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Dear Parents and Carers,

ONLINE SAFETY – YEAR 2

In our online safety lesson today, we have been learning how to stay safe when we use different websites on the internet. We have a website traffic light that tells us whether it is good to use a site or not. Green means it is a good site for children, yellow means we need to check with an adult because we are not quite sure whether it is right for us, and red means stop! Red sites are not for us to use and we know we must tell an adult if we see a red website.

From 2S, 2T, Miss Smyth and Miss Tonge

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!

Staying Safe Online

* DID YOU KNOW ...

Just because it's online doesn't mean it's true! Sometimes people make mistakes, are joking, or are not honest when they write something online.

Trace each word

caution

permanent

keywords

* WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How is staying safe in your neighbourhood similar to staying safe online?

* DO YOU REMEMBER ...

How to make sure you stay safe when you visit websites?

1. Family Activity

Create a website traffic-light poster. On a large sheet of paper, draw an outline of a traffic light with red, yellow, and green lights. Have a family member help you write tips next to each light to explain how you can spot a red, yellow, or green website. Think together of three "green" websites that are safe for kids to visit.

2. Tech It Up!

Together, go online and visit the green websites you identified! Consider bookmarking the pages so you can easily find them later.

3. Common Sense Says ...

Stick to green websites!

A green website is GOOD. A green website: Is good for kids your age to visit. Is fun, with things for you to do and see. Has appropriate words. Doesn't let you talk to people you don't know.

A yellow website means CAUTION, and you should check with an adult. A yellow website: Is one you're not sure is right for you. Asks for information such as who you are, where you live, and so on. Is a place where you are allowed to communicate freely with others.

A red website means STOP. Try to avoid red websites. A red website is: A site that is not right for you. A place you might have gone to by accident. Filled with things that are for older kids or adults.