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Cyber smarts – being safe online

5 February 2014: iiNet, Australia's second largest DSL broadband provider, is celebrating Safer Internet Day by sharing tips to help parents start the cyber safety conversation.

Now in its 11th year, Safer Internet Day will be celebrated on February 11 and aims to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones to young people across the world.

iiNet Compliance Manager Rebecca Moonen, said the day provided parents with a great opportunity to start an age-appropriate conversation about how to stay out of trouble online.

In her latest [iiNet blog article](#) Rebecca explains what parents need to know about social media apps like Snapchat, Kik and Instagram - which are experiencing increased popularity - and gives tips on how to avoid unwanted online interactions.

“If you have already spoken to your children about safety online, it’s important to hit them with a refresher course. Chances are the apps that they were using last year have been replaced with newer and oh-so-cooler alternatives that have not yet been ‘ruined’ by snooping parents.”

For those who need a hand to get the conversation started, Rebecca suggests that parents first get familiar with Snapchat, Kik and Instagram.

“Once the darling of the sexting crowd, Snapchat remains a firm favourite of teens. It lets users shoot photos or video, embellish with pictures and text, and send to contacts. The main reason for its popularity is that, within 10 seconds of the recipient opening the image, it expires but most users know that a screenshot or third-party apps means the image can be saved and then it can come back to haunt you,” she said.

Instagram lets users take photos, apply digital filters to their shots and share them with followers. Used almost exclusively on smartphones, Instagrammers ‘follow’ others in their newsfeed, ‘like’ and comment on photos, ‘tag’ friends, and ‘hashtag’ topics so that when someone searches for that particular user or hashtag, the photos that have been shared are publically displayed.

Kik, described by NSW Police as “the number one social media problem involving teenagers”, is an instant messaging service to send text and photos with relative anonymity.

“As Kik uses a username rather than phone number, a ‘phoneless’ child that has an iPod touch or an iPad, can still install the app and use Kik as an unmonitored communications method with people that they don’t know in real life.”

Parents can find out more about Safer Internet Day at <http://cybersmart.gov.au/>

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Fast facts for parents:

- Talk about Snapchatting or sending inappropriate or risqué content. If either the sender or the recipient is under 18, there are potentially legal consequences resulting from sending or receiving lewd pictures.
- Have a chat about public profiles on apps, like Snapchat, that list the people they talk to most. Ask if you can scan the list for any names that you might not recognise.
- Talk about communicating only with people they know, and not meeting up with people who they don't know in real life.
- Adjust App Rating restrictions on devices to block the download of apps intended for adult use.
- Shots that are shared across Facebook and Twitter can potentially identify where that photo was taken. Displaying your location might be cool at the Eiffel Tower, but sharing the location of your family home is another story.

- ENDS -

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About iiNet

iiNet is Australia's second largest DSL Internet Service Provider and the leading challenger in the telecommunications market. Publicly listed on the ASX 200, our company is now valued at approximately \$1 billion. We employ more than 2000 inquisitive staff across three countries – 80 per cent of whom are employed to directly service our 900,000 customers. We maintain our own super-fast broadband network and support over 1.7 million broadband, telephony and Internet Protocol TV (IPTV) services nationwide.

We're committed to making it simple for all Australians to connect across both our own network and on the NBN. Our vision is to lead the market with products that harness the potential of the Internet and then differentiate with award-winning customer service.

A lot has changed since our CEO founded iiNet in a suburban garage back in 1993 and the broadband landscape continues to evolve. What hasn't changed is our passion for the transformative benefits of the Internet and our commitment to helping Australians connect better.

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