



## Running Awareness Sessions for Parents and Carers

### Why run a parents' session?

Parents have a key role to play in educating their children about the online world and keeping them safe. Many parents buy technology for their children, like laptops or phones, yet know little about the risks young people may face online or how simple steps can help protect them.

It's crucial that they know what to do if their child is uncomfortable with someone's behaviour and also that their children know about the risks of giving too much personal information, putting images and videos on the internet or talking to strangers online.

By running awareness raising sessions with parents and carers in your school or organisation you can help parents empower themselves and their children. You will be playing a vital role in protecting children by passing on essential knowledge and guidance.

### Running a session

This document aims to help you plan and prepare for your session. It offers useful tips on getting the attention of parents, being imaginative with your delivery and many tried and tested ideas for making sure your event is a success.

For ease, this document has been broken down into the following sections:

1. Preparing for an event – downloading resources
2. Preparing for an event – getting their attention!
3. Event delivery
4. After the event
5. Keep us informed

#### 1. Preparing for an event – downloading resources

To download the appropriate materials, please take the following steps;

- a Log into your trainers account – [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/trainers](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/trainers)
- b Sign in at the top of the page – email address and password required
- c Click on the “Resources” tab on the left of the page
- d As you scroll down, you will see the resources are broken down across several tabs
- e Click on the “Parents” tab
- f Add the Parents *presentation, script, factsheet and letters* to your basket
- g Download and save



## 2. Preparing for an event – getting their attention!

- Advertise your event well in advance! Ensure that it does not fall on the same day as major and popular events, such as the FA cup final or the start of X Factor... Put posters around the school (close to the pickup gates), advertise at existing groups, like the PTA, and send emails, text messages and letters home.
- Ask parents to sign up to the event, even if this means standing in the playground with a clip board. Try to get an ‘influential’ parent on board and ask them to spread the word.
- DO NOT use terminology such as ‘e-safety’. This can make parents switch off - ‘online risks and dangers’ usually gets their attention!
- For impact, have the head teacher/senior manager sign the invitation letters/emails.
- Other tactics that you may wish to use include:  
Running a survey with your students about their internet usage. Put some of the results in the invitation.  
*For example: Did you know that 89% of all year 6 children in St Cuthberts have a Facebook account and 40% have posted images, what percentage of them do you think friends are with people they have only met online?.... come along to find out more!*  
Explain to the parents that the results will only be released at the awareness session. This can be a really powerful way of getting them to take notice.
- Advertise that the session you are running will also provide useful tips for parents to help them make their own online activity safer.
- Where possible run attendance incentives – a raffle from local shops, discount on school trips or refreshments.
- Add internet safety sessions for parents to your organisations home schools agreement— their child will not be allowed to use the schools/organisations internet with out the parent having attended
- Train parents/carers’ ‘buddies’ who can assist the not so confident with general computer skills and safety issues.

## 3. Event delivery – Try something different!

- If possible plan your parents’ session for the same day you run an internet safety session with the children. This will enable you to pick up on issues identified by the children earlier on in the day.
- Think about promoting your internet safety talks to parents in conjunction with letters home or information about other, more “popular” topics, such as the school trip. If the school has a parents evening, see if you can run a short internet safety presentation or have a stall as a taster for your main awareness raising session.
- Be imaginative with your locations and opportunities, possibilities include:  
School/community/ summer and Christmas fetes  
Open evenings  
First day at school  
Quiz night – involve an online safety question  
Any occasion where parents have to be present!
- Involving the children is another way of ensuring parents participation. You could, for example, challenge your students to develop a drama or a song to explain to their parents the positives of the internet but also the risks involved and how to stay safe.



Parents will (hopefully) attend the session to see their child act or sing etc and there you have a captive audience. Conclude the session with a talk from your e-safety representative if your school has one. Download the CEOP parental factsheet as a handout for parents to take home.

#### 4. After the event

- Update parents regularly about what your school/organisation is doing to keep children safe online. Use the information sent from CEOP Education team in update emails (available when registered on the trainers area) to update your parents and carers. For example tell them current changes on social networking sites and ways to protect their children.

#### 5. Keep us informed!

- We know that our teachers and trainers are already doing some excellent work to engage with parents. Please keep us informed of any successful techniques and activities that you have used so we can share them with our wider network.  
[education@ceop.gov.uk](mailto:education@ceop.gov.uk)

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KNOW  
.co.uk