Internet safety is one of those issues where everyone has a responsibility; schools, parents, children, and website owners. In particular, parents and schools need to work together and support each other to help children make the most of the web. Webwise, the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre managed by the NCTE, offers a few suggestions to help your school to support parents in this endeavour.

Webwise parenting workshops
The National Parents Council Primary and Webwise have developed a workshop that takes the mystery out of the internet for parents and gives them confidence to engage with their children’s online lives.

They are also introduced to strategies for agreeing rules and boundaries around their child’s internet usage. This is the most important aspect of keeping them safe online.

Negotiating a contract with their child can give parents a lot of information about what they do online. It also gives them a platform to discuss the types of things their child uses the internet for and how long they spend on the internet. The dialogue surrounding the agreement of this contract can often be as useful as the contract itself.

Organise a Webwise Workshop in your school through the training section on www.npc.ie.

Webwise on Facebook
Webwise on Facebook has a range of content designed to give parents the skills and confidence to intervene more effectively in their use of the internet. It has videos from parenting experts, interactive cartoons that teach children the golden rules for using the web, and a selection of publications that provide information and advice. It is also a community where parents and experts support each other.

Join the community at www.facebook.com/webwise

Play and learn: being online
This colourful publication, developed by UPC and Webwise, contains activities and games that parents and children aged 4 to 8 years old can do together to develop open and relaxed communication channels around their online lives from an early age.

Often parents feel at a disadvantage when they are talking to their children about the internet as they can feel that their children may know more than they do. Doing activities together can be an ideal opportunity to get your child to talk about what they do on the internet and show you around the sites that they visit.

A limited number of this resource is available, contact internetsafety@ncte.ie.

Compiled by NCTE. www.ncte.ie.