



# Professional Practice Support

## CYBER SAFETY

The technology available today for you to be globally connected and communicate whenever you like with whoever you like is amazing. You are the “**NOW**” generation.

While there are wonderful opportunities on offer, there is also a dark side to technology usage that can have a threatening impact on your life

- as you or your friends have already probably experienced, there are people out there in cyberspace who can make life hard by anonymously bullying you, stalking you, sending you pictures and messages that are sexually suggestive
- Facebook has introduced an online report system. If you are bullied, use it.

There are some really smart things you can do to keep yourself **Cyber Safe**.

None of these strategies will cramp your style or reduce your ability to communicate.

Try these things. They work

- firstly be open and sit down with your parent/s and come up together with an agreed set of cyber behaviours that you can all live with. This should include telling them about cyber problems that you have. They will help you solve them rather than taking away your mobile and internet access.
- always use **profile private** to ensure only friends you wish to see what you have posted can see it
- save bullying and sexually suggestive messages that you receive. Don't reply and share them with your parent/s and teachers; the Police can trace them and stop the senders
- only welcome contacts into your networks that you have met face to face and trust. It is easy for adults with distasteful intentions to create fake identities; Police are catching these people every day and there are plenty of them in cyberspace
- put blocks on people who you do not wish to receive messages from
- don't share with **anyone** your username and password; you know how so called friends sometimes let you down
- protect your identity by not disclosing personal details, mobile/home phone numbers, address, sporting clubs, school, named photos. You can be traced very easily through the White Pages and Google Earth. Once people have your identity description they may be able to access your bank details and accounts.
- now that Cyber Safety has become one of the biggest issues confronting teenagers today, both parent/s and teachers have been shown the best ways to help you solve them. Speaking up and sharing cyber bullying and sexually suggestive messages will make things better for you. Be strong!
- don't become a bully yourself by setting up fake websites. You don't like it, so don't do it to others.
- don't use your webcam or mobile to take sexually suggestive photos or videos of yourself or others. Sexting can be illegal. You don't know who will see the texts so don't post them on your network or Bluetooth them to friends.
- it can damage your reputation in the future when applying for jobs if you put sexually suggestive photos or videos of yourself on Facebook or YouTube. Employers are now checking people on these sites.
- be aware not to send on chain letters or accept free ring tones even when threatened to do so by the sender. Your address can be on sold to anyone wanting peoples' addresses for illegal reasons.
- don't post photos or videos of yourself or others doing the wrong thing on Facebook or YouTube. Police are always on the lookout for these things. Also, don't do the wrong thing.
- beware of **online gaming** because you don't know with whom you are playing, and leaving a game may target you for cyber bullying because you let the team down.
- your generation is very good at doing a number of things at once such as using msn, iPod, mobile, a number of screens open at once; it's called multi-tasking. Unfortunately, whether you accept it or not, the reality is that your memory is not good at it and it makes effective learning impossible. Give your brain a chance by only using one technology at a time.
- ask your parent/s not to post identifying photos of you on their Facebook site should they have one. They may be proud of you, but they are threatening your cyber safety.

To keep yourself **Cyber Safe** be smart

- no sexually suggestive photos, videos or nicknames
- no surnames
- no school or sporting clubs
- set your profile private
- make your parents friends on Facebook. If you can't show them, don't put it on.

Some sites that will help you to make good choices and to keep you Cyber Safe are

- [www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au)
- [www.hectorsworld.com](http://www.hectorsworld.com)
- [www.acma.gov.au/cybersafety](http://www.acma.gov.au/cybersafety)
- [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)
- [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)