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21<sup>st</sup> October 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **ONLINE SAFETY – 6L**

This week in class, we have been learning what the difference is between online-only friends and in-person, face-to-face friends. We have learned that it is not safe to give away personal information online, especially if it is just to an online-only friend. We have found out that if someone asks questions which give us our early warning signs, we should block and report them, showing the evidence to our responsible adults who would help us to deal with the situation. We know that some people will lie about who they are online, which means we need to take extra precautions to protect ourselves, our families and our friends.

Parents and carers, attached to this letter is some homework that we (the children) are expecting you to complete over half term. We will support your understanding and guide you through the process. Jacob and Oliver (our online safety officers) expect the homework to be handed in on time please (Monday 31<sup>st</sup> October).

Yours sincerely,

**Class 6L and Mr Lee**

# Common Sense on Talking Safely Online



## What's the Issue?

Kids love connecting with others online. Most young people talk online only with their friends and family. But as a parent, you might be concerned that a stranger with bad intent (predator) could contact your child.

Predatory behaviour is when people contact your child on the internet (mostly through instant messaging, chat rooms or social networking sites) and attempt to “groom” your child for a relationship. These people try to win children’s trust by hiding their true identities. They may try to get kids into creepy or dangerous situations by pretending to have similar interests, giving them compliments and letting them talk about anything they want. They typically tell children to keep the friendship secret, and they may even threaten kids if they tell anybody. As the relationship develops, the predator may send pictures, ask a child to send them pictures and then ask to meet face-to-face.

## Why Does It Matter?

Teaching your child to be alert about how predators groom their targets is crucial to keeping your child safe. With very small children, it is best if you are present when they are online. At this age, you may choose to block your children from talking online, or create strict rules for them to follow about who they can talk to. For older primary school children, you may choose to give them more freedom after first discussing how to stay safe online.

### common sense says

**Discuss responsible online behaviour.** Establish rules for appropriate instant messaging and chatting online and explain that you’re using those rules because you care about their safety. You may want to involve an older sibling who can model good online behaviour and can stay involved in their younger siblings’ online lives.

**Establish rules for who’s okay to talk to.** Online talk should generally be with people your children know, like family and friends.

**Set boundaries for what topics are okay to discuss.** Children shouldn’t answer questions online that make them feel uncomfortable. They also shouldn’t talk about adult topics with strangers.

**Make sure your child feels safe telling a trusted adult.** If something creepy or inappropriate happens online, children need to know that they won’t get in trouble if they tell an adult they trust. Also, avoid banning them from the computer. Children are less likely to tell parents when they experience a problem on the computer if they think that they won’t be allowed to use it as a result.

**Remind your children not to give strangers private information.** Children should never give out their name, address, school, phone number, email, pictures or anything that could identify who they are.

**Block, ignore or leave.** Most kids know to brush off unwanted contact. Encourage this behaviour.

**Look for warning signs.** Does your child seem withdrawn, emotionally distant, spend endless hours online or seem to be hiding something? The children who get sucked into inappropriate online relationships often show warning signs. They might be hiding an online relationship they don’t want you to know about. If you think this might be happening, ask your child about it!

# Talking Safely Online

## \* DID YOU KNOW ...

Many websites that allow you to chat with other people have a "block" feature, which allows you to stop receiving messages from a particular person. You can even block certain phone numbers from texting you. Don't be afraid to ask a parent for help figuring out how to block a person who makes you feel unsafe.

## Unjumble to find the hidden words

1. uaoltrfncmobe \_\_\_\_\_

2. ehpaiztme \_\_\_\_\_

3. spetteroye \_\_\_\_\_

4. messgae \_\_\_\_\_

5. clbryulibyneg \_\_\_\_\_

6. mitnoor \_\_\_\_\_

## \* WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What kind of information should you not share with online-only friends?

## \* DO YOU REMEMBER ...

What the differences are between Internet friends and in-person friends?

## 1. Family Activity

Come up with a clever way to remember examples of private information in the future. Pick the tune of a song, such as "Happy Birthday," "Mary Had a Little Lamb," or even the theme song from your favorite TV show. Write a song to that tune that helps you remember private information: your full name, street address, school name, school address, email address, phone number, computer password, mother's maiden name, or parent's place of work.

## 2. Tech It Up!

Use an audio recorder on a family member's phone (with their permission) or the GarageBand app to record your song!

## 3. Common Sense Says ...

If things get creepy or uncomfortable when you're chatting online, take action.

- ~ Log out of the website or messaging service.
- ~ Tell a parent or trusted adult.
- ~ Ignore the person or block that person from chatting with you.