SpunOut.ie is a not for profit information website run
by young people, for young people

We have roughly 80,000-100,000 readers every month

Our readers see online as no different to the other spaces and environments they inhabit. The line is entirely blurred.

Privacy as we know it is dead.

Privacy (or lack thereof) and the protection of our data presents more challenges than we currently have solutions for.

It starts with us. As individuals.

As Patrick McClusker, a 23 year old from Donegal, wrote on our site recently, *"we all need to exercise caution in how we use the internet every day"*.

There are practical things we can all do to limit our exposure to the challenges we face, so we can reap the rewards of a connected, creative online experience.

Amongst the things our readers are concerned about:

- Porn and sexual content

- Connecting with someone who they haven't met face to face

- Hateful messages

- Bullying

- User generated content promoting harm

- Violent content

- Hate speech

- Exposure to harmful images

- We must develop critical thinking skills to assess the quality and accuracy of information and content we find.

- We must be able to recognise harmful content like hate speech, child exploitation material and extreme pornography.

- We must be resilient enough to deal with inadvertently or purposely consuming violent, explicit or upsetting video content.

- We must know how to act in a crisis, personal or one experienced by a family member of friend. We must know to reach out and where to go for help.

- We must also know how to act if we bear witness to harmful behaviour like bullying, shaming and harassment. We must know what tools we can use to report the behaviour, how to intervene without making matters worse and who to go to for help in the aftermath.

Online Safety Hub
www.SpunOut.ie/OnlineSafety

1.Keep your passwords strong, using upper, lower cases, numbers, symbols and more than 8 characters. Keep your passwords to yourself and change them now and again. Use two factor verification where possible

2.If you something makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you are being bullied or abused, take screen grabs for evidence, log off (maybe even deactivate) and talk to someone about it. Then decide on the next steps like; reporting, asking the person to take down the posts or other options. Know where to go when you need help

3.Try not to react to posts online, don't feed the trolls

4.If you see bullying or abuse happening online, say something or report it, be there for the victim and think through the next steps about reporting and getting more support. Don't be a bystander

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5.Think about privacy; are you happy with how much you're sharing publicly? Check your privacy settings and make sure you're comfortable with them (what about location settings on Instagram?)

6.Think before you type; things will annoy us online or we may find them offensive, but think before you post something or send a message. Be aware of the consequences of your actions online and the impact your words may have on someone

7.Know your platform and device – spend time finding out how features on SnapChat, Twitter, Whatsapp work? How does my iPhone work? How can I get help if I need it?

Online dating

•Keep information private; don't reveal your address, full name
•Be aware of catfishing (people pretending to be someone other than who they really are); perhaps a video call, or snapchat can help mitigate the risk - but this is not foolproof and be aware that if you video calls can be recorded and snapchats can be kept without your knowledge
•If you are to meet, do so in a busy public place and let someone know where you are going and who you intend to meet
•Watch for warning signs; undue pressure to meet, inconsistent information being provided, refuses to video call or identify themselves

Sexting

•Try to avoid and definitely don't feel pressured/coerced into it
•You have no control after you press send
•Think about how you would feel if posted online
•If you decide to - limit your liability;
  o Try to avoid revealing identifying features
  o Use snapchat - might mitigate risk of photos being kept
  o Be aware a video call could be recorded without your knowledge
  o Delete and reinstall dating app profiles regularly to remove access to chat histories in other users' accounts

If a sext leaks

- Untag yourself, deactivate your account
- Contact poster/platform/site
- Contact a legal professional
- Create dummy profiles
- Talk to family/friend for support
- Blackmail? Contact law enforcement
- Revenge porn? Contact law enforcement
- Be aware content doesn't necessarily get posted to facebook, twitter - could be posted to amateur porn site
- Be prepared for stress/anxiety but know people will eventually forget, they might not forget the incident but over time they will forget who was involved
- Don't feel guilty (Jennifer Lawrence)
- Get sent one? Be a good human and delete without sharing

Viral shaming

- Don't post images/video without someone's consent
- Be a good human and don't record someone doing anything you wouldn't want to be recorded doing
- If you do so inadvertently, don't share it
- Don't share stuff posted by others with the intention of shaming (Worst people involved in Slane incident? Those who filmed and shared it)
- Display compassion

Hate speech

- Again, be a good human and don't say racist, misogynistic, homophobic or generally offensive things
- Know what might be hurtful to others
- Stick up for others, but don't feed the trolls, just block

Financial security

- Avoid saving details on browsers or once off sites
- Avoid mailing or messaging financial information
- Make sure you web session is secure (https)
- Use two step verification to sign into email/password/file(Dropbox) clients

Privacy

- Exercise caution in what we publish in the first instance
- Explore privacy settings and decide on the level of protection we want for ourselves
- Protect email and file repositories (Dropbox) with two step verification
- Explore the myriad encrypted services out there and see if any of them are right for our needs
- Exercise your right to be forgotten when needed

- People, not platforms, cause harm

- Positive role models in the community

- Platforms can empower their users with the tools they need to establish safe communities protected from harm.

- The law as it either currently stands, or as it is currently being enforced, is not having the desired effect – that of deterrence from abuse and harassment online.

Conclusion

Online Safety Hub
www.SpunOut.ie/OnlineSafety

SpunOut.ie Survival Guide to Life
www.SpunOut.ie/Guide