FACT SHEET: Online Behaviour

The Issue: Keeping your kids safe online

The internet is a fantastic resource but without supervision, it can also open your kids up to potential dangers. To protect your kids, it's important to know the risks and to teach them how to be safety-savvy online.

There are five main risk areas for kids online.

- Pornography
- Identity theft
- Cyber-bullying
- Becoming the target of sexual predators
- Gaming addiction

Is your child at risk?

Kids who are on the internet often, for large chunks of time with little or no supervision, spending a lot of time in chat rooms or gaming and using the computer in their bedroom or in a private space are at the biggest risk. Any one of the above can decrease their online safety.

Signs to Look Out For

Trouble Shooting

Signs that your child is being impacted by their internet use can include becoming withdrawn socially, having disturbed sleep, depression, getting into trouble at home or school and abnormal moods and behaviour. Other signs are a disinterest in school or sporting activities, avoiding using their mobile phone and anxiety after being online.

Danger signs you shouldn't ignore

There are sexual predators online that target the young and vulnerable. Signs this could be happening to your child are …

1. Your child is receiving phone calls and/or gifts from people you don't know or is calling numbers you don't recognise.

2. There is pornography on your child's computer or their online history shows they are visiting unsafe sites or sites you don't recognise.

3. Your child changes the screen or turns the computer off when you enter the room

TIPS

10 things you can do to protect your kids online

While it's impossible to make internet use completely safe for kids, the good news is that protecting your kid online can be easy.

- ✓ Limit the time they spend online – set clear boundaries and stick to them
- ✓ Get protector software on your computers that blocks access to risky sites.
- ✓ Get involved with, and understand the technology your child is using
- ✓ Direct your kid to age-appropriate sites and find out about the sites they are visiting
- ✓ Allow internet use only in shared family areas at home
- ✓ Explain that they must not give out their phone number or address online at any time
- ✓ Encourage them to report behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable or afraid.
- ✓ Without scaring them, explain that stranger danger also works online.
- ✓ Ask your child to let you know if someone your child has met online wants to get in contact or meet face to face.
- ✓ Make sure they understand what behaviour is acceptable online, both from them and others.

Help Is a Phone Call Away

If you feel you need some advice or support call the confidential 24 hour helpline 1800 200 526 to talk with experienced counsellors.

For more information check out www.bullyingnoway.com.au

What can I expect when I call the helpline?

Your call will be answered by a person, no answering machines, no recorded messages. The person who answers your call will be an experienced counsellor, not the police, not a government department.

You will not have to give your name, You can request a male or female counsellor.

They can also help connect you to other support services as needed.

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) Phone 13 14 50

Hearing Impaired or Deaf Callers phone the National Relay Service 13 36 77 and quote 1800 200 526.