#DITTO

STAY SAFE ● HAVE FUN ● REPEAT

In this edition

YouTube

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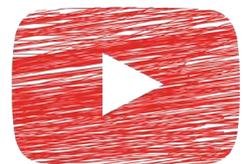
Foreword from
Alan Mackenzie

Hi there, I'm Alan Mackenzie. I'm an independent consultant specialising in online safety, specifically within education to children, young people, schools and other organizations, and parents.

I'm a strong believer that technology, for the most part, is neutral; behaviour is key. To understand behaviour, we have to be a part of childrens lives in order to understand what they're doing with technology and why.

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Welcome to Edition 6 of #DITTO

Probably one of the most often questions I'm asked, particularly when delivering parents training, is in regards to YouTube. No surprise there; when I'm talking to students well over 90% across all age ranges are using YouTube for one purpose or another. No DIY would ever get done in my house if it wasn't for YouTube!

But we also know that of the millions of videos on YouTube, there are some that are simply not appropriate for children.

Over the last few months you'll have noticed that I have started to introduce new, regular articles from other people. All of these are picked by me; they're people I know personally that really do know their stuff, they work with children and young people, we share the same ethos and I consider them all to be friends.

The idea is to always bring you relevant, up-to-date, practical advice and guidance, as well as opinion based on real-world experience.

If there is anything in particular that you would like any of us to cover, please let me know.

Drop me an email:

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PRIVACY

It is, in my opinion, one of the least understood aspects of online life. Not only by children and young people, but by adults too.

I'm a firm believer that there is no such thing as true privacy online. When you consider the monitoring of our web histories, our online interactions and much more, not only by governments but also by companies who are profiling us for the purpose of selling us as much as possible, it really makes you think. Where artificial intelligence is being improved to the point that algorithms can accurately predict our likes and dislikes it sometimes makes you wonder where this is all going.

I don't mean to make this sound like it's a bad thing; different people will have different opinions, what I mean is that we have to have a good understanding in order that we can give due consideration for what we do online - all of us, not just children.

Just recently I worked with a large group of primary and secondary schools as part of a project for Safer Internet Day (or week is it turned out to be).

Specifically with the secondary schools I wanted to talk with smaller groups of students, rather than the normal assembly-type talks. This is specifically because these smaller groups can be really engaging, which gives great insights into their use of technology, apps, social media and all sorts of other things.

It's really easy to make assumptions about what children and young people are getting up to online, after all we're constantly bombarded by terrible, weak, misguided media reporting that tends to concentrate on all the 'dark' things. There are some very serious issues, nobody would deny that, but concentrating on these areas does very little to educate children in terms of understanding and impact.

When I work in secondary schools I like to concentrate a lot on privacy. Primarily this is because there is such a poor general understanding of what privacy really means, and the impact that the technologies we use have in regards to our privacy. But because it's such a huge area, it's also a way that I can inject those all-important safeguarding and safety messages as part of the talks, so it's a win-win.

I had some brilliant talks with the students, most of whom were really engaging. I say most because talks like this can sometimes be a bit of a risk. After all, why would young peo-

ple want to talk to somebody they've never met before? But after gaining their trust and explaining why I'm there they do start to open up.

As suspected, their understanding was generally low. That's not unusual, and certainly not the fault of the school, after all how can school be expected to have significant understanding in this area?

A big part of the problem, and the blame, lies with those very companies that fill our smart devices with their 'free' apps. The old saying is as true now as it has always been; there's no such thing as free, and when it comes to free apps, free couldn't be further from the truth.

Consider this, have you ever read those terms and conditions of any site or app you've used? If the answer is no, you're in the large majority. If the answer is yes, huge respect to you!

I've tried, I really have, but trying to wade through the appalling jargon and legal-speak is not a task that I or tha majority relish. Instead, we just click on that box that says we have read and agree to the terms and conditions.

