

Internet Safety

Each year, around the world, **Safer Internet Day** is celebrated on the second day of the second week of the second month of the year; this year's Safer Internet Day took place on 8 February 2011. The event is part of a global drive to promote a safer Internet for users of all ages. In Ireland the campaign is organised by the **National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)** and promoted through **Webwise**, the Internet Safety initiative of the NCTE.

To coincide with Safer Internet Day, in conjunction with the NCTE, **National Parents Council Primary (NPC)** organised information sessions for parents on the issue of Internet Safety. As parents, it is vital to have good, open communication with your child about their internet lives. Like all other aspects of their lives, we need to talk to our children about the potential dangers that they may come across online as well as the many benefits they will find. Setting rules and boundaries around children's Internet usage is an important aspect of keeping them safe on-line.

The Webwise Internet Safety sessions focus on strategies for improving communication between parents and children and negotiating boundaries to their internet use. You will hear young people talking about how they use the Internet, why it is attractive to them, and get an insight into their main concerns about being online. Parents will be introduced to strategies to help their children be responsible, effective and safer Internet users.

If you would like to run an Internet Safety session for parents of children in your school contact:

The NPC Training and Development Programme
Tel: **01 8874475 / 81** email: training@npc.ie

NPC has an Information/Helpline which provides a confidential service for parents who have concerns about **Cyber Bullying** and other issues relating to Internet Safety. If you would like to contact our Helpline please

Tel: **01 8874477** or email: helpline@npc.ie

The Helpline is open:

Monday - Wednesday, 10am – 5pm
Thursday - Friday, 10am – 4pm

EU Kids Online: The Ireland Report - Risks and Safety for Children on the Internet

A **survey** to mark Safer Internet Day 2011, has found that 43% of Irish children between the ages of nine and sixteen report using the Internet excessively, which is very high compared to the European average of 30%. The survey also found that over half of Irish children use the Internet for more than one hour a day. The survey is part of a global drive to promote a safer Internet for all users, especially young people. The survey found the following:

- **43% of Irish children report using the Internet excessively** which is very high compared to the European average of 30%. Excessive use of the Internet is particularly a problem for 11-12 year olds. 54% of this age group have experienced one or more of the features describing excessive internet use
- Over **half of children in Ireland use the Internet daily** or almost daily (53%) with the **average time spent online being just over one hour per day**
- A **growing number of children in Ireland (37%) are allowed use the Internet in a private space** away from supervision. However, far more (56%) only access it in a public room at home. This is a reverse of the European finding where more children had private internet access (49%) compared to public rooms (only 38%).
- **25% of children in Ireland have seen websites containing some form of potentially harmful user-generated content.** These include sites promoting drug-taking, suicide, ways to be thin, racism or hatred. Girls see more sites promoting ways to be thin, hate messages and drug taking while a slightly higher number of boys have seen sites encouraging suicide
- **52% of all 12 year olds** in Ireland have their **own social networking profile** despite **13 being the minimum age for many of the popular sites.**
- Just **4% of respondents experienced bullying on line** with 15-16 year olds reporting the greatest levels of technology facilitated bullying - 9% on the Internet and 10% by mobile phone. Social networking sites are the main platform for online bullying.

To mark Safer Internet Day 2011 in Ireland, Webwise has 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 be 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
The report is available at www.eukidsonline.net

NPC Training and Development Programmes

Training for School Boards of Management

Did you know this is the last year in the term of office for all primary school Boards of Management? Do you know the makeup of a board? Who is on your board? Do you know that every board has two parents who play an equal part in the management of the school? Now is a really good time for your school community to understand the roles of all the Board members.

Serving on the Board of Management of your children's school is a very important role. You have the opportunity to influence the management of the school in a practical way. You and your fellow board members will look after the overall running of the school from ensuring that the building is safe and of the highest quality possible, to employing staff and overseeing the allocation of the school's budget. The Board of Management has the final say in all important decisions that are made for the school so it is vital that the parents are part of that.

NPC have a panel of Trainers that will come to your school to help you understand the role and the function of the Board of Management, Board legal issues, Child Protection, Board Finances, and Appointment Procedures.

Relationship and Sexuality Workshops for Parents

NPC offers parents an opportunity to understand the Relationships and Sexuality element of the Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) curriculum their child learns during primary school. Parents can opt for an overall view of the curriculum (an RSE information session) or can attend the RSE training sessions which help parents have a better knowledge of relationships and sexuality education so that they can talk to their children and foster their children's self esteem and decision making skills in this important area of their lives.

As part of the Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) curriculum your child will be able to understand and recognise:

- The different stages of life and what happens at each stage
- Communication and respect - this focuses on different kinds of communication and listening skills
- Feelings and Adolescence - body awareness, body care, body image
- The words we use - self esteem - friendships
- Puberty - relationships - family - peer pressure

This training programme is funded by HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme.

Parent Association Training

Do you want to know what your role is as a Parent Association? Does your Parent Association committee want support in their role? Do you want NPC to help you in creating a positive partnership in your school community? Then this training is for

your committee. NPC will deliver this training in your school. This training is open to all partners in education, parents, principals, teachers and Board members.

Transition from Primary to Post Primary

This training is aimed at parents whose child is in 5th or 6th class or has just moved from primary to post primary school. The workshop looks at:

- choosing a school that is best suited for the child
- the differences between primary and post primary school
- how parents can best support their child as they start post primary school
- the changes for both the child and the parent
- the daily routine changes
- the emotional and physical changes for the child and what these mean to parents
- subject choices – the range of subjects and why it is important that both the student and the parent understand the different bands of subjects.

The participants receive information to enable them help their child through the transition, making it less stressful for all concerned.

Whole School Evaluation (WSE)

Do you know what a Whole School Evaluation is? Is your school due to have a Whole School Evaluation in the near future?

NPC in partnership with the Inspectorate have developed a training programme for parents, principals, and board members to inform them of the WSE process. Through WSE the Inspector/s carry out an evaluation of the quality of education being provided by a particular school in accordance with the Education Act 1998. The Inspectors evaluate the quality of the teaching and learning, school planning, school management and supports for pupils in the school.

The programme enables parents and partners to understand what a WSE is, the parents' role in the WSE, how the WSE is carried out and who is involved in the process.

This programme is available to parents, teachers, principals and board members in individual schools countrywide.

Code of Behaviour

NPC in partnership with the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) have developed a training programme for parents, principals, and the board members on developing a code of behaviour. Every school is required by law to have a code of behaviour. Under section 23 of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, the Board of Management of each school must prepare and make available a code of behaviour for its students. The code of behaviour outlines the behaviour expected from all members of the school community.

If you are interested in any of our training programmes you can download an application form at www.npc.ie or phone Sharon or Deirdre in the Training and Development Programme at **01-8874475/01-8874481**, or email training@npc.ie