



Survey to mark Safer Internet Day 2012 finds that 86% of Irish parents think using the internet is an important part of their child's education

Safer Internet Day also marks launch of Webwise Primary School Programme and new Garda Primary Schools Programme to deal with online bullying

A new **survey into parent's attitudes to their children's use of the internet** has found that **86% of Irish parents think using the internet is an important part of their child's education.**

The findings of this survey, which was conducted by the **National Parents Council Primary and the National Centre for Technology in Education**, were announced today to mark Safer Internet Day 2012, which is part of a global drive to promote a safer internet for all users, especially young people.

Safer Internet Day is organised in Ireland by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) and is promoted through the website **Webwise.ie**, the Internet safety initiative of the NCTE.

The survey found the following:

- The risk that most parents (**83%**) said they were very concerned about was their child seeing inappropriate content on the internet
- **86%** do not think it's okay for an 11 year old child to use Facebook without their parent's permission
- **55% of all parents** regularly check what their child is doing online by viewing browser history files, emails and other records. 74% of parents with teenage children do this
- **86%** of Irish parents think using the internet is important for their child's education
- They also felt that the benefits of the internet were outweighed by the risks (31%:35%). This was most pronounced with parents of younger children (aged younger than 9 years) where **46%** thought that the risks outweigh the benefits and only **30%** felt the contrary.

- There was an almost **50:50** split between parents who said they trusted their child to use the internet safely versus those who didn't. Parents of teens were more likely to express trust at **51.9%**, parents of tweens at **46.1%** and parents of children under 9 years old at **28.2%**
- **74%** disagree that their child knows more about the internet than they do
- **86%** do not think it's okay for an 11 year old child to use Facebook without their parent's permission

Concerns

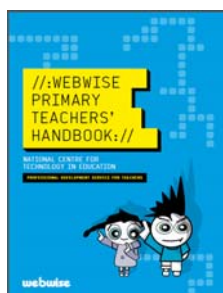
- The risk that most parents (**83%**) said they were very concerned about was their child seeing inappropriate content on the internet
- **65%** were concerned about giving out personal details to strangers
- 60% were concerned about their child being exposed to video game content
- **59%** were concerned about their child being bullied online

Mediation

- Almost all parents surveyed (**97%**) have some form of rules or restrictions in place governing their child's usage of the internet. The most common measure in place is to restrict access to the internet from a public space in the home – e.g. the living room, not their bedroom
- **Over two-thirds (67%)** of parents surveyed said that they were confident that they could monitor what their child does online
- **Two-thirds (67.8%)** also restrict the length of time their children can spend online
- Most (**67%**) also disagree with the contention that it is easy for their child to use the internet without them knowing
- Parent's who have teenage children were significantly more likely to talk regularly with their children about what they do online (**76.6% parents of teens; 62.6% all parents**)

Safer Internet Day marks the launch of the **Webwise Primary School Programme** module dealing with

The **Webwise Primary School**



launch of two new initiatives for 2012 - the launch of **Programme** and a new **Garda Primary Schools online bullying.**

Programme has been developed by Webwise and

Stay Safe (Child Abuse Prevention Programme) for primary school teachers who wish to introduce internet safety into their teaching of the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. It is designed to further address aspects of both the personal safety objectives and the media education objectives of the SPHE curriculum that are not specifically covered by the Stay Safe, Walk Tall, or RSE resources. This resource will assist and support educators when teaching students about the safe and responsible uses of the Internet. The first part of the resource focuses on skills needed for surfing the web such as; effective and safe searching, downloading images and determining what online content can be trusted. The second section deals with the skills required to safely and effectively communicate online or by text message. It deals with issues relating to sharing personal information online, treating others with respect, cyberbullying, and dealing with spam.



The Garda Primary Schools Programme is a comprehensive education programme for 5th class pupils in Primary Schools throughout the country. It promotes sensible and responsible behaviour and fosters a positive attitude towards the Gardaí. It achieves this through visiting the class room and engaging in discussion with the students. For 2012, the Garda Primary Schools programme has introduced a new initiative called '**Respectful Online Communication**'. This initiative addresses the personal safety that arises through communicating using new media. It recognises the challenges that children and young people face in a modern society, particularly when using new technologies. It aims to foster a sense of care and respect for others online or when using mobile phones and to equip children with the skills to deal effectively with cyber bullying. It aims to develop and enhance the social skills of communication, cooperation and conflict resolution.

Webwise has also set up a Facebook presence to help parents to get involved in what their children are doing online. The single most important thing a parent can do to help keep their children safer online is to engage with them on the topic. Webwise on Facebook has been developed to support parents to start the conversation with their children about what they do online. See more at www.facebook.com/webwise.

- Online survey was conducted by the National Parents Council Primary and the National Centre for Technology in Education on parent's attitudes to children's use of the internet.
- A total of 773 respondents completed the online survey