

PLEASE KEEP THIS AS A RESOURCE TO USE AT HOME.

At school, the Internet is used to support teaching and learning, as a tool to access information and for communication through our school's eLearning portal.

If you have the Internet at home, encourage your child to show you what they are doing online. If not, ask if you can make a time to visit the school to see their work and how the school uses the Internet.

Bullying, stranger danger, gossip, telling the wrong people your personal details have long been issues for young people. These are all behaviours which now present online. These are not "virtual" issues. Online issues ARE offline issues. They are real and can harm and hurt.

At home we recommend you:

- Make some time to sit with your child to find out how they are using the Internet and who else is involved in any online activities
- Ask for a tour of their "space" if they are using a site which allows them to chat, publish photos, play games etc.
- Help them to set any social networking sites they may use to "Private" - they are then in control of who they communicate with and control who accesses their information.
- have the computer with internet access in a shared place in the house – **not your child's bedroom**
- Negotiate appropriate times for your child's online activities.
- ask questions when your child shows you what they are doing
 - How does it work and how do you set it up? Can you block out people?
 - Who else is sharing this space or game - did you know them before or "meet" them online? What do you know about them?
 - Why is this so enjoyable – what makes it fun?
 - Can you see any risks or dangers in the activity - what would you say to warn/inform a younger child who was going to start to use the space?
 - When would you inform an adult about an incident that has happened online that concerns you? Discuss why your child might keep it to themselves.

Many students say they will not tell an adult they are in trouble or ask for help because:

- they might get the blame for any incident
- they think adults don't understand the Internet – it is for students only
- they might put their own access to technology at risk by either:
 - Admitting to a mistake or
 - High-lighting a situation that might lead a parent to ban their access. (Even to protect them)

Hume Valley School sees the education of safe and ethical cybercitizens as essential in the lives of its students and as a partnership between home and school. 21st Century students spend increasing amounts of time online learning and socialising. These online communities need Cybercitizens who "do the right thing" by themselves and others online, particularly when "no one is watching". Safe and ethical behaviour online is explicitly taught at our school and the request is for support at home.

It is important to note that some online activities are illegal and as such will be reported to police. This includes harassment of others, publishing inappropriate images, etc.

Students can be approached, groomed, and bullied online. They love to publish information about themselves and their friends in spaces like MySpace, Facebook, Snapchat, blogs, Club Penguin, and hundreds of other interactive online apps and sites.

We recommend that when using a social network site that is open for anyone at all to join the following guidelines are adhered to:

- Don't use their own name, but develop an online name and use avatars where available.
- Don't share personal details including images of themselves or their friends online.
- Don't allow anyone they don't know to join their chat or collaborative space. Use the block feature.
- Repeatedly remind that any image or comment they put on the internet is now public (anyone can see, change or use it). Once it is published they have lost control of it.

The online environment sometimes feels different. The language is different. Sometimes students say things online that they would never say to someone's face. Not all altercations are bullying but unacceptable behaviours need to be addressed. We address this issue at Hume Valley School where the students can communicate through our school's on-line learning portal, and practice cyber-safe behaviour. However, in open social sites:

- Being online can make students feel that they are anonymous (however online interactions can be traced).
- The space or chat they use in leisure time might have explicit language and they will feel they have to be part of it.
- Often the online environment has very few adults.
- Participation in bullying or hurtful actions can take many forms in the online world. Forwarding the messages, telling others where to go and see any published images, content which has been deliberately posted to humiliate another person is all part of how a child can participate and contribute to the hurt or bullying of another child.
- Deliberate exclusion of another in an online space is another way some students hurt each other online. It is important that the behaviours are discussed as separate from the technologies.

The internet has some really flashy and tricky ways to lead people into websites they never meant to visit. It is easy for us all to get distracted. We want students to ask for help in locating the information they need, and clarifying the task they have been set. Unfocused clicking through websites can lead to inappropriate content.

Open communication between parents, teachers and students is the best way to keep students safe. Students will often share concerns with each other online. It is important that they tell a teacher and or parent when they are feeling uncomfortable or threatened online.

If you have any concerns about this agreement or internet safety contact the school or visit <https://www.esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/esafety-issues>

EVALUATION:

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