

Net Smartz



Type of intervention

Net Smartz is an online safety education initiative. This has been designed for young people and hosts a wide range of information on online risks and safety in a variety of formats.

Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:

Children and young people with web access. This is a primary prevention program.

Target population

Children and young people.

Delivery organisation

This platform is hosted by the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), a USA based not-for-profit organisation. The NCMEC provides support and assistance to families and organisations involved with missing, exploited and recovered children.

Mode and context of delivery

Online resources providing information about a range of topics relating to child sexual exploitation.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

N/A

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

Children and young people can choose to engage with whichever elements interest them. Teachers can use the education resources and lesson plans as they wish.

Description of intervention

Net Smartz includes a range of online resources designed to inform young people about the risks online and how to keep safe. The main topics covered are cyberbullying, gaming, online enticement, sexting and sextortion, smartphones, social media, and livestreaming.

The Into the Cloud program features a series of online videos exploring aspects of online safety using cartoon characters to explore real life examples from the associated helpline. This has been designed for children aged 10 and under. There are also a range of downloadable activities and resources to go alongside the videos to

help to embed knowledge and enable interactive learning. There are also a range of videos for tweens and teens featuring cartoons and actors to explore these topics.

A series of free educational resources have also been developed for teachers and educators to use. Topics have been adjusted for Kindergarten up to 12th grade focusing on web safety, sexting, and seeking help. Resources include PowerPoint presentations, handouts for students and parents, activities and lesson plans.

Evaluation

In a review of the Net Smartz educational program, the authors conclude that the resources provide a useful basis for web safety messages. Recent updates to the program are commended for their inclusion of research statistics. However, the authors raise concerns that there is a reliance on 'don't' messages, lack of skill building, and that some outdated stereotypes are used. They also suggest the lessons for younger children are not grounded in their lived reality of online activity (Jones, Mitchell & Walsh, 2013).

References

Jones, L. M., Mitchell, K. J., & Walsh, W. A. (2013). *Evaluation of internet child safety materials used by ICAC Task Forces in school and community settings*. Retrieved from <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/242016.pdf>

Contact details

Phone: (+1) 703 224 2150

Contact form: <https://www.missingkids.org/footer/contactus>

Address: 333 John Carlyle Street Suite #125, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-5950

Website: <https://www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/home>