Be part of Safer Internet Day 2013

The tenth Safer Internet Day will be held on 5 February 2013 and promises to be one of the most important internet safety awareness-raising initiatives held to date. Now, more than ever, a safe online environment for young people is essential while enabling them to get all the benefits from the digital world.

Webwise, the Irish internet safety awareness-raising centre, will be coordinating this year’s campaign which centres on the theme ‘connect with respect’. While the main focus of a lot of the work on the campaign this year is on young teens, there are still plenty of activities to interest primary students and teachers.

**The Webwise Primary Programme**
The first ever internet safety teaching resource for Irish primary teachers, was launched on Safer Internet Day 2012. To date, hundreds of these booklets have been sent out to primary schools and many young pupils have benefited from the core internet safety messages contained therein.

The booklet supports teachers in the instruction of safe and responsible internet use as part of their SPHE curricular provision. Developed by Webwise and Stay Safe (Child Abuse Prevention Programme), it is designed to further address aspects of both the personal safety and media education objectives of the SPHE curriculum.

The first part of the booklet focuses on skills needed for surfing the web such as safe searching, downloading images and online verification. Skills required to safely communicate online or by text message and issues relating to sharing personal information, cyberbullying and dealing with spam are all examined in the second part of the booklet.

**Class activity**
Why not start your own internet safety class for this Safer Internet Day? Email internetsafety@pdst.ie to get your copy of the Webwise Primary Programme if you do not have it already.

A new internet safety module of the Garda Primary Schools’ Programme was also launched last February and it has quickly become a vital part of the Garda Síochána involvement in schools. Delivered by community gardaí, the ‘Respectful Online Communication’ talks are for fifth class students and cover a range of topics including cyberbullying.

On completion of the module, pupils will be able to identify what type of online activity is illegal and list rules about meeting people in person they first met online. They will also be able to outline plans for coping with online harassment and bullying.

The programme was launched last year on Safer Internet Day by Garda Commissioner Martin Callinan on the same day the Webwise Primary Programme was launched.

It addresses personal safety issues that arise through communicating using new media and recognises the challenges that children and young people face in modern society, particularly when using new technologies. It also aims to foster a sense of care and respect for others online or when using mobile phones and to equip children with the skills to deal effectively with cyberbullying.

The success of Safer Internet Day 2013 relies on everyone getting involved – and that includes teachers at all levels. Please get involved this year to ensure that young people feel supported in their online activities and can continue ‘connect with respect’.

Compiled by PDST Technology in Education.

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**Spring and summer ICT courses**
The new spring schedule for ICT courses commencing in January and February from PDST Technology in Education (formerly NCTE) has now been published. Most courses focus on the use of ICT to support literacy and/or numeracy development. Contact your local education centre to book a place. For details, see [www.ncte.ie/courseschedule](http://www.ncte.ie/courseschedule).

Now is also the time to think about applying for a whole school summer course funded by PDST Technology in Education, to be held in your own school for you and your colleagues. Contact your local education centre for more information about how to access whole school training. Please note that early deadlines apply to whole school summer courses.

The list of scheduled summer courses open to all primary teachers will soon be published, with updates available on [www.ncte.ie/training](http://www.ncte.ie/training). These will include both online and face to face courses. Why not subscribe to the PDST Technology in Education email newsletter to keep in touch, via the website [www.ncte.ie](http://www.ncte.ie).