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Keeping Up with Technology

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Many adults find keeping up to date with children's use of technology challenging. Knowing the trends in children's use of technology, and the kind of environment they are immersed in, is key to giving them the right advice and guidance in a timely and age-appropriate way. E-safety relates to many parts of the curriculum, including ICT, computing, citizenship and PSHCE.

SO WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ChildNet, to make things simple, categorise the risks for children into three areas; **contact, content and commercialism.**

CONTACT:

Contact from someone online who may wish to bully or abuse the child. This could include:

ONLINE GROOMING: A criminal minority makes use of the internet and related services, such as chat rooms, gaming and social networking sites, to make contact with young people. The intention of these people is to establish and develop relationships with young people with the sole purpose of persuading them into sexual activity.

CYBERBULLYING: New technologies provide an apparently anonymous method by which bullies can torment their victims at any time of day or night; this is known as cyberbullying. While the victims may not be in physical danger, they may receive email, chat or text messages or be the target of unfavourable websites or social networking profiles that make them feel embarrassed, upset, depressed or afraid. This can damage their self-esteem and pose a threat to their psychological well-being.

CONTENT:

Inappropriate material available to children online.

VIEWING INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT: There is a risk that when using the internet or other online services and technologies, young people may be exposed to inappropriate content.

PLAGIARISM AND COPYRIGHT: Plagiarism and copyright are key issues, particularly in relation to copying schoolwork and downloading music or games, as popularised by many file sharing services.

INACCURATE INFORMATION: Anyone can write what they want and post it on the internet, and as a result not all the information available online is good information.

COMMERCIALISM:

Aggressive advertising and marketing schemes can invade young people's privacy, both online and via their mobile phones

E-COMMERCE: E-commerce continues to grow, and there is a risk that young people may give out financial details, for example the credit card details of a parent, while online.

PRIVACY: Many sites and online services request personal information and data about a user. Protecting one's privacy online is an important issue, because personal information is sometimes misused and passed on to third parties. Pupils need to be taught how to protect their privacy when using the internet.

JUNK EMAIL OR SPAM: Unsolicited emails or text messages containing offers that sound too good to be missed can often contain links to content that is inappropriate for children. Phishing and similar scams may trick young people (and their parents) into revealing personal or financial information which could be used for identity theft.

PREMIUM RATE SERVICES: Premium rate services offer ring tones, logos and competitions. The phone numbers for these services often begin with 090. Information and entertainment is available via landline telephone, mobile phone, PC (by email, the internet or bulletin boards) and interactive digital TV services for a high charge. Some children have been caught out by premium rate subscriptions: they thought they were making a one-off purchase of a ring tone, but were in fact tied in to a reverse-billed subscription (in which you pay to receive rather than send text messages).
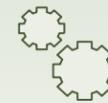
SOCIAL NETWORKING AND BLOGGING

Social networking sites, chat rooms, wikis and blogs are places where young people can create personalised web-pages or profiles to express themselves or connect with their friends or social networks. These web-based technologies are part of Web 2.0 technologies.
BBM
Facebook
Twitter

DOWNLOADING, PEER TO PEER P2P COMMUNICATION AND FILE SHARING

A file-sharing network enables people to exchange photos, videos, music, software and games directly between computers using downloaded P2P software. Many young people use these networks to download copy-music, films and software,

MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES

Increasingly, all web-based services are becoming available on mobile phones. Social networking, for example, is becoming increasingly mobile: as handsets become increasingly sophisticated, users are able to upload content to their profiles on the internet from their mobile phones while on the move. Other technologies, such as games machines, also give access to the internet or Bluetooth™.