



Being smart, safe and responsible

Some quick tips for using technology

The Alannah
and Madeline
Foundation



Keeping children safe from violence



Your digital footprint

Almost everything you do with technology leaves a trace: something called a digital footprint.

- Your digital footprint is a map of everywhere you've been with your technology - everyone you've spoken to, every image, chat or comment you've posted, and every file you've downloaded.
- Digital footprints are almost impossible to erase.
- Text messages, photos and emails can be saved by the person you sent them to, and then forwarded to many more people than you ever intended.
- You can delete a blog, a comment or image you've put online, but many people may have downloaded and saved it before you delete it – and a copy is always saved in the site's archive.
- Even a one-on-one IM chat can go public if the person you're talking to decides to record or copy it.



My Brand

Self image and reputation

Your digital footprint is permanent, so it's really important to think about the online image you want others to see.

- You work out what people are like by reading what they say and looking at what they post online – so don't ever forget that other people do the same thing about you.
- Your digital footprint can be a permanent map of the journey you take to becoming your adult self, so think about how much of what you're experimenting with you'd want made public in a month, a year or even five years.
- Remember that, even though there are some things you just don't want everyone to know about, it is very hard to limit who sees what.
- Before you say or post anything online, use the 'school assembly' rule: if you wouldn't want something held up, read out or displayed at your school assembly, it's safer not to text, post, email or chat about it over your phone or the internet.
- Some employers and unis look at your social networking pages when they're deciding whether to give you a job or a place on a course, so it's always worth thinking about the future before you text, post, email or chat.



Chatterbox

Friendships and relationships

Making new friends online is fun – but it can turn nasty if you're not careful.

- More friends online mean more people can see everything you put on your profile.
- Never forget that the person you're talking to is a real person with real feelings: if you wouldn't say it face to face, don't say it online.
- Sending or forwarding mean or humiliating things about other people can cause real hurt – and in some parts of Australia, it's against the law.
- Making other people's private information public (like posting a phone number or address online) can put them in danger.
- If you know someone else is being bullied, tell someone. The person being bullied might not have the courage to find help for themselves.
- If someone is giving you a hard time, don't respond or reply. Lots of people will give up if they don't get a response. But don't ignore it either – tell a trusted adult and ask them to help you.
- Save nasty messages, texts or emails (or copy and paste Instant Messaging chats to Notepad) so you can show an adult if you need to.
- Most chat sites, Instant Messaging software and phones will let you block communication from people you don't want to hear from.



Images and video

Flicks & Pics

Sending and downloading images and videos is easy – the hard part is knowing what the person you send it to might do with it.

- If you wouldn't want a photo, video or information about you displayed at school assembly, think twice before you post, email or text it to anyone.
- You can be charged with making child pornography if you are underage and share nude or explicit photos of yourself.
- It's never a good idea to send a photo or video of yourself to someone you don't know in real life.
- Be respectful: don't take pictures of someone unless they know you're taking them – especially if they are doing something that they might regret or be embarrassed by later, or might get them into trouble.
- Think carefully about your safety before you accept a file or webcam feed from someone you do not know or trust in the real world.
- Remember that (static) web cam images can be faked – seeing an image of someone you're chatting to online doesn't mean they are who they say they are.
- If you see something online or get a text that scares or worries you, tell a trusted adult right away, and block the person who sent it to you.



Bodyguard

Protecting your privacy and staying safe

Keeping your computer safe is a big part of keeping yourself safe online.

- Always use anti-virus software, run regular scans and ensure you download updates.
- Back up everything on your computer once a month or so, so that even if you get a virus or your computer breaks down, you don't lose your stuff.
- If you do think you've been hit by a virus or Trojan, disconnect the internet immediately and run your anti-virus software. If you think the virus is still there, take your computer to a repair shop right away.
- Delete spam texts and emails as soon as you get them, without opening them or replying. These messages take up memory, and some contain viruses that could wipe out everything on your computer or phone.



Google It

Finding and using information

The web is full of fun and information, but it also contains stuff that's inaccurate or even disturbing. Smart web users filter out what's not safe, and think hard about how they use everything that's left.

- Use a good search engine
 - Google has some student-friendly versions of their search tool (StudySearch or SafeSearch).
- There is a never-ending stream of information on the web, because anyone can put stuff on a website and call it fact. It pays to think about who's written the information you're reading, and why they've written it.
- If the person or organisation who has written the website is credible in the real world, you can have some trust in the information they've put on the web.
- Always look at the 'About Us' section of the website if there is one. It's usually a good indication of what interests, bias or attitudes the site's authors have.
- Using someone else's ideas or words without making it clear where you got them from is cheating (plagiarism).
- If you're using someone else's words or ideas, include them in quotation marks (") and make it clear where you got the quote from (the web address) and when (the date you accessed it). If you can, you should also say who wrote them.

More information

For more information about eSmart:

- visit www.esmart.org.au
- call our help desk on 1300 592 151 between 8am and 5pm EST, Monday to Friday
- email (esmart@amf.org.au).

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