangers of chatrooms.



Practical guide for parents and teachers by bullying expert Evelyn Field.



Two fabulous books by Maggie Hamilton...a must read for all parents. Learn what our kids are exposed to and how it can impact on

**\*\* Prepared by Susan McLean**

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