Safer Internet Day 2012

Safer Internet Day is organised by Insafe each year in February to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially amongst children and young people.

Safer Internet Day 2012 is taking place on the 7th February and will be celebrated worldwide with a focus on "Connecting Generations". This year is an opportunity to encourage users young and old to "discover the digital world together safely". An inspirational array of activity is taking place nationwide, coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk), with all activities focusing attention on empowering all generations to safely benefit from the opportunities that the internet offers.

Whether you are 5, 40 or 75 years old, whether you use the internet once a month or several times a day - each person has something different to bring to the table that can help shape our online experiences and our understanding of online competences and safety. We all have a role to play in ensuring that every child is safe online. Our offline and online worlds are strongly connected, from families communicating via webcam with relatives and friends abroad to children doing their homework online. The online world is a unique arena where people of all ages can learn together and from each other, especially regarding online safety. Tech savvy children can teach their elders how to use new technologies, while grandparents and parents/carers can draw on their life experiences to advise younger generations on how to stay safe online, as they discover the digital world together.

Top tips on internet safety for parents/carers:

1. Discuss keeping safe online with your child online much like you would keeping safe in "real" life.

2. Understand the different types of technology your child uses such as Games consoles, mobile phones and social networking sites. Why not ask your child to teach you how to use them safely!

3. Have family rules and boundaries about how the internet and other devices (such as mobile phones and games consoles) will be used and be clear about what behaviour is acceptable.

4. Make sure your children are aware that they need to think very carefully about the information and pictures they share, as once information is published, it's possible that anyone can use, change or share it without them knowing.

5. Always keep communication open so that your children feel able to report any concerns they have online. Visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents to find out more about keeping children safe online.

Mobile Phone Safety

Mobile Phones are now part of everyday life and are a great way to keep in touch with people by calling, texting or sending photo or video messages. With a third of all 5 to 16 year olds believed to have a mobile phone, it's essential that parents/carers are aware how they can be used safely.

Research conducted by YouGov for the Carphone Warehouse has been published which has found that whilst 44% of parents say they have parental controls in place on their home PC/laptop and 84 percent also have anti-virus software installed on their computer, the same care isn't applied to children's mobile phones smartphones. Nearly half (46%) of parents said they are unaware parental controls for mobile phones exist. With more than two in five (21%) of 8 to 15 year olds in the UK having accessed inappropriate content from their mobile

phones, it's essential that parents and carers are aware how to educate and protect their children no matter how they access the internet.

Professor Tanya Byron has been advising the Government on child internet safety since 2007 and worked with the Carphone Warehouse to procude a guide for parents on mobile web safety. Professor Byron says "With a digital divide existing between generations, and with only 13 percent of children having the correct parental restrictions installed on their phone, it's important we enable parents to support, educate and, as necessary, protect their children. This can be done by ensuring their mobile phone use is responsible, safe and as secure as possible. It is also important parents develop an honest communication with their children so that they can support them to be responsible digital citizens and help them with any worries or concerns that should arise."

Mobile Phone Safety advice for children and young people:

● Only give your mobile number to your friends and people that you trust and don't share it on social networking websites
● Don't lend your phone to someone you don't know or trust, or put it in a place where other people could get hold of it.
● Lock your phone with a PIN code so if anyone steals your phone they won't be able to use it.
● If you have Bluetooth on your phone, keep this switched off when you are not using it.
● If your mobile phones uses GPS technology then make sure you only share your location with trusted friends and family
● Always check your privacy settings on applications you use on your mobile phone as sometimes these will be different to when you use websites online
● Always remember that once you've sent a text, picture or video (even to someone you know or trust) they can send it to other people without you knowing, so always think before you post
● If something happens on your mobile phone that makes you feel worried or uncomfortable then always speak to an adult you trust straight away.

For more help and information about mobile phone safety please visit the following websites:

Kent Police information: http://www.kent.police.uk/advice/personal/internet/netsafe.html

A parents Guide to Technology: http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide

Vodafone Parents Guide: http://parents.vodafone.com/

Orange Mobile and Online safety: http://www1.orange.co.uk/safety/

T Mobile Advice for parents: http://www.t-mobile.co.uk/help-and-advice/advice-for-parents/

02, Keeping Kids safe: http://www.o2.co.uk/parents/

Carphone Warehouse Guide to Mobile Web Safety: http://www.carphonewarehouse.com/mobilewebsafety

Mumsnet Mobile Phone Safety advice: http://www.mumsnet.com/internet-safety/mobile-phones

Childnet International: Know it All for Parents: http://www.childnet.com/kia/parents/

CEOP Think U Know website: www.thinkuknow.co.uk