

# E safety Update



## 1. Nicebot

November 2015

Nicebot is tweeting friendly things to combat cyberbullying.

A Twitter 'bot' is tweeting nice things at random people in order to combat cyberbullying on the social network and online in general. Tweeting under @TheNiceBot, the virtual good samaritan's goal is to counteract the negativity on Twitter by sending every single user a compliment.

Link: <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/nicebot-tweeting-friendly-things-people-125604414.html#HE56VaF>

## 2. Sexting becoming 'the norm' for teens, warn child protection experts

Sexting – the sending and receiving of nude pictures and sexually explicit text messages – is increasingly becoming normal among teenagers, who often don't realise they may be acting illegally and could face police action, according to the government's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre.

The true scale of young people's sexting activity is unclear, but Ceop is notified of a serious incident on average about once a day, with reports coming from schools, parents or pupils. All involve serious concerns about child protection.

Kate Burls, education team coordinator at Ceop, a command of the National Crime Agency, said: "Working with young people, we are finding that sexting increasingly feels like a norm in terms of behaviour in their peer group."

The former secondary school teacher said: "There's no one kind of sexting incident. In some incidents you might have clear elements of coercion and pressure and it may well be appropriate for a school to confiscate a phone because it may contain evidence of a criminal offence."

In September, the legal risks were made clear when a 14-year-old boy was told his details would be held on a police database for 10 years for the crime of making and distributing an indecent image of a child. He had sent a naked image of himself to a classmate.

Link: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/nov/10/sexting-becoming-the-norm-for-teens-warn-child-protection-experts>

For more information about e safety :

- go to <http://www.blackpoolaspireacademy.co.uk>
- come into school and talk to a member of Student Services

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## **3. Parents, is it OK to spy on your child's**

Can giving parents detailed activity reports of their child's online search terms be harmful to young people looking for information on sensitive topics such as religion, sexuality, gender or domestic abuse?

When Microsoft this summer launched its new Windows 10 feature that lets parents see what their children get up to online, this was one of the criticisms it encountered.

Microsoft has since welcomed feedback and promised an update, with more appropriate default settings for teenagers. However, it is not the only service provider offering this level of parental control. Most security software companies today sell "family" products, many including reports, notifications and video supervision. But is it right to spy on your child?

The UN convention on the rights of the child stipulates that children have a right to privacy and a right to information. They also have a right to protection from all types of violence and exploitation – and there lies the rub.

With a young generation more internet-savvy than their parents, ensuring online safety for minors surfing an ever-expanding web becomes a hard task. Today's parents don't have an older generation to turn to for tech advice, so many turn to parental control software instead.

**Link:** <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2015/nov/05/parents-children-online-search-history-microsoft-windows-10-privacy>

## **4. Smartphones**

Smartphones are mobile phones with internet access. They are capable of a range of functions, including social networking, listening to music, playing games, browsing the internet, checking emails, taking photos and videos and watching TV – along with the usual texting and calling!

You can personalise your phone by downloading 'apps' which carry out fun and useful functions, from checking train times to caring for a virtual pet! According to Ofcom, the most popular types of apps among young people are for games, social networking and music. Smartphones are incredibly popular with young people – research has shown that 59% of young people aged 12-15 have a smartphone.

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## **5. Create a positive digital footprint online! November 2015**

Your digital footprint is the mark that you leave behind when using the internet and can shape your online reputation. Your digital footprints are made up of the content you create, post and share; as well as the content that others post, and share, with you and about you.

To help you manage and maintain your online reputation we have a simple checklist:

**1. Search yourself online:** do you know what is online about you? Do a simple web search of your name and see what you can find. If you find something you aren't happy with, take the necessary steps to get that content removed. Remember if your Facebook or Twitter pages appear you can change this by adjusting your privacy settings.

**2. Check privacy settings:** make sure you know what information you are sharing on the websites you use, in particular on social networking sites. Most social networking sites have privacy settings to help you manage the content you share and who you share it with; you can decide if you want your posts to be shared with your online friends and followers only or with the public. Keep in mind that your friend's content and their settings can also affect your digital footprint.

**3. Think before you post:** before you post that funny picture of your friend, or make that joke about someone on Twitter, ask yourself do you want everyone to see it; friends, family, grandparents, future employers? Would you be happy for others to post that type of content about you? You should be proud of everything you post online, remember once it is online it could potentially be there forever!

**4. Deactivate and delete:** when you stop using a social networking profile or website, it's a good idea to deactivate or delete your account. This will mean the content is no longer live and should not be searchable online; it will also remove the risk of these accounts being hacked without you knowing.

**5. Make a positive footprint:** we hear a lot about the negative footprints left behind online. The best way to keep your online reputation in check is to use your time online to get creative and create a positive footprint. For example why not write a blog to promote all the great things you are doing, fundraise for a charity using an online sponsorship page or create a video to teach others something new.

**Link:** <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/news/create-a-positive-digital-footprint-online>

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