

Tips for Parents

1. Empower yourself and your child – learn about technology
2. There is a lot of information about keeping your kids safe on the internet and when chatting on their cell phones – use these resources to educate yourself (search for “cyber safety” or “online safety”)
3. If your child seems withdrawn and spends a lot of time online or chatting, something might be wrong – talk to your child about it. Consider limiting the amount of time your child spends chatting, and spend more time with your child.
4. Don't keep computers in your child's room – rather put them in shared family spaces like the lounge or a shared study.

Tips for Teachers

1. When you talk about safety issues, include online and chat safety
2. Make sure that the school's computers are installed with software that keeps kids safe
3. If you have a computer lab at school, invite parents to learn more about online safety – they need education too!
4. If learners use cellphones to harass or bully other learners, take it seriously and address it
5. Make sure your learners know that it's a crime to record explicit sexual images of children, to save these images on your phone or computer and to send these images to other people
6. Help your school develop a policy about using technologies positively, and how you will address problems if they arise

Tips for Kids

1. Never, EVER give your personal details to anyone you have only met online or on a cell phone chat. This includes the name of your school, pictures of you, the place you live, the clubs you are a member of – anything someone could use to identify where you live. They might not be who you think they are!
2. Don't send pictures of yourself to anyone – even if they send you one first (it might not even be a picture of them!)
3. If the person you are chatting to insists on information, or keeps pressing you about your details, stop chatting!
4. Trust your instincts – if someone makes you feel uncomfortable, stop chatting
5. If someone keeps trying to call or chat, or threatens you, tell someone you trust, and get help
6. Be Assertive!
7. Report people who use abusive language, harass or abuse you to the people who run the social network you use – they can be banned from using it!

Be part of the Campaign

As part of the campaign, Girls'Net, which is a daughter project of Women'sNet, visits schools., Learners in Grades 6 and 7 raised the following, either their own experiences, or experiences they have heard about from others in their community.

1. Majority of learners have cell phones and regularly use them (sometimes young people use the cell phones of their siblings, parents/ guardians, relatives, friends)
2. The learners spent a long time (6 hours per day) sending and receiving SMS'es/ MMS'es, during school hours and mostly during the weekend. Some even going to bed between 1pm- 3pm
3. They reported being exposed to, and interacting with, pornographic materials. The learners either viewed pornography from family/ friends/ relative's phones or their own. They also reported viewing and sharing pornography they downloaded from the internet or received from their friends. Another side to the issue of pornography, was the learners sharing each other's naked pictures
4. They received threats from online friends (strangers) and were either bullied or they were bullying others
5. Some learners reported receiving requests for physical meetings from online friends. Some learners reported actually meeting with online friends
6. Some learners reported cases of young people in the communities being abducted or raped after meeting with people they met through their cell phone

The following quote is from a Tho-Ya- Ndou Primary teacher in Pretoria, Atteridgeville.

“The presentation was exciting and has a lot of information which can help our Grade 7 learners. We need such information in future for up- grading and keeping our learners alert of dangers of chatting with a stranger on cell phone”

Call us if you would like us to come to your school, or be part of the campaign!

Telephone: 011 429-0000 fax: 011 838-9871 or email us: women@womensnet.org.za

Keep your chats exactly that!



Resources

- Childline (0800) 055 555
www.childline.org.za
- Take Back The Tech
www.takebackthetech.net
- POWA (011) 642 4345
www.powa.co.za
- LifeLine (011) 728 1347

RAPCAN <http://www.rapcan.org.za/>
(021) 712 230

Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA)
www.childwelfare.org.za

Report child pornography
(0800) 148 148.

Children's Rights Centre
www.childrensrightscentre.co.za
(031) 307 6074

International Organization for Migration

Missing Kids www.missingchildren.co.za
(021) 801 0010

Human Trafficking (0800) 555 999

About the campaign

This campaign aims to empower young people from becoming victims of violence or harassment when they use the internet and cell phones. We also aim to help young people use these tools as ways to call for change to problems they face. We live in an 'Information Age' where there is an increase in the use of technologies. This development means there are quick, easy and in sometimes, cheaper ways to produce and share information. The development of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) has helped us to access and practice our rights, including the right to access information, the right to self expression and right to privacy. But young people are often faced with violent encounters in these environments – just like in real life. This violence stops young people, especially girls, in practicing their freedom to express themselves, access information and to communicate.

This campaign addresses violence on the internet and cellular communication by raising awareness and spreading information and promotes using the same tools for positive social change on the same issues.

About Women'sNet

Women'sNet is an NGO that aims to amplify women and girls' voices and to empower women and girls for social action using ICTs as a tool.

How children use Information Communications Technologies (ICT's)

One of South Africa's most popular cellphone social network boasts more than 11 million registered users and processes 250 million messages a day. Most of its users – 70% - are between 15 and 25 years old and a more than half are young men. Using these cellphone social networks costs less than 2cents to send a message – making it an extremely cheap way of communicating.

Young people often use their cell phones and computers to:

- » Access the internet
- » Chat
- » Download music/ games
- » Picture & video sharing

For young people, the internet gives them an opportunity to access educational information, download entertainment and news, and chat to other people. But, young people need to be careful when using them.



Risks when using ICTs

There are online and phone chat predators who are themselves regular users. This is where images, video sharing and particularly language is used as violent tools to bully, lure and control other users.

1. Providing personal information such as school name, home address etc. **This information can be used by a potential online predator to identify and track you!**
2. Sharing personal pictures and videos to chat friends. **This information can be circulated without your consent to others**
3. Constant nagging about personal information and or pictures/ videos. **When someone constantly pesters you, this is harassment!**
4. Use of uncomfortable language such as name calling' and threatening language. **This is bullying!**
5. When someone uses sweet-talk, **they might be trying to lure you into giving them personal information**
6. A chat friend can seem trustworthy, but because you cant see who you are chatting to. **Their identity can be untruthful and misleading**

Online predators use ICT's through:

- » Web sites
- » E-mail
- » Chat rooms and forums
- » Instant messaging – including SMS
- » Using cellphone cameras

