**PC’s and other internet enabled devices (Ipod, Iphones, Xbox) **SHOULD be in a common area of the house NOT IN THE BEDROOM! **

**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.**

Make sure there is no response to rude or harassing emails. (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 email account can be deleted and a new one started. The new email address should only be given to a selected few.

If receiving harassing messages on MSN /Facebook etc - have the sender blocked.

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 loose 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 14 ARE NOT ALLOWED on FACEBOOK. Don’t support your child to break the rules.

Social Networking Profiles such as Facebook **MUST BE SET TO PRIVATE.**

MSN contacts and 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 email correspondence/MSN to be a list of friends and family that has been approved.

Set up an MSN, Facebook, MySpace account….whatever your children use and 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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Cyberbullying Fact Sheet

Cyberbullying can be described as any harassment, insults and humiliation that occurs through the electronic mediums such as email, mobile phones, social networking sites, instant messaging programs, chat rooms, web-sites and through the playing of online games.

Forms of Cyberbullying can include:-

- Harassing and threatening messages
- Sending nasty SMS, IM’s pictures or prank phone calls
- Using person’s screen name or password to pretend to be them
- Forwarding others’ private emails, messages, pictures or videos
- Posting mean or nasty comments or pictures
- Sending sexually explicit images – ‘sexting’
- Intentionally excluding others from an online group

What can I do if my child is being cyber bullied?

- Do not be angry with your child – remember that they are the victim and it is someone else doing the wrong thing
- Praise them for coming to you – this is a big step as most children are frightened to tell a parent about cyberbullying
- Save and store the emails, chat logs or SMS’s in case of Police investigation
- Help your child to block and delete the bully from all contact lists
- Do not respond to nasty emails, chats, SMS or comments – this is what the bully wants so ignore them. (They will need your help to do this)
- Use the ‘report abuse’ button which all websites/applications have. Tell them the problems you are having and they are obligated to investigate.
- Have some ‘down time’ without computer or mobile (do not do this as punishment, rather as some peaceful time where they are not being bothered)
- If unwanted contact continues, consider deleting email, msn, hotmail etc and start a new account. Only give your new details to a small list of trusted friends.
- Get a new phone number if being harassed on your phone. Report the problem to your phone company and insist on a new number for free.
- Inform your child’s school. It is important that they know what is going on so that they can monitor any issues at school.
- If ongoing report to Police. Each state has laws that prohibit online bullying and stalking. You don’t have to put up with it.
Grooming:

Grooming is where an adult contacts a child and by the words and actions during this contact, encourage, entice, recruit or induce the child to engage in sexual activity. This usually occurs over a period of time where a level of trust is developed between the adult and the child and often the child's family.

Online grooming is conducted in a similar fashion and is often a preliminary step to procuring, where the adult through the words and actions attempt to lower the child’s inhibitions regarding sexual activity or heighten their curiosity by sending pornographic material or talking about sexual matters.

Sexting:

Is the act of sending sexually explicit messages or photos electronically, primarily between mobile phones, but can include internet applications such as MSN, email, or social networking sites.

Once photos are sent, there is no way to get them back, and once in cyberspace, they become a permanent part of a person’s digital footprint. This means that they can forever be linked to that person and without doubt will resurface when least expected such as a job interview. Whilst the immediate fallout is usually amongst the persons peer group, school and local community where they can then be used to cyber bully and harass the victim. These images will then most likely fall into the hands or onto the computers of those with the predilection to sexually offend against children and young people.

It is a criminal offence to take, possess or transmit (share via technology) a naked image of a young person. It doesn’t matter how you came to possess the image, or if you willingly took the photo yourself and sent it on. It is still an offence. Remember, no-one can give you permission to break the law and you cannot give anyone else permission either.

Problematic Internet Use

The Internet appears to be capable of altering the mood, motivation, concentration, and producing a dissociating and disinhibiting experience for users; for some individuals, patterns of use can transform to abuse, taking on a compulsive quality. Studies suggest that the Internet may have psychological properties that are capable of altering mood and behaviour, often with little or no awareness. Many of the daily spheres of behaviour, including work, appear to be effected by this powerful technology.

Dr David Greenfield
Centre for Internet Behaviour USA

Problematic Internet Use is:-

- More common in adolescent males than females
- Often connected to online gaming sites
- Takes over their life of the young person to the exclusion of all else; school, family, eating and sleeping
- Leads to many other mental and physical health issues
- Needs to be addressed as a serious mental health issue and suitable treatment obtained from either your GP or through and adolescent psychologist.

Susan McLean
www.cybersafetysolutions.com.au
Further Resources

www.cybersafetysolutions.com.au
www.netalert.gov.au
www.NetSmartz.org
www.netsafe.org.nz
www.ceop.gov.uk
www.CyberTipline.org
www.iSafe.org
www.bullying.org
www.wiredsafety.org
www.digizen.org.uk
www.GetNetWise.org

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!

**Prepared by Susan McLean**
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