

St John's Primary School and Nursery



Head Teacher: Mr D Barrow

Mortimer Road
Kenilworth
Warwickshire
CV8 1FS
01926 854450
www.st-johns.warwickshire.sch.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers,

ONLINE SAFETY – 3T

We have been learning about online communities in our online safety lessons.

From 3T and Mrs Tennant

Common Sense on Digital Life



What's the Issue?

We may think of our children's online, mobile and technological activities as "digital life", but to them it's just life. In their world, being able to connect and communicate 24/7 from just about any location is normal – and expected! Between Reception and Year 6, children go through rapid growth in learning. From playing games on their parents' mobiles, to learning how to point and click a mouse, to navigating online by themselves, children this age are participating in a connected culture.

Why Does It Matter?

The stakes are high because our children's technological abilities can be greater than their maturity and judgement. Having unrestricted access to information and people can result in gaining a wealth of information and experiences, but also access to inappropriate content. Just as children learn to eat properly, swim safely or drive a car carefully, they need to know how to live in the digital world responsibly and respectfully. Their success depends on their abilities to use digital media to create, collaborate and communicate well with others. Those who master these skills in using digital tools will benefit from the digital world's awesome power.

common sense says

Use bookmarks and safe search. Teach your child to bookmark his or her favourite sites. This way, your child is less likely to go somewhere online you don't want. Use safe search options on web browsers, such as Pixabay, to make sure that your child can search safely.

Consider using filtering and blocking software. Some parents find these tools to be useful to help protect younger children from accessing inappropriate content.

Have older siblings help. Have your older children help teach your younger children how to be responsible and safe online. Let the older ones know that you want them to help you protect their little brothers or sisters online.

Share wisdom. Children often don't understand how their actions affect others. We do. We teach children to choose their words carefully, play nicely with others and respect their teachers. Now, we have to extend those lessons to a vast, invisible world. As a parent, you can translate your values into the digital world and help children understand the implications of their actions.

Seek balance. If our children are going to thrive with digital media, we must balance the negative with the positive, privacy with protection. As our children grow, they need more independence and privacy. However, parents have to be sure their children know how to be safe and responsible before letting them loose.

Keep an open mind. We don't see the world the way our children do. We don't help our children when we judge their lives through the lens of a non-digital world. It's important for us to understand that our children will spend much of their lives in a connected world, where everyone creates and communicates. We need to help them to enjoy it and learn from it.

My Online Community

* DID YOU KNOW ...

More than two billion people from around the world use the Internet! (The number two billion has NINE zeroes after the two!)

Word Search

e	e	t	p	e	e	l
o	e	d	r	n	e	o
e	e	n	o	e	i	b
e	y	t	t	o	a	m
e	e	e	e	a	o	y
e	r	u	c	e	s	s
e	d	i	t	a	a	a

secure

symbol

protect

tone

edit

* WHAT DO YOU THINK?

When you go online, do you really go somewhere?

* DO YOU REMEMBER ...

What it means to be part of an online community?

1. Family Activity

Create a map of a family member's online community. Interview a family member and create a list of people with whom he or she might connect and websites or online places where he or she might go when using the Internet. Then, create a map that shows all the key people and places. Does your family member's online community include any people he or she doesn't get to see in person very often?

2. Tech It Up!

Use ToonTastic on a smartphone or tablet to create a story about your family member's online community. Make sure the story explains who your family member talks to online and where he or she likes to go!

3. Common Sense Says ...

You might have people who are part of your community offline (at school, on sports teams, or at home) whom you don't connect with online. That's OK! But make sure not to connect with any people online whom you don't know from real life.