Safer Internet Day 2016

The call to action for Safer Internet Day 2016 was ‘Play your part for a better internet’ and schools supported the call in great numbers. 67,342 pupils in 463 schools around Ireland held events and campaigns on 9 February to promote safer use of the internet by their pupils. There were free wristbands for everyone who took part!

#UP2US competition winners

The grand prize winners of the Safer Internet Day 2016 #Up2Us photo competition were the pupils from Holy Family Senior NS in Swords. These pupils designed wonderful posters and enjoyed a week of internet safety lessons using songs, poems, stories and online lessons, thanks to their teacher, Ms Farrell. They won a GoPro Camera Kit for their efforts.

Runners-up in the competition were the pupils from Glanduff NS in Co Roscommon. They won a Fuji Instax camera having had a class discussion on photo sharing, viral photos and videos and they devised their own code for online sharing and internet use, to mark the day.

Resource on sharing of explicit images launched

Elsewhere, Lockers, a new SPHE resource on the sharing of explicit self-generated images was launched at a symposium held in the Royal Irish Academy. Produced by Webwise, the resource was launched by Ciara O’Donnell, Director of the PDST, at a symposium on ‘Sexting and the

Consequences for Schools’. Lockers (www.webwise.ie/lockers) is an innovative information and education resource that assists schools in coping with and preventing incidents involving the sharing of explicit self-generated images of minors. Though the two animations and six lessons are intended for junior cycle students, the 25-page information section will be a great resource for all school leaders. It outlines the context for sexting among young people, the laws that can come into effect when underage sexting occurs and the implications for school policy. Considerations for schools dealing with incidents of sexting are also outlined.

“For school leaders, it’s very important to be well informed when encountering incidences involving the sharing of explicit images in their schools. When self-created sexual images are shared non-consensually, the repercussions can seriously undermine the wellbeing of students. Malicious sharing can take the form of cyberbullying, while abusive sharing could indicate a child protection concern,” said Ciara O’Donnell, as she launched the Lockers resource.

RTÉ support Safer Internet Day

RTÉ also supported this year’s Safer Internet Day campaign. Swipe TV launched Bernard
Teaching matters

Glanduff NS, Co Roscommon were runners-up in the Safer Internet Day 2016 competition

Presenter, Mebs, gave his top five internet safety tips in videos that aired on Swipe TV.

1. Try out the I Like It rap with your class. Tá leagan Gaeilge den rap freisin.
2. Agree an online code for better internet use with your class.
3. Make a poster using the #Up2Us Anti-Bullying Kit.
4. Order one of Webwise's free teaching resources at www.webwise.ie.
5. Check out the Safer Internet Day 2016 map to see what schools around Ireland did to celebrate the day. It might give you some inspiration for next year! www.saferinternetday.ie.

Now in its 13th year, Safer Internet Day is an EU wide initiative to promote a safer and better internet for all users, especially young people. It is promoted in Ireland by Webwise, the internet safety initiative of the PDST Technology in Education.

Safer Internet Day 2017 will take place on Tuesday, 7 February.

EMILY LYNCH and JANE MCGARRIGLE, Webwise team, PDST Technology in Education