

NATIONAL CENTRE
FOR TECHNOLOGY IN
EDUCATION (NCTE)



Dot.Safe Project
Survey Analysis
Executive Summary



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Internet is one of the greatest potential learning tools that has become available to the education sector in many years. It offers the potential of communicating across geographical boundaries and opening up all kinds of educational resources. While encouraging and embracing this technology educationalists must be secure in the idea that they are not exposing children to risk in Internet use. The results of this survey indicate that there is a great awareness of Internet safety issues amongst the education sector. Results are generally consistent throughout Europe. A comprehensive set of resources have been developed and policies are being put in place to ensure Internet safety is high on the agenda of those involved with education.

1.1 Teacher Awareness and Responsibilities

The survey work has shown that teachers are aware and concerned about Internet safety issues. They are frequent users both at home and in school. The role of the ICT co-ordinator still influences these results with a high level of concern for viruses in evidence. Over half of the teachers that responded based these concerns on actual experience. These encounters were usually when browsing the Internet.

TEACHERS CONCERNS (POST PRIMARY)	VERY CONCERNED	CONCERNED	NOT CONCERNED	NOT AWARE
Exposure to explicit/crude language	19	44	31	3
Racial hatred/discrimination	30	46	17	4
Graphic images, violence, crime	38	47	13	2
Access to potentially dangerous material	3	33	36	22
Partial, provocative frontal nudity	25	37	31	4
Adult pornography	40	37	15	4
Child pornography	59	25	8	4
Students vulnerable to paedophiles	51	29	11	5
Students gaining unauthorised access	24	36	26	6
Receipt of unwanted mail	15	51	27	2
Receipt of computer viruses	31	48	14	3
Exposure to commercially orientated websites	17	35	38	5
Privacy protection	24	45	19	6
Piracy	15	38	31	8

The important role of the school ICT co-ordinator is to be seen across most of the areas of responsibility in the school where in nearly every instance the majority of respondents say they have a role, this is also in evidence on the policy side.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS TASKS	HEAD / PRINCIPALS	ICT CO-ORDINATOR	TEACHER
Develop and monitor implementation of school policy	49	54	33
Demonstrates research techniques to students	13	47	55
Educate, encourage responsible online behaviour	22	59	58
Checks browser history log regularly	16	59	11
Checks temporary Internet cache files / log files	12	51	7
Checks address bar, bookmarks, favourites	12	51	16
Downloads material for offline use by students	13	43	32
Pre-screens selection of websites before class use	8	36	43
No particular responsibilities or duties	12	4	8

Shading highlights the individual most responsible for each task.

1.2 Teacher Concerns

Teachers showed a clear level of concern for a number of issues relating to students Internet use, particularly as regards adult and child pornography. Teachers had the same level of concern for students receiving computer viruses. There was little to no variation among the participating EU countries as regards these issues. Greater involvement of the school board in this area could also assist teachers. This is evidenced amongst primary and post primary teachers and this was based upon actual experience.

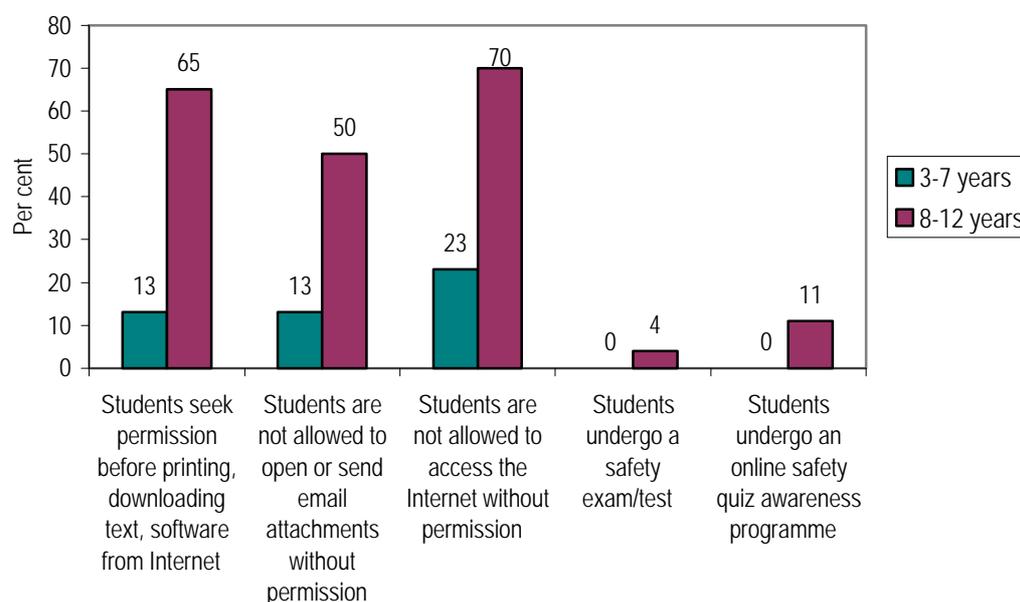
1.3 Policies and Initiatives

Some 96 per cent of schools that responded to the survey have developed safety guidelines for Internet usage. This shows a keen awareness of the issue amongst schools and teachers. Permission to use the Internet was also required in the majority of schools. The presence of an adult featured in a similar number of instances. Advice and guidance is one of the main methods used to inform pupils about Internet safety. Parental involvement in Safe Internet use issues is an area that could be further developed. The use of Acceptable Use Policies is identified as a key

strategy in ensuring safe Internet use in schools and should be further utilised as part of an effective Internet safety strategy.

