

Communicating The Issues To Your Children

The following SMART TIPS have been written especially for younger children. Spend time going through them now!



SECRET – Always keep your name, address, mobile phone number and password private - it's like giving out the keys to your home!



MEETING someone you have contacted in cyberspace can be dangerous. Only do so with your parent's/carer's permission, and then when they can be present.



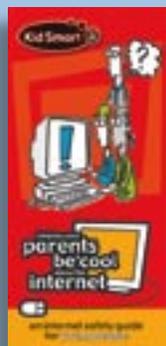
ACCEPTING e-mails or opening files from people you don't really know or trust can get you into trouble - they may contain viruses or nasty messages.



REMEMBER someone online may be lying and not be who they say they are. Stick to the public areas in chat rooms and if you feel uncomfortable simply get out of there!



TELL your parent or carer if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried.



A special leaflet for young people "Helping Your Parents Be Cool About The Internet" is also available.

Contact Childnet on 020 7639 6967 for further information.

Further Advice & Resources



The **Kidsmart** website contains further resources and activities for both parents, teachers & children including the online role play activity "Net Detectives."

www.kidsmart.org.uk



Chatdanger.com - vital advice for young people and parents on using Internet Chat rooms safely.

www.chatdanger.com



The **Cable & Wireless Childnet Awards** site showcases over 100 inspiring projects designed by young people and teachers.

www.childnetawards.org



Childnet's main site includes further information and links to a wide range of other resources.

www.childnet-int.org

"Childnet's Kidsmart programme helps both parents, teachers and children to understand the dangers whilst at the same time encourages positive Internet use."



Carol Vorderman

Kidsmart is an Internet safety awareness programme for schools run by Childnet with support from Cable & Wireless and the Department for Education and Skills. The programme helps pupils, teachers and parents to understand Internet safety issues and includes creative online role-play activities, and resources to encourage children to stay safe and be smart online.

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keeping up with your child on the internet



an internet safety guide for parents

The Internet- It's A Real World Out There!

It can be a tough job keeping up to date with kids these days. Just when we thought we were doing OK and could use E-mail, along comes Chat, Instant Messaging and Texting. Suddenly we have a whole new language and new challenges for us parents.



This guide will help you understand the online safety issues and gives practical help as you talk to your children about their Internet use with these SMART Safety Tips.

But My Kids Know More Than I Do!

Many adults can feel intimidated in using the Internet and are baffled by some of the terms and technology. While it is true that many children may have better technical skills than you, children still need parental advice and protection in using this new tool. After all, you can teach your children the importance of wearing a seat belt in a car without understanding how the engine works!



So What Are The Dangers?

The Internet is like bringing a city into your living room: there are the exciting places for children to go and enjoy but also lots of places where you wouldn't want your children to go unsupervised.

The main dangers for children can be grouped into:

CONTACT - Potentially from someone online who may wish to harm them. Children must re-learn the "stranger=danger" rule in a new context and never give out personal details or meet alone with anyone they've contacted via the Internet.

CONTENT - Keep an eye on the material your children are looking at and agree the ground rules about where your children go and how they behave.

COMMERCIALISM - Aggressive online marketing which can invade your child's privacy. Encourage your children not to fill out forms which ask for lots of personal details.

Can't I Just Use A Filter?

Filtering software can help to block a lot of inappropriate material but they are not 100% effective and are no substitute for good parental involvement. Internet use at school is generally filtered, supervised and safe. But many children use the net at friends' homes, Internet cafes, libraries and youth clubs where there may be no filters and little supervision.

It's therefore important to help educate your children about how to behave online and discuss problems which they may have. It helps to keep the computer in a family room - not tucked away in a bedroom.



What About Mobile Phones?

The issues about being careful online apply equally to mobile telephones. Already many mobiles and hand-held devices have Internet facilities on them. It is very important to encourage your children not to give out their mobile numbers to strangers or people they cannot trust completely. Talk about the sort of text messages your children are receiving and sending.



Stick To The Positive

Encourage your children to stick to the fun and positive sites on the net that reinforce their interests. Just as you look out for good TV programmes for children, take the time to find the best and most useful websites for you and your family.

