

Embargoed: 00.01 Tuesday 9th February 2010

Parents stuck in online generation gap

New adverts show parents how to keep their children safe online

Over a quarter of young people say their parents never talk to them about their time online

Parents and young people from today will see the digital code, '*Zip it, Block It, Flag It*' brought to life with radio, press and poster advertising, as the new internet safety campaign 'Click Clever, Click Safe' is launched.

The campaign launch comes alongside a new survey of young people which shows that many parents still aren't talking to their children about internet safety; and yet the average 6-14 year old communicates with more than 1,100 people online in a year.

The survey, conducted by Young Poll to coincide with Safer Internet Day, found that:

- Just over a quarter (26.8 per cent) of young people say their parents never talk to them about how they're spending their time online - which can leave a child more vulnerable to cyber bullying, people accessing their personal information and witnessing potentially harmful or upsetting content
- Out of the 73.2 per cent of young people who did talk to their parents, under half said their parents talked to them about using the internet safely
- From the same group, less than 43 per cent said their parents used controls to stop them accessing inappropriate content online
- Young people spend an average of 8 hours online each week – with the majority of time spent on social networking and gaming sites
- Only 34 per cent of young people have met in 'real life' all the people they speak to online.

Encouraging parents to remember the digital code '*Zip It, Block It, Flag It*', new radio, press and poster advertising will use specially created characters to highlight how risky behaviour online can have consequences for young people. With more young people than ever accessing the internet, and at a younger age, the campaign and code will give parents practical, simple and easy to remember tips so they can help their children keep themselves safe.

Commenting on the campaign launch, Children's Secretary Ed Balls said:

"The internet is a fantastic tool for young people and can open their eyes to tremendous opportunities. But it's important that parents and children understand the risks involved with using the internet, as with any area of life.

"I know that many parents aren't confident or feel they lack the knowledge to talk to their children about the internet. As today's survey results confirm, many parents are still not talking to their children about how to use the internet safely or using parental controls. In the offline world most parents feel confident to set boundaries and have discussions with their children, in the online world they often struggle to discuss safety on the internet.

"That's why I'm really pleased to be announcing the roll out of the public awareness campaign, 'Click Clever, Click Safe' - which will empower parents with the skills to start talking to their children about what they do online and will help to provide information and advice on how they can help their kids protect themselves. The code itself is a simple way to remember everyday tips for safe behaviour online."

Home Secretary Alan Johnson said:

"This Government takes protecting children seriously which is why the Home Office established the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre.

"CEOP's work protecting children from predators off and online has seen them track down high risk missing child sex offenders, safeguard over 500 children, and helped dismantle 205 sex offender networks.

"Children and young people are vulnerable to harmful or inappropriate content online which is why encouraging parents to talk to their children about staying safe online is vital to help keep them safe.

"This awareness campaign, and the important work that will continue under the UK Child Internet safety strategy, is further evidence of the Government's commitment to creating a safer online environment."

Today's survey results build on findings from the Government's 'Staying Safe Survey' published in December 2009, which showed that:

- 33 per cent of children say their parents don't really know what they do on the internet
- 18 per cent of children have come across harmful or inappropriate content online
- More than one in ten parents say that they do not know enough about how to help their child stay safe online.

The new advertising campaign is part of the Government's action in response to the Byron Review, published in 2007. The Review found that 53 per cent of adults want more and better information about the internet and 57 per cent of parents whose children use the internet do not know where to get information about how to protect their children online.

By following the digital code '*Zip it, Block it, Flag it*', parents and children can adopt a few simple strategies to help them stay safe online, while continuing

to enjoy the internet. The code highlights three things that parents can encourage their children to do:

Zip It: *Get your children to keep their passwords private*

Block It: *Make sure your children know how to block people that upset them*

Flag It: *Ask your kids regularly if they have seen or done anything online that has upset them*

Launched to coincide with Safer Internet Day, by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS), a coalition of Government, industry and charities, the new campaign follows publication of the first ever Internet Safety Strategy – launched in December by the Prime Minister. The campaign builds on wider work being done by a range of partners on the UKCCIS board, including the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) who are running a range of activities to promote the safer use of the internet.

Will Gardner, Chief Executive Officer of Childnet, said:

"We know from our daily work with children, young people, parents and teachers that learning to stay safe online is crucial. We are committed to continuing to work with UKCCIS to ensure that all users are empowered to 'Click Clever, Click Safe' and to get the most out of the Internet."

