



**Parents as partners**  
in their children's learning



## **'Keeping our Children safe when using the Internet'**

**Event held at the Raploch Community Campus  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2010**

### **Presentation: Joe Shaw, Curriculum Development Officer ICT Stirling**

Joe Shaw gave a presentation outlining current facts and figures and research about the role ICT plays in children and young people's lives. He gave some examples of areas of risks to children and alarmingly, what adults weren't aware that could be happening while children were using social networking, games and so on. He also showed video clips (dramatised), which demonstrated very powerfully the possible impact of social networking on the Internet. He outlined some of the safety measures that were in place, particularly in schools and those that are being developed and what measures we, as parents/ carers could take to minimise risk at home.

We then went into discussion groups focussing on what was happening in schools (lead by Joe and Marion Wallace Gee, Stirling Council), what the Community Safety Partnerships were doing in Forth Valley (Lead by PC Brian Anderson), What measures are being taken by Youth Space (Lead by Lisa Holland) and a general discussion about parents and carers concerns, ideas and awareness of good practice (facilitated by Lesley-Anne Livesey, Stirling Council)

Some comments from the participants following the event:

*'Good overview of the reality of the risks associated with the Internet, followed by some general advice and discussion'*

*'Finding out about usage of web, mobile phones. What measures parent can take to make the Internet more safe for our children'*

*'Enjoyed the variation of the presentation i.e. discussions, presentation, visual displays'*

### **Round Table discussions: Comments from parents**

#### **Concerns**

We need to educate but not frighten parents/ carers and children

How quickly the safety message has changed from the bribe being sweets to 'phone top ups!

How we can discourage the sharing of passwords/phone numbers/ etc?

Peer pressure at school or pressure from older children to begin to use technology that is not appropriate for the age/stage of the child

We need to find a language other than 'control' and to respect need for privacy

Many parents and educators are way behind the children. Need to catch up quickly and aim to be ahead! Many parents/carers don't know they need to be concerned

There is an emerging ethic around the use of the Internet. This can also present dilemmas such as teaching honesty while saying don't tell who you really are etc

There is a tendency in schools to assume that making use of the Internet safe in school is the aim, rather than to help children be safe outside school as well

### **What we know that's been effective**

Children seem to be receiving good guidance from some schools

'Crucial Crew' gave a workshop to P7s demonstrating how a person you are chatting to on line may be quite different from who they say they are.

'Netsafe'

### **Key messages**

- **Start early:** A key message from many parents was the need to give parents the information and guidance on how to keep their children safe as early as possible, for example, preschool. It's easier to engage and educate parents at this stage.
- The message should be incorporated into the principles already established that apply to safety in all areas of life and integrated with all aspects of education/ life skills.
- Internet use and keeping safe should be embedded throughout the Curriculum for Excellence.
- Reinforce message of responsibility and encourage parents/carers to stay involved and know what their children are doing
- Schools/ settings should keep parents/carers informed about what they are teaching children
- Talk to children about what they are doing

*'As with everything else, there are so many resources and information out there that it would be helpful to have a key checklist of the issues and addresses to go to for more details. It can not cover everything, but a bit of specific, hand-holding info would be useful'*

### **Communicate:**

- Brief parents in their own settings eg induction meetings
- Schools to ensure parents/carers are fully informed on what the children are being taught with regard to safety on the Internet
- Information handouts at schools
- Information in school newsletters

- IT security surgeries Members of Parent Councils could be trained to deliver surgeries (designed by Stirling Council?) at local schools
- 'Drop in' event with local Police present, at the same time as parents' evening
- Create a basic guide for parents / schools to circulate
- A check list for parents and carers (Fools Guide) on Stirling Council's website updated regularly and with links, eg: ' The One Stop Shop', 'Think u know' etc
- Keep parents informed about any future initiatives

### **Other ideas/ thoughts**

Hold other events similar to this one at schools or in clusters.

'Slow down button'... like speed cameras, slow down buttons strategically placed through the Internet could remind people where they may be at risk.

Put pressure at Government level to reduce access to paedophiles

Share good practice from elsewhere, eg. International developments

Everyone present (at the event) should spread the word.

*'..plenty of food for thought, lots of things to back and do! Not least start talking to the children about it'*

*I thought I was doing enough to keep them safe but I know I can do more, e.g. blocking sites, internet safety qualification – didn't realise about X-Boxes and PS3! From nursery perspective, include internet safety as part of curriculum for staff team and parent awareness as soon as you use internet*

### **Useful websites:**

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

<http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en/landing/familysafety/>

<http://www.ceop.gov.uk/ie8/>

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

[www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk)

[www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/09154928/2>

Newsround Special Report, video: 'Caught in the Web':

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid\\_8490000/newsid\\_8498300/8498379.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_8490000/newsid_8498300/8498379.stm)