

1. Introduction.

The Frankston Library Service wants your child's experience of the Internet to be positive. This information sheet is designed to give parents a brief introduction to the Internet and to highlight some of the issues we think you might like to be aware of, so that you can ensure that your child's experiences while using the Internet are indeed positive.

2. What is the Internet ?

As a parent it is important for you to understand the nature of the Internet as it relates to your children. The Internet is a term used to describe the world wide collection of connected computers and computer networks. This means information can be accessed anywhere in the world, at any time. The range of topics that the Internet covers is only limited by our imagination.

3. Control Of The Internet.

The Internet is not allowed or governed by anyone or any organisation. This means there are no restrictions or checks on the information accessible to Internet users. It also means there are no controls over who is connected to the Internet or who publishes information on it.

4. The Internet - Another Resource.

Frankston Library Service provides a broad range of educational, cultural, recreational and informational resources. These resources now include the Internet. However the Library cannot control the type of information available on the Internet, and therefore cannot be held responsible for its content. As with other Library materials, restriction of children's access to the Internet is the responsibility of the parent.

As with any other environment, children can be exposed to offensive or inappropriate materials. While your children are keen to get on the Internet, they may need parental supervision and advice to ensure their experiences are positive.

5. Participating in your child's Internet session.

The Library cannot be held responsible for the choices children make regarding the resources they use to obtain information; Parents are therefore advised to monitor the resources their children use.

Becoming familiar with the Internet resources your children are using is as easy as participating in their Internet sessions. Ask them to show you how to get into the Internet, how to use it, and to show you what to do while connected. This way you can stay in touch with what they are doing.

6. Evaluating Your Information.

It can be difficult to find specific information on the Internet. When you do find it remember that not all sources of information on the Internet can be guaranteed as accurate, complete or timely. Anyone can publish anything, so it is important to consider where information is coming from, who is writing it, when they did write it, what is their experience in this field.

As with print sources, we encourage you to encourage your children to evaluate the validity of information found on the Internet as they would be information they find in books.

7. A Word Of Caution.

Children will be curious and anxious to explore the Internet. It is paramount they be reminded that not everyone on the Internet is who they might say they are, or appear to be.

So please advise your children not to give out any identifying information over the Internet. This includes their name, home address, and telephone number.

This section has been adapted from the Upper-Clarence Regional Library. The Frankston Library Service gratefully acknowledges Upper-Clarence Regional Library for the use of its "Parents Guide To The Internet" article.