Marian Merritt, Family Online Safety Advocate for Norton, part of Symantec, said:

"One of our goals is to keep families safe online, which is why Symantec has been working with UKCCIS since its inception. We're keen to support and help promote the "Click Clever, Click Safe" campaign, and look forward to reaching as many families as possible with the digital code, helping them to make the most of the Internet and stay safe online."

Matthew Bishop, business and marketing director of Microsoft and board member of UKCCIS, said:

"Technology and the Internet offer wonderful opportunities to our kids. As a parent, I feel very strongly about helping young people and fellow parents to take full advantage of those opportunities, which also means following a few simple steps to be safer. We at Microsoft stand fully behind the new code. We've been working in partnership with CEOP to embed Click Clever, Click Safe in our products specifically to help children, parents, teachers and other carers find information and make the internet a safer place."

Luc Delany, Google policy advisor said:

“We're strong supporters of the 'Click Clever, Click Safe' educational campaign to help get the message out about staying safe online. YouTube users can follow the advice to Zip It, Block It, Flag It by using our controls to manage their personal information, block unwanted contact and report unsuitable content.”

Jim Gamble, Chief Executive of CEOP said:

“Everyday staff at CEOP see just how vulnerable children can be online. Working in this environment we recognise the need to create and build meaningful partnerships. That is why we welcome initiatives such as the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS). Each of us has a separate role and range of responsibilities. By constructively sharing our concerns, expertise and networks we create the opportunity to inform and empower parents, carers, children and young people. So they too can help ensure that everyone can enjoy the positive potential the internet holds.

“If the one thing we do today is to get people to begin thinking about behaviour rather than the technology itself we will have made a significant step in the right direction.”

Richard Piggin, Deputy CEO of Beatbullying said:

“Safer Internet Day is an excellent opportunity for parents and children to work together and tackle issues such as keeping personal information private, cyberbullying and online grooming. We at Beatbullying believe that part of the problem relates to parents' lack of knowledge of the internet as well as their child's online activity. The 'Click Clever, Click Safe' campaign, is a great way for parents and children to learn that simple steps can be taken to stay safe online and we are delighted to be working alongside UKCCIS on this very worthwhile project.”

- END -

For more information please contact:

Michelle Andlaw - email: Michelle.andlaw@iris-pr.com Tel: 020 7654 4758
Sarah Hall – email: sarah.hall@iris-pr.com Tel: 020 7654 7636

Notes to editors

1. The Young Poll was conducted with children aged 6-14yrs to coincide with Safer Internet Day – the theme of this year's day is 'Think Before You Post'. The survey results are available here: <http://www.72point.com/ukccis>

2. Over a quarter of young people – 26.8 per cent – said they never talked to their parents about how they are spending their time online. Out of the 73.2 per cent of young people who did talk to their parents, 49 per cent said their parents talked to them about using the internet safely, 52 per cent said their parents did not explain that they should never download files or links from people they don't know, and 56 per cent said their parents did not use parental controls.

3. Some of the advertising images from the campaign are attached. Parents will be able to access information and advice at:
www.direct.gov.uk/clickcleverclicksafe

4. The UKCCIS strategy '*Click Clever Click Safe: The first UK Child Internet Safety Strategy*' sets out what UKCCIS is collectively doing to keep children safe online. The strategy was launched by the Prime Minister at the UKCCIS Summit on 8 December 2009 and is available here: www.dcsf.gov.uk/ukccis

5. UKCCIS was set up in September 2008 to implement the recommendations from Professor Tanya Byron's review 'Safer Children in a Digital World'. It is made up of over 140 organisations, including Google, Microsoft, Bebo and the NSPCC. The full membership of the UKCCIS board is available here: www.dcsf.gov.uk/ukccis. Professor Tanya Byron will return this year to measure progress on implementing the recommendations of her review

6. Online safety is already a compulsory part of the National Curriculum for secondary schools and is also being taught in many primary schools. But from September 2011 online safety will be a compulsory part of the curriculum from age 5. Government will issue guidance to schools on how they should address online safety across the whole school curriculum, not just within ICT provision, with specific focus on the safe and responsible use of technology in personal, social, health and economic education. This reflects the way that safe and competent use of the internet should be part of every child's lifeskills.