



Help keep your kids  
safe online



## Cyber safety for children

As parents the safety of our children is our number one priority – in the playground, at home and online. Just like wearing a helmet when riding a bike or sunscreen at the beach, every parent should know how to help make sure their children are safe on the internet.



# Your check list



## 5 steps to becoming an internet parent

- 1 Familiarise yourself** Talk with your child about their use of the internet
- 2 Explore** Explore these sites and technologies yourself
- 3 Restrict** Restrict inappropriate content and consider parental controls such as filtering
- 4 Talk** Talk to your child and encourage open communication
- 5 Know** Be aware of the potential dangers and know where to report potentially illegal or inappropriate behaviour online

## 5 steps to help protect your child online

- 1 Keep it private** Ensure your child keeps their profile and online friends private
- 2 Keep it friendly** Ensure your child knows what to do when they encounter cyber-bullying (Stop, Block and Tell!)
- 3 Keep it online** Ensure your child only ever meets online friends for the first time in the company of yourself or a trusted adult
- 4 Keep it locked** Make sure your child's mobile phone uses a PIN, so when lost or stolen it can't be used to auto-sign into their online profiles
- 5 Keep it real** Reinforce strong and positive personal and societal values and behaviours online

# 5 steps to becoming an internet parent

## 1 Familiarise yourself

Talk with your child about their use of the internet, what social networking sites they use, which ones they favour and how they prefer to keep in touch with their friends online. Show a healthy interest and celebrate the positive side of these social technologies.

## 2 Explore

Explore these sites and technologies yourself. Ask for advice about them from your child. Know which ones are the most popular for different age groups. Explore their Terms and Conditions. Discuss with your child how they keep themselves safe on each of these sites, what features they use to protect their identity and their own content.



### 3 Restrict

For young children, consider parental controls such as filtering or monitoring software.

Have rules for your children online: how long they spend on the internet (multi-user Internet games can be addictive), where they use their computer (open, family room settings are better than closed-door bedrooms), what sites are safe, what is appropriate content to view, what information they should be sharing online.

### 4 Talk

It is critical to have regular conversations with your child about their 'online life' and if anything is worrying them or has happened online.

Make it easy for them to come to you if something does happen that offends, scares or upsets them. But don't threaten to remove your child's access, this is a sure-fire way of ensuring your child never consults you about anything online.

### 5 Know

Be aware of potential dangers in the online world and find out what the more recent research says of the most common problems. Know where to report potentially illegal or inappropriate content or behaviour online. Contact the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs for illegal and/or child-exploitation issues.

# 5 steps to help protect your child online

## 1 Keep it private

Ensure your child keeps their profile and online friends private. Most social networking sites and other technologies (such as chat rooms) have both private and open/public settings. They should also avoid divulging personal information, including identifying photographs, to anyone they don't already know.

Ensure they understand that once posted/uploaded, content is non-retractable and will be part of their permanent record online. Someone, somewhere will always find it.

## 2 Keep it friendly

Cyber-bullying is poised to turn into the biggest online concern, already affecting up to 35% of all children<sup>1</sup>. Ensure your child knows what to do when they encounter cyber-bullying (Stop, Block and Tell!), and who to report it to - make sure you are on their list!

'Think before you send' is a great online rule for your child to live by. Ask them to think about the potential consequences to themselves and others of every video uploaded, every comment, every text, every email.

## 3 Keep it online

Ensure your child only ever meets online friends for the first time in the company of yourself or a trusted adult. Ensure your child never, ever organises to meet an online friend face-to-face for the first time on their own - no exceptions.

1. [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

#### 4 Keep it locked

Make sure your child's mobile phone uses a PIN, so when lost or stolen it can't be used to auto-sign into their online profiles (auto-sign-on is where a website auto-remembers a password). If in doubt, ask to set their Bluetooth-enabled phone to 'undiscoverable' – otherwise strangers can potentially access your children's phone and its data.

#### 5 Keep it real

Children find the internet an easier place to explore their identity, to challenge adult norms and boundaries, experiment with relationships and practice a range of behaviours. But many of the consequences of these things are amplified online.

Reinforce strong and positive personal and societal values and behaviours online. Help build resilience in your child to what they will undoubtedly come across on the internet: inappropriate content and cyber-bullying. Make sure they know how to handle themselves online.

For more information about cyber safety and how we can help, visit [www.cyberbullying.co.nz](http://www.cyberbullying.co.nz)

# Why help keep your kids safe online?

## Why should parents care?

New international research shows:

- 99% of children aged 8 to 17 years have access to the internet (ChildWise Monitor Report 2007 UK)
- Children have doubled their use of the internet from 7 hrs/week in 2005 to 13.8 hrs/week in 2007 (Ofcom March 2008)
- Almost one in seven children aged 8 to 17 years say they have come across harmful or inappropriate material (OfCom March 2008)
- Up to 35% of children have been bullied or harassed online ([www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) No hiding place for bullies)

## Online users are getting younger...

- A third of young children aged 8 or 9 have already been online for 3 years. (kidsonline @ home - Internet use in Australian homes, Netratings Australia, 2005).

## But young people face issues...

- cyber bullying and harassment,
- some children mistaking the online world for the real one,
- internet addiction,
- pornography and adult content,
- identity theft, and
- other anti-social and predatory behaviours.

## Dr Martyn Wild

Dr Martyn Wild is a cybersafety expert and e-learning researcher at La Trobe University (where he holds an Honorary position) and the Director of Intuitive Media Australia. Much of Martyn's work over the last five years has gone into the development of SuperClubsPLUS, the only age-verified and actively protected social learning network in Australia and the UK for young children, 6-12 years (with upwards of 130,000 members globally).

SuperClubsPLUS is a safe alternative to the wider-known social networks and actively encourages and stimulates children to practice how to be, and how to keep, safe online at all times. It has won multiple awards internationally for its education value, its innovation and of course, its cybersafety - including BAFTA, BIMA, EMMA, BETT and Internet Safety (Internet Watch Foundation) Awards.



**Notes...**

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