

Advice for parents and carers: Teaching your child about the internet

This advice sheet is designed to accompany the Share Your Photo Interactive.

Playing IT Safe is a key way to support your child to learn about being safe online and to develop an understanding, as a prior to school aged child, of what being online means and to understand the internet and digital technology.

As a parent or carer, you can support your child to understand what the internet and being online is by identifying simple ideas to your children. For example, you can say to your child “I am sending an email from my computer and it travels to another computer through the internet.” Or you can say, “My phone is connected to the internet and I can send a photo from my phone to grandpa’s phone.”

At early learning settings

Through Playing IT Safe, educators run activities for children to teach them how the internet works. For example, old phones and computers are connected using wool with pegs for children to attach drawings. This activity allows children to demonstrate “sending” images between devices, providing a visual on how things are connected via the internet.

In early learning settings, children may learn that electricity travels along the wires we see in the street, or that water channels in the sandpit connect. These ideas can be linked

to the concept of a ‘network’ to help children understand that computers are linked through a network and that network is called ‘the internet’.

Share Your Photo Interactive

The Share Your Photo Interactive allows you and your child to create a story together about the journey one photograph can take on the internet.

This allows you to talk with your child about how different technology is connected and how information can be shared using the internet. You can explain that we send messages and photos and make video calls to our family and friends through the internet, focussing on the fact we should only communicate with people we know in person.

How to use this interactive

When you sit down with your child to complete this interactive you should:

- Talk about the need to think about what you are sharing and who with.
- Tell them we can send things to family and friends and people we trust.
- Discuss the need to ask someone if you can send a photo of them.

Key questions you can ask your child

- Who would you share photos with?
- If you didn’t like a photo of yourself, can you ask people not to share it?
- If people say we shouldn’t share a photo, should we respect that and not share it?