Internet Safety Seminars for Children aged 9-11
UK
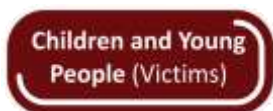
Type of intervention

Classroom setting

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

Children and Young People (Victims)

Primary prevention

Children (6-11 Years) | Male & Female | Classroom Setting | Internet Related Only |English

Target population

Children in years 5 and 6 of primary schools in England and Wales (aged between 9-11 years).

Delivery organisation

These seminars are delivered by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation, UK.

Mode and context of delivery

The Internet Safety Seminars take place in schools, usually in year groups of 30-60 children. The seminars last for approximately one hour and take the form of a verbal presentation utilising power point slides and short films. The seminars are interactive and aim to encourage the children to discuss issues related to safe internet use. The material used in the presentation is obtained from a number of sources, including publicly available material from other organisations which specialise in internet safety. The seminars are regularly reviewed and the material updated to keep abreast of changes in information, technology and research.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

The Internet Safety Seminars are delivered by a variety of staff from The Lucy Faithfull Foundation, who have different roles within the organisation including practitioners, psychologists and helpline staff. Knowledge of the internet, the way it can be used by potential offenders to groom children and of resources that can increase children's

understanding, is key to delivering the material. However, the seminars do not aim to be technical presentations and expertise in this aspect of the Internet is not necessary. An ability to be responsive to and engage with children is essential.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

The Internet Safety Seminar is a 'one-off' presentation which lasts between an hour and an hour and a quarter, depending on the age, stage of development and level of engagement of the children. It is desirable that parents and carers attend a separate Internet Safety Seminar for adults and that information obtained from the 'hands up' section of the children's seminar is shared with parents. This can assist in highlighting the discrepancy which is sometimes apparent between children's knowledge and on-line behaviour and parent's beliefs about the experiences of children.

Description of intervention

The aim of the Internet Safety Seminars is to engage the children in questions and answers with the objective of identifying their knowledge and understanding of both the positive and negative aspects of the Internet.

These questions and answers initially require a 'hands up' response by the children and are undertaken in the presence of teaching staff in order to assist them to gain a level of insight into the children's knowledge and on-line activity. It is usually the class teachers which are present. This in turn can inform e-safety lessons undertaken by the school.

In addition, the Internet Safety Seminars are designed to be interactive and promote discussion and are delivered in a way that is aimed at raising the children's awareness without creating fear and anxiety.

The seminars are not technical presentations, nor are they aimed at training children to use the Internet; the emphasis is on increasing children's knowledge, emphasizing responsible behaviour, encouraging them to identify strategies to keep themselves safe on-line and develop confidence in knowing what to do should they have any negative experiences.

The overriding message being promoted to the children is that there are both positive and negative aspects to the Internet, that there are things that they can do to keep themselves safe; and that support and assistance is available in the event of them having a negative on-line experience. Communicating with a safe trusted adult is encouraged.

Evaluation

The Internet Safety Seminars are evaluated through feedback from the teaching staff who accompany the children. This is mainly via a formal feedback form but sometimes this feedback is more informal and is secured via liaison with teaching staff following discussions with pupils and parents.

Feedback from school staff following events has included:

"The session allowed us to discuss this more in a Year group assembly. I think it was a fantastic session, very eye opening. I was a little worried that the content was a bit much for the Year 5s, but they seemed to take it on board and not be too worried about it. I think it opened their eyes to the problems of the internet too."

"The learning style was appropriate for Yr 5's. Based on the show of hands, Yr 5 children were more active in terms of internet usage than we thought which confirmed my views that we should target year 5 in future years for this session and make the seminar to pupils and parents a yearly event."

References

http://www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk/internet_safety_seminars.htm

http://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/internet_safety_useful_links.htm

Contact details

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