Smart Thinking

(Engaging with the technology and minimising the risks.)

Keeping e-safe?

- What is "messing about" to you, may be criminal damage to someone else.

- **Companies invest a huge amount of money in IT, they do not take kindly to it being compromised.**

- Your photographs become someone else's the moment you post them online.

- **A "free" account is usually too good to be true. Facebook has recently been valued at $50bn. Not bad for a "free" company.**

- When you post details of your lives online, you need to keep control over who can see them.

- **You can never "recall" an image that you post on the internet. Once it is out there, it stays out there.**

- Setting up a social networking site purporting to be someone else may be illegal and make you liable to prosecution. Impersonating someone else is a criminal offense.

- **You are powerful. You decide what you will post. Don't put anything out there that you don't mind losing.**

- **Together, we can make E-Sussex, E-Safe.**

Further information

Acting responsibly can be hard going. We want everyone to gain the maximum benefits from all that online, connected technology can offer, but in order to do this, you have to act responsibly yourself.

Someone once said "Guns don't kill people. People kill people." This saying applies to all technology. The internet does not harm or abuse people. People themselves do that.

If you, and everyone you know has a zero tolerance to abuse, and they influenced others to have the same values, there would be no abuse on the internet.

However much "fun" it may be to send a nasty message, just remember that the person you sent it to can do something about it.

East Sussex
County Council

eastsussex.gov.uk

In a nutshell….
There is a huge amount of pressure to have your whole life online! TWITTER, Facebook, and other social networking sites encourage users to post a huge amount of detail, including photographs online for others to see. More and more people communicate via text messages, (And some young people are convinced that "late" is spelled L8)

Just because you could, doesn't mean you should. A few facts. Once you post an image online you lose control of it. Anyone who sees it can copy it, change it, enhance it, re-post it. That implies that you should think about not only what images you post online, but also their size. The larger an image is in terms of pixels, the easier it is for someone to copy and change it. You do not need to upload 10megapixel images onto the internet.

Profiles. Your profile may have been set to "private" or "Friends only" when you set up the account, but is it still? Surprisingly, your profile settings can be changed without necessarily visiting the appropriate page. Did you know, for example, that joining groups, or even using built in applications can make changes to your privacy settings? It is good practice to check your privacy settings every time you use the application, and while using it.

GPS systems. There are an increasing number of these applications for mobile phones. "I know where my child is at every moment." One parent said. What they know is where their child's phone is, not where the child is. There is another consideration here, and that is where is that information displayed. If it is on a social network homepage, that information is available to anyone who can see the homepage. There is also usually a cost for this service, some of which work on a "per view" basis. You are charged for telling the system where you are now, and charged again for asking it for the location of someone. These costs can mount up.

Got to have the latest mobile phone? Some of the latest handsets are highly desirable. Even possessing an iphone4 can result in bullying in school. Do you really need to take the very latest handset in?

Technology is useless….until someone uses it. And that means you. If you use the technology responsibly, you have nothing to worry about, BUT, if you chose to abuse it, you could be putting yourself at risk. For example, it is not acceptable, and may even be illegal, to take someone's photograph without their knowledge. It is illegal to impersonate someone. We have seen Facebook sites set up in other people's names. This is illegal and can render you liable to prosecution and heavy fines.

"But people don't prosecute do they?" Why wouldn't they if you have damaged their reputation or careers? More and more staff are taking the view that professional or reputational damage should be prosecuted. Ask yourself; "What would I do if someone posted something about me online that caused me damage?"

The technology exists for the benefit of everyone. And if you look on it in that light, it is without doubt one of the most beneficial and productive things to have happened to the human race in recent times. Just think of the amount of information that is now freely available to anyone, anywhere, anytime.

Choices, choices, choices. And this is really what it comes down to every time. The choice on whether to use the technology responsibly or irresponsibly is yours. It is your finger that hits the enter key, and you that holds the accountability for your actions. In the newspapers, there have been reports of companies taking aggressive legal action on young people who have tried to hack into their systems. "Tried" being the operative word here. As far as foreign countries are concerned, the USA seek extradition of people who deliberately attempt to hack their systems. One thing these prospective hackers had in common was an absolute belief that their activities could not be traced back to them.
Responsibilities, then, is what it really comes down to. You are the one who has to act responsibly, or chance the consequences. It is YOUR choice, and YOUR responsibility. Act responsibly, and you minimise the risks. Simple as that.