

Case Study: Internet Safety Seminars

Presentations for parents, carers and teachers on dangers posed by the internet, where the risks lie, how to protect children and where to go for advice and information. Seminars are also available for children and young people.

Developed by Stop it Now! UK and Ireland and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation.

Who we are

Stop it Now! UK & Ireland is a child sexual abuse prevention campaign. It operates a confidential freephone helpline and email service (0808 1000 900 / help@stopitnow.org.uk) and provides accurate information to adults to help them play their part in keeping children safe. It is managed by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, a child protection charity. One of our aims is to encourage safer online activity by delivering internet safety seminars to parents, carers and children.

The Challenge

Barely a day goes by when we don't hear about a child being harmed through their use of the internet. Many parents feel out of their depth or look to technical safeguards such as filtering and blocking software to protect their children. But these solutions can only ever deal with part of the problem. Parents, whatever their technical ability, need to understand the risks and take practical (often non-technical) steps to keep their children safe.

The Internet Safety Seminar

We provide tailored seminars for parents, carers, teachers and children. These are not technical events – instead we focus on practical advice.

We aim to:

- ▶ promote benefits of children's use of internet
- ▶ raise awareness of key risks to children, including:-
 - content – sexual, violent and other "adult material"
 - contact with inappropriate people, including those who might use the internet to exploit children
 - conduct – including cyberbullying and how to prevent and respond to it
- ▶ provide practical strategies to respond to these risks and details of where to go for support and help

We do this through giving advice on:

- ▶ how to help children understand the importance of not giving out personal information
- ▶ how to respond to worrying or abusive contact
- ▶ the difference between real world friends and 'online friends' or 'e-buddies'
- ▶ the importance of children knowing not to meet people they have only met online
- ▶ how to encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if anything or anyone causes them concern
- ▶ how to get involved in children's online activity such as asking them to explain how the internet works



Who is involved

Stop it Now! UK and Ireland and the Lucy Faithfull Foundation work in partnership with schools to promote and deliver these Internet Safety Seminars.

We are also working with Ecclesiastical Insurance which is part funding sessions to schools across England.

The outcomes and impact

Feedback from our Internet safety seminars for parents has shown that 97% of attendees found the seminar useful or very useful, with the majority (68%) falling into the very useful category. 98% said their awareness had been raised. 95% said they felt more confident to help their children stay safe online.

94% were able to identify one action that they would take as a result of the seminar. The most common action was to talk with their children about the issues raised in the presentation. Other common responses were to visit the recommended websites and to move the family computer into a shared area.

Direct quotes from those who attended a seminar:

"This has really opened my eyes"

"I have become more knowledgeable about chat rooms and social networking sites and will educate my children before they start accessing them"

"The cyber-bullying DVD was extremely powerful and useful"

Next steps

Stop it Now! UK and Ireland continues to deliver Internet Safety Seminars to schools and other interested agencies and organisations.

For further information

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