What Do 17,000 Children in London Tell Us About Online Safety?
The London Esafety Report

Aims

It is in this period of challenge and increased concern about children's online behaviours and abilities that the London Grid for Learning undertook its second E-safety Survey in 2013. In support of Safer Internet Day (SID) 2013, the London Grid for Learning (LGfL) undertook a piece of information gathering designed to gain a snapshot of useful and credible information about the ways in which young people in London schools access and use the Internet. The aim of the survey was to provide real information for London schools, rather than historical and theoretical assumptions made from global research. It also aimed to support the work of the LGfL E-safety work group, by helping to focus on any additional or updated resources required to support London schools.

Key Findings

- Most children have fun online, playing games and watching video. They experience little of concern and do not put themselves at risk.
- Undertaking school work is a key use of the Internet.
- Children's use is largely as 'passive' receivers.
- Esafety Education is having impact, but mainly on KS2.
- Home is where young people have most access and face risks.
- Schools' access is important, and pupils want more.
- Online bullying is a significant issue for those affected.
- Gender stereotypes are strong online.
- Significant numbers of boys (from Year 5) are playing age inappropriate games.
- High risk behaviours are displayed by around 3% of young people. Boys are as much at risk as girls.
- Parents' knowledge is key to supporting safe behaviours.

Key messages for schools:

- Embed an eSafety programme throughout all years and ensure pupils know how to report concerns or issues.
- Model good behaviour.
- If in London - use the LGfL!
- Find out about your own setting.
- Tackle gender issues, caring and relationships within curriculum (e.g., PHSE).
- Violence in gaming - explore options for getting students engaged in pro-social experiences.
- Access - consider use of after school "computing clubs".
- Keep parents updated with eSafety advice throughout the year.
- Never over react or ignore reports – make sure you have staff training.

Key messages for parents:

- Talk with your child about what they do online.
- Monitor the games and videos your child plays to ensure that they are age appropriate, or that the messages in them are sound.
- Do not assume that risks are less because children are younger.
- Enable parental controls and consider younger and most vulnerable users on shared devices where possible.
- Never over react or ignore reports and seek help from school staff or online parental support.

Methodology

The survey was designed by the E-safety Board and reviewed to ensure students would be able to access and understand the questions asked. Because the survey was being provided to a wide range of users (Years 3 to 9), it needed to reflect the wide range of answers potentially obtained from such a diverse group. The survey was based on one undertaken in 2010/11 by the London Grid, to enable tracking of changes in usage and answers since the previous survey. All schools across London were sent information about the survey as part of a global communications from the CEO of the London Grid. This targeted head teachers and named contacts within schools in 2013, inviting them to get their classes to complete either in school or at home. Locally, it was also promoted in many Local Authorities. 17,000 responses were deemed useful or complete and used as the basis of the report

Background

The London Grid for Learning E-safety board provides steer, support and expertise to guide London schools in excellent and safe practices in online learning. The board is made of highly skilled educators from across the region, and has developed highly regarded content and resources supporting London schools.

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