



National Centre for Technology in Education  
Ionad Náisiúnta don Teicneolaíocht san Oideachas

## **Minister for Education & Science Mary Hanafin TD launches new website to promote on-line safety for children on *European Safer Internet Day***

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**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2006:** Minister for Education & Science, Mary Hanafin, T.D., today launched the Webwise initiative ([www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)) which provides information and resources to teachers, parents and students to help ensure that children's on-line experiences are positive and safe. The website presents a technology-neutral message in four specific content areas: **surfing, chatting, sharing, and gaming.**

The site has been developed by the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) an agency of the Department of Education & Science responsible for the implementation of ICT policy in schools.

Jerome Morrissey, National Centre for Technology in Education, commented: "In the context of always-on broadband being made available to schools, Webwise will assist teachers and pupils to learn safe and suitable Internet skills in a manner which will allow pupils to develop a life-long ethic of responsible practice."

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*Note to Editors*

Jerome Morrissey, Director of the National Centre for Technology in Education gave some preliminary findings from a major Europe - wide study of children's on-line behaviour. The study, undertaken in November 2005 and administered to 800 Irish children between the ages of 8 and 16, will be published in April 2006.

### **Internet Security & Safety:**

- Just over 40% of children believe 'most or all' of what they find on the Internet
- 57% 'do nothing' to confirm that the information they find on the Internet is true.
- Children identified parents and schools as the preferred sources of internet safety information.

Schools 46%

Parents 46%

### **Internet Usage:**

- 28% have access to the Internet through new technologies e.g., mobile phone, games console
- The most popular online activities are:
  - Doing Homework (41%)
  - Surfing for fun (48%)
  - Downloading Music (53%)
  - Playing Games (56%)

The survey also questioned the children about **mobile phone usage** -

- 26% of mobile phone owners had received a message that threatened or frightened them.
- 41% of children who received such messages knew the person who sent the message
- 42% reported there are no rules from home for using mobile phones.

Ends.

