parenting in the 21st Century
implications & opportunities for families

what do we need to know?
what do we need to do?

exploring Cyberia

challenges

go figure Nov 2011
crossing the line
where are you?

what behaviours would you expect to see on the + side
what behaviours would you expect to see on the - side

why did he choose to stay on the + side?
“I’m not moving…where are you?”

how hard is it to stay on the + side?

my digital footprint
Be selective about what you put online -
You should post only information that you are comfortable with others seeing and knowing.

Posting is permanent -
Once you post to the Internet it can be copied, saved, and used by others.

Private is never private -
There are ways to get around the privacy settings on your social networking site.

Monitor regularly -
Perform regular online searches of your name to view any new information that has been posted about you. Ask that any photos of you that you don’t want to be on the internet be removed.

Get help -
If you find negative words, photographs, audio, or video about yourself, get help to try to have the content removed. Tell a trusted adult.
Key findings

94.9% of middle school students (years 7 to 10) have used SNS. 93.4% use Facebook is the most popular SNS. 26.6% use MySpace.

The majority of surveyed students update information on their SNS at least every day, and over a quarter update their SNS profile several times a day.

Surveyed students felt that SNS were safer than did their teachers and parents.

48.8% of students recognised that there was some element of risk in using SNS. 28.3% thought that SNS were safe.

19.6% of students were ambivalent about risk, essentially reporting that the degree of risk was irrelevant to them as it is "just what everyone does".

EU Kids Online Study

23,420 Internet users ages 9-16 years old + one of their parents

The survey asked about these online risks:
- pornography
- bullying
- receiving sexual messages
- contact with people not known face to face
- offline meetings with online contacts
- potentially harmful user-generated content and
- personal data misuse

50% of all children said they find it easier to be themselves online than in real life.

Key Findings: Parents

41% of parents whose child has seen sexual images online say that their child has not seen this;

56% of parents whose child has received nasty or hurtful messages online say that their child has not;
Key Findings: Parents

52% of parents whose child has received sexual messages say that their child has not;

61% of parents whose child has met offline with an online contact say that their child has not.

Although the incidence of these risks affects a minority of children in each case, the level of parental underestimation is more substantial.

Key Findings

“Parents were often not aware of the risks to which their children had been exposed,” including a lack of awareness of their children’s experiences with bullying online.

48% have Internet access in their own bedroom
31% have access via a mobile phone or other handheld device.

managing content

To be safe around all water, we teach children to swim

Fences are not sufficient

Easy & Fast

Strong emotions can be released at the speed of a keystroke but the ripple effects can last much longer.

Common for teens to post whatever they are feeling, thinking, or doing whenever the impulse takes them.

Good Kids do Bad Things on the Internet

Why?
easy & fast

part of the brain that is in charge of impulse control and long term consequences not fully developed until 20-25 years

illusion of privacy

invisible audience

bedrooms a digital cocoon

can’t see the ‘whites of someone’s eyes’

lack of non-verbal cues

lack of empathy

paradox of parental expectations

no one is all good or all bad

living up to being ‘good’ creates pressure to conform to these expectations in ‘real’ life

paradox of parental expectations

resentment/frustration until opportunity for privacy & anonymity

Internet outlet for expression of ‘bad’ thoughts

emotional & physical distance

child who bullies or harasses online doesn’t witness the emotional and physical reaction of the target

difficulty in feeling compassion or empathy

offender safer from physical retaliation

e.g if bullied offline becomes bully online

loss of self awareness & ‘groupthink’

an anon member of a large group of supporters feels less responsible for their actions

less likely to question whether behaviour is appropriate or out of control

‘bad’ group behaviour can seem like the right thing to do
fallout from ‘super’ parenting

showered with attention & ‘things’
young people have a stronger sense of entitlement and weaker sense of responsibility
allows them to think they can get away with bad behaviour

15 min of fame

model behaviour that gets attention and peer acknowledgement
bad behaviour ‘celebrated’ in reality TV
infamy, tasteless & derogatory behaviour gets more attention than acts of kindness

so what? now what?

Problems Solutions

Why do young people use Facebook?

For as many reasons as adults do. The research of psychologists and sociologists shows us that they use social networking sites for:

Socialising or “hanging out” with their friends, for the most part friends at school
Day-to-day news about their friends, acquaintances, relatives, and peer groups
Why do young people use Facebook?

- Collaborating on school work
- Validation or emotional support
- Self-expression and the identity exploration and formation that occurs in adolescent development

Why do young people use Facebook?

- Learning about the world beyond their immediate home and school environments
- Civic engagement – participating in causes that are meaningful to them

What sociologists call “informal learning,” or learning outside of formal settings such as school, including learning social norms and social literacy

Learning the technical skills of the digital age, which many businesspeople feel are essential to professional development

Discovering and exploring interests, both academic and future professional interests

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