

February 9, 2010

Keep safe on the web

This Safer Internet Day (February 9), Kids Helpline is urging children and young people to take seriously the message of “Think before you post”.

Kids Helpline General Manager Wendy Protheroe said Safer Internet Day is about encouraging the safe and responsible use of new technologies, especially among children and young people.

“The world wide web is a great place for sharing, but children and young people need to remember what they share with their friends can often be seen by people they don’t know,” she said.

“Postings may be visible for years to come. Once something is online, it could be there forever - as you often can’t remove it completely.

“We are also encouraging young people to remember not to post anything they wouldn’t say about others face-to-face. The basic rules of respect still apply; treat others as you would like to be treated.”

Kids Helpline’s suggestions for parents concerned about their children’s internet safety include:

1. Know what your children are doing online and who they are talking to. Ask them to teach you to use any applications you have never used.
2. Help your children to understand that they should keep their profiles private and never give out personal details to online friends. Personal information includes their messenger id, email address, mobile number and any pictures of themselves, their family or friends.
3. Remind your children to never believe, reply to or circulate spam / junk email and texts.
4. It’s not a good idea for your children to open files that are from people they don’t know. They won’t know what they contain—it could be a virus, or worse - an inappropriate image or film.
5. Help your children understand that some people lie online and therefore it’s better to keep online mates online. They should never meet up with any strangers without an adult they trust.
6. Always keep communication open for children to know that it’s never too late to tell someone if something makes them feel uncomfortable.
7. Teach your children how to block someone online and report them if they feel uncomfortable.

You can find out more about Safer Internet Day at www.cybersmart.gov.au.

Counselling is available at free call 1800 55 1800 or online at www.kidshelp.com.au.

ENDS

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