UNIVERSITY of Lethbridge

FIAT LUX

CYBER TALK:

Creating Safe Internet Communities

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CYBER TALK:

Communication and Online Technology Use Among Rural Adolescents in Alberta

Dr. Robin Bright, U of L

Dr. Pamela Adams, U of L

Dr. Mary Dyck, U of L

"The Internet is just another public place, just another public park or public building. It's as good or bad as the people who congregate there."

Sher (2007). *One child at a time*

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Access to Technology
- Online Activities, Behaviors and Communities
- Cyber Relationships
- Cyber Crime
- Safety Strategies
- Questions and Discussion

SOURCES

◉ Media Awareness Network
  Young Canadians in a Wired World
    Phase II-Student Survey, November 2001-2005

◉ Ipsos-Reid/Microsoft Canada
  Kids' Online Safety Report
    Student and Parent Survey, December 2006

◉ Cyber Talk
  Online Technology Usage
    Alberta Students Survey, May 2007

ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

- 90% of Southern Alberta teens have Internet access at home
- 50% have high speed
- 37% own a cell phone
- 93% have access to a cellphone

BEING ONLINE

- Outside of school, 61% go online everyday or almost everyday.
- 39% spend two hours or more online each day
- 38% of 14 year olds spend three hours or more (IPSOS, 2006)

TIME ONLINE

- 65% of parents said they thought their kids use the Internet primarily for schoolwork.

LOCATION ONLINE

- 63% talk online from home
- 12% talk online from a friend's home
- 9% talk online at school

PARENT/ADULT PRESENCE

65% of the students said that a parent or other adult is never or rarely with them when they are online

CYBER RELATIONSHIPS:
THE CHANGING FACE OF FRIENDS AND STRANGERS

- Face-to-Face Friends
- Online Friends
- New Friends/People/Strangers

METHODS USED IN CYBER RELATIONSHIPS

- E-mail
- Instant Messaging
- Text Messaging
- Chat Room
- Blogs/Personal Profiles/Webpages
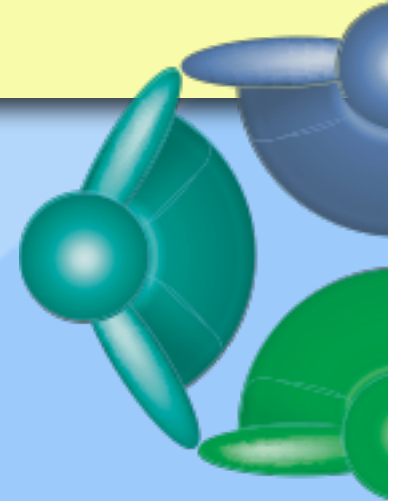
CYBER RELATIONSHIPS:
PERSONAL PROFILES

- Blogs
- Social networking profiles
- Personal webpages

NEXOPIA

Nexopia [www.nexopia.com] is a social networking service that allows those individuals who register to become members to receive the Nexopia Services and to create unique personal profiles online in order to find and communicate with friends

PERSONAL INFORMATION ONLINE

69% of kids believe that the information they put online and send to friends is private and only for them and their friends to see (IPSOS, 2006)

ONLINE IDENTITITES

- 17% pretend to be a different gender
- 44% pretend to be a different age
- 14% pretend so they can be mean and not get into trouble
- 30% say things online they normally wouldn't say.

CYBERBULLYING

- 37% know someone who has been bullied online
- 19% have been bullied themselves online (target)
- 17% have bullied others online

SHARING PASSWORDS

- 26% share their passwords with friends
- 28% say someone else has tried to use their passwords without permission

SHARING INFORMATION

- 21% of young Internet users indicated they would give out both their name and address online in order to win a prize in a contest

    - Boys (60%)
    - Girls (40%)

SEXUAL CONTENT

- 20% of Southern Alberta teens have received unwanted sexual comments
- 24% of youth have received pornography on the Internet from someone they have met only online
- Girls are more likely than boys to have received unwanted sexual comments

TALKING TO STRANGERS

- 33% have talked to someone online whom they have never met in person
- 25% said they feel safe getting together with a person that they have met online and talked to for a long time online

(IPSOS, 2006)

CYBER-CRIME

- Identity theft
- Insecure wireless
- Viruses, file sharing and spyware
- Sharing of illegal data (child porn)
  - 2-3 billion dollar per year industry
  - 116,000 searches related to child pornography
  - 20,000 child pornography images posted per week

STRATEGIES

No one piece of technology or trick or tool is going to keep kids safe online

PARENTS

The Internet is like any other community-some are safe and others are not. Some people are friendly, but some are dangerous. You can't keep your child locked up in the house or off the Web. All you can do is arm them with the skills and tools they need to protect themselves... **It has to be about communication between parents and kids.**

Sher (2007) One child at a time

PARENTS

- Be aware of young people's online activities. Ask and check history.
- Help your child understand about the dangers of posting personal information, downloading files, and meeting online friends.
- Communicate ground rules regarding acceptable behaviors while online.
- Set security and privacy settings to protect users.

PARENTS

- Place the computer in a common family area. This way you can easily keep an eye on what they're doing.
- Control access and use of cellphones.
- Educate yourself. If you understand how the Internet works, you can better understand the dangers and risks.
- Ask them to teach you. Get online.
- Keep communication open, it is never too late to tell someone

EMPOWER THE CHILDREN

"You have to be in control of your surfing. Not other people-not parents, not teachers and not the pedophiles."

Patel (2007) Youth Advisory Panel

YOUNG PEOPLE

- Don't post personal information of yourself or your friends.
- Don't add people you don't know.
- Don't post plans on your site.
- Don't record yourself in a compromising fashion. If you're not comfortable with the world seeing what you are recording, don't post it. Remember - videos and photos put up on the Internet can be broadcast across the world and cannot be removed. Be cautious with your web cam.
- **STOP, BLOCK, TALK AND SAVE**

YOUNG PEOPLE

- Do take precautions when meeting people you have met online - Do not go alone.
- Do read privacy policies.
- Do restrict access to your sites.
- Think before you click.
- Do have fun!

CONCLUSION

- Work as a team.
- Start early before using the technology.
- Be conversational rather than confrontational.
- Learn about the technology.
- Talk to your friends.