Buckley Park College

CYBERSAFETY

Advice for Parents

Please keep this as a resource to use at home

Buckley Park College believes the teaching of cybersafe and ethical online behaviour is essential in the lives of students and is best taught in partnership between home and school.

21st Century students spend increasing amounts of time online learning and socialising. These online communities need cybercitizens who do the right thing by themselves and others online, particularly when no one is watching.

Safe and ethical behaviour online is explicitly taught at our school and support at home is requested.

It is important to note that some online activities are illegal and as such will be reported to police. This includes harassment of others and publishing of inappropriate images.

Bridging the gap between home and school

At school the internet is mostly used to support teaching and learning. At home, however, it is often used differently. Not only is it a study resource for students, but it is increasingly being used as a social space to meet and chat.

If you have the internet at home, encourage your child to show you what they are doing online.

At home we recommend you:
- find out how your child uses the internet and who else is involved in any online activities
- have the computer with internet access in a shared place in the house – not your child's bedroom
- ask questions when your child shows you what they are doing, such as:
  - how does it work and how do you set it up?
  - who is else is sharing this space or game? (do you know them or did you 'meet' them online?)
  - can you see any risks or dangers in the activity - what would you say to warn/inform a younger child?
  - what are you doing to protect yourself or your friends from these potential dangers?
  - when would you inform an adult about an incident that has happened online that concerns you? (Discuss why your child might keep it to themselves.)

Statistics show that students will not approach an adult for help because:
- they might get the blame for any incident
- they don't think adults "get" their online stuff
- they might put at risk their own access to technology by either:
  - admitting to a mistake or
  - highlighting a situation that might lead a parent to ban their access.

Protecting personal privacy rights and those of other students

Students like to publish information about themselves and their friends in spaces like Myspace, Facebook and blogs, but in doing so they can make themselves more vulnerable to being approached, groomed or bullied online. To avoid this we recommend they:

- don't use their own name, but develop an online name and use avatars.
- don't share personal details including images of themselves or their friends online
- password protect any spaces or accounts they have.
- don't allow anyone they don't know to join their chat or collaborative space.
- are reminded that any image or comment they put on the internet is now public (anyone can see, change or use it) so no full names should appear in reference to individuals in any image, movie or sound recording
- ALWAYS make the space private so that they can control who sees their space and can communicate with them.

In line with school's expectations and rules, ensure your child understands the importance of using appropriate language when talking to and working with others online and never writing or participating in hate mail.

Being online can make students feel that they are anonymous and sometimes students may say things online that they would never say to someone's face. Often very few adults visit this online environment. The web space or online chat environment that they use in leisure time might also have explicit language and they may feel they have to be part of it. Students need to be reminded that their behaviour online must fall in line with the school's code of conduct.

Using equipment and resources properly for educational purposes as directed by teachers

It is important to realise that there is a time for fun and a time for work even on the internet. Students may often see the internet as "free" but just looking at a page on the internet incurs a download cost. By just taking care with the equipment, and thinking carefully about printing and downloading from the internet students can save time, money and the environment.

Using social networking sites for educational purposes and only as directed by teachers

Web2 tools and social networking spaces allow students to be contributors to the web and allow them to work collaboratively online with other students. Creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, digital stories and podcasts can all be legitimate educational activities which allow students to publish, share and inform others and be active contributors to the web.
The task, online space and responsibilities should be clearly outlined by the school and reinforced throughout the task.
The educational purpose should be clearly understood by the student and the online space defined by the school. When publishing, students should be aware that they are posting to the web and should follow safe practices which protect both their privacy and other members of the school community and post/create in an appropriate way for the school project.

Keeping away from rude or offensive sites.

In school settings, internet service providers set up filters to block out a lot of inappropriate content, but these filters are not always foolproof. Students who deliberately seek out inappropriate content or use technology that bypasses filters, will have their internet access reviewed and their parents will be immediately informed.

Following copyright procedures

All music, information, images and games on the internet are owned by someone. A term called copyright is a legal one and has laws to enforce it.
By downloading a freebee you can risk bringing a virus or spyware to the computer or system. These can destroy a computer system or provide hackers with details such as passwords and bank accounts. Remember if an offer is too good to be true, the chances are it is.

Evaluating and using content on the internet carefully

Not everything on the internet is true, accurate or unbiased. The school is working to teach information literacy skills, which enable students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively on the internet.
Copying and pasting information can help organise arguments, ideas, and information, but it is important that your child uses their own thoughts and language to express what they have learnt.

Not interfering with network security, the data of another user or attempt to log into the network with a user name or password of another student

Computer facilities are for the use of all students so due care should be taken at all times when using these resources. Students are responsible for everything done using their accounts, and everything in their home directories. To this end students need to keep their password secret and not gain access to other students' login details.

Seeking teacher assistance

The internet has some flashy and tricky ways to lead users into some websites they never meant to visit. It is easy for us all to get distracted. We want students to ask for help in locating the information they need, and clarifying the task they have been set. Unfocused clicking through websites can lead to inappropriate content.

We also want the whole school community to keep their internet environment as safe as possible so we ask your child if they see a site they think should be blocked to turn off their screen and let a teacher know.

Open communication between parents, teachers and students is the best way to keep students safe.

Use of mobile phone and other mobile technology

Mobile phones and technologies are a seamless part of our lives. The school is asking to have some say in how these technologies are used to ensure that there is the capacity for learning in a classroom. A classroom could have more than 25 mobile phones in it at any time. Student learning and concentration could well be hampered by texting and ringing.

The recording of both images and sounds can breach other student's rights under the Privacy Act. Sometimes students feel embarrassed telling their peers that they don't want their image or voice recorded. The use of such images can be instantly transmitted by SMS and/or posted online.

The Privacy Act says that the posting and sharing of information online or in any other way requires consent. This consent must be fully informed, freely given, current and specific in how the information will be presented and who it will be presented to. Schools are required to obtain signed authority for any work, images or information posted online. All citizens need to respect the rights of others to privacy and students are no exception.

If you have any concerns about this agreement or Internet Safety in general.
Contact either the school or NetAlert Australia's Internet safety advisory body on
1800 880 176. or visit http://www.netalert.gov.au/ or www.cybersmart.gov.au..