NON TECHNICAL STRATEGIES	% OF SCHOOLS
Acceptable Use Policy or set of guidelines	74
School Board / Management are involved in drawing up guidelines	35
Teachers are involved in drawing up guidelines	55
Parents are involved in drawing up guidelines	16
Education programmes for parents are conducted	19
Default Browser Homepage is set to an educational site	68
Safety tips / escape procedures are displayed near the computer	31

The use of passwords was the main technical solution in use by the majority of schools. This was standard throughout the majority of countries where over 80 *per cent* of schools reported the use of passwords. Teachers' and administrators' knowledge of filtering software and some of the main solutions to regulate Internet access appear to need improvement. Several restrictions are placed on students in their use of the Internet.



There is scope for better protection of identities of those using the Internet.

1.4 Resources

A comprehensive list of resources has been gathered by the Dot. Safe project. Most of these are online in nature such as websites or sections of web sites. A Directory is included as an appendix to this report outlining the resources available by country. Teachers involved in the survey often did not understand the full details of how filtering software operates. The provision of advice and guidance figured here again as illustrated below

RESOURCE TOPIC	%
Training Materials	12
Classroom materials	15
Activities	16
One to one messaging	18
Photographs and images	23
Copyright	24
Research	28
Newsgroups	28
Planning/Policy e.g. AUP	30
Privacy, Ethics, Psychology	34
Legislation	37
e-mail	41
Filtering	43
Websites	44
Security (Software etc.)	44
Chat rooms	45
Advice and guidance	72

1.5 Target Groups

1.5.1 Teachers

The survey indicates a need for further Internet safety awareness for teachers. Teachers of the 11-16 year age group should be a key target, as these pupils generally have more frequent access to the Internet in schools. While these pupils can use Internet quite competently, they still remain vulnerable to exposure to explicit material on the Internet. In targeting teachers a clear preference has being expressed for training and support material. This material should also include provision of resources for teachers to educate pupils to use the Internet safely.

METHODS FOR ASSISTING IN INTERNET SAFETY	% OF TEACHERS WHO AGREED
Government legislation	44
Filtering services provided by ISPs	49
Self regulation by ISPs	24
Development of a Universal Rating System	32
Self rating by web-publishers	32
Hot-line to receive and address complaints	31
Media awareness campaign	50
Use of filtering software in schools	49
Acceptance use policy in schools	41
Teacher training	58
Resources for schools to educate parents	51
Resources for schools to educate students	60
Training for community groups	29

1.5.2 ICT Co-ordinators

Perhaps one of the strongest themes throughout the survey is the very obvious role of the ICT Co-ordinator in schools. The influence of the ICT Co-ordinator was also highlighted by the level of concern expressed by teachers in relation to the receipt of computer viruses. The concern over the integrity of the system was just as high as the level of concern for the safety of the user about issues such as exposure to pornography.

1.5.3 Principals/Head Teachers

In addition to highlighting the obvious reliance on the ICT Co-ordinator, the survey also highlighted the need to improve managerial support for principals and head teachers in important issues such as developing guidelines and implementing policy within the school.

1.6 Recommendations

The survey analysis of the Dot.Safe Project highlights the need for continuing work to be carried out on promoting and ensuring Internet safety for students and young people both in and outside of school. Increasing awareness of the potential exposure of explicit material to young people and of the resources that are available to schools to prevent such incidences will ensure safer Internet use for all. The importance of resources for school management, training and support for teachers and targeting those most in need should guide future developments. The following recommendations emerge from the report.

- THE FOCUS OF FUTURE WORK SHOULD BE IN THE AREA OF TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

- AN INTERNET SAFETY TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME SHOULD REFER TO
 - Vigilance
 - Technical and non technical strategies
 - Acceptable Use Policy
 - Parental liaison

- TEACHERS OF THE 11-16 YEAR OLD CATEGORY SHOULD BE A KEY TARGET GROUP

- A CORE SET OF INTERNET SAFETY MATERIALS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO SUPPORT THE ROLE OF THE ICT COORDINATOR IN THE SCHOOL

- SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND HEAD TEACHERS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP POLICIES FOR SAFER INTERNET USE AT SCHOOL LEVEL

- A FOCUS SHOULD BE PUT ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- THE PROTECTION OF THE IDENTITY OF USERS SHOULD BE A PRIORITY

- THE RESPONSES TO THE SURVEY INDICATE A HIGH LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF THE INTERNET BY TEACHERS. SUCH KNOWLEDGE MAY ENABLE TEACHERS TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FUTURE INITIATIVES.

- THE COMPREHENSIVE DATABASE OF INTERNET SAFETY INFORMATION AND RESOURCES SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE UPDATED ON A REGULAR BASIS