This was part of the conversation I had with the students too. To be fair, a small number said that they had tried to read the T's&C's but simply couldn't understand them so gave up.

Interestingly, a couple of months ago the Children's Commissioner released their 'Growing up Digital' report. As part of this report a law-

yer ripped apart the terms and conditions of some social networks and put them into a language that we can all understand. It makes for a really interesting read, and when I spoke to the students about the amount of information that we are giving permission to use they were shocked, and that's a huge understatement.

There's this constant rhetoric around the fact

that 'the internet was never built with children in mind'. Well, it has been around for a while now and it's about time companies and organizations got wise to this - children use it too. Governments need to start intervening with these hugely powerful companies.

For the moment, children and young people must understand that free doesn't mean free; if they want to use something they must pay for it somehow and they need to know the implications of the use of this data not only from a safeguarding perspective, but from a privacy perspective too.

You can view the Growing Up Digital report here - http://bit.ly/2laZhe7

Facts and Stats
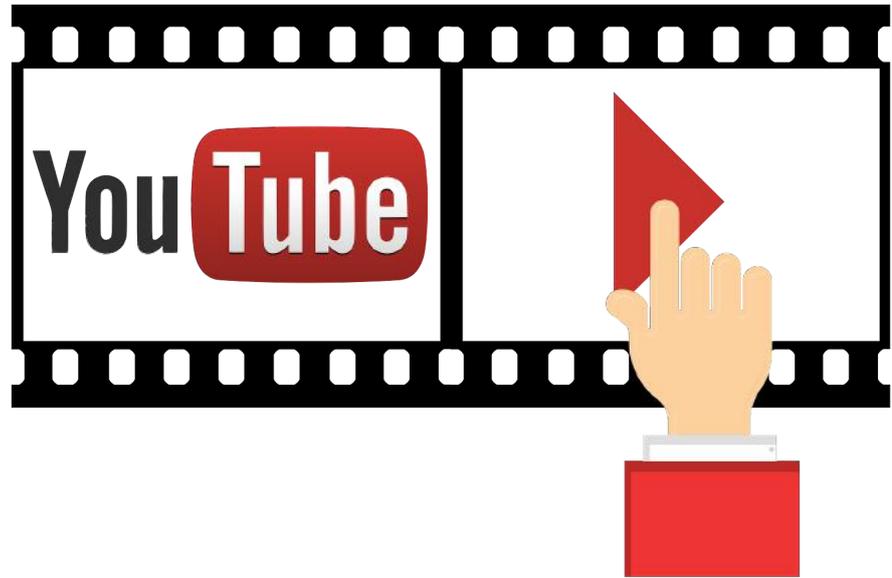
YouTube was founded in 2005 by three former Paypal employees. In 2006 Google paid $1.65 billion dollars for it.

YouTube has over 1 billion users; that's around a third of the entire population of people online. Almost 5 billion videos are watched every single day.

300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute. The first ever video was called 'Me at the Zoo' which was uploaded by one of the founders. View HERE

The most watched (non-music) video is 'Charlie Bit my Finger'. At nearly 1 billion views this one video was enough for the family to buy a new house. View HERE

The highest paid YouTuber is PewDiePie; his annual income was approx. $12 million for 2015. It will be interesting to see how much this drops after he got into trouble in Feb 2017.

The most watched video ever is Gangman Style. At the time of writing (Feb 2017) this had over 2,765,956,612, views. Click HERE if you're one of the few that hasn't seen it.

How does YouTube moderate inappropriate videos?

There's very little information (frustrating!!), but essentially YouTube say that it's a combination of 'flagged' (user reported) videos and AI (artificial intelligence). There is a team of moderators who will view flagged videos to see if they break terms and conditions, but if you consider the facts on the previous page you can see that this is a mammoth undertaking.

Adele and her music video 'HELLO' got over 1 million views in just 5 days. Click HERE to see the video.

How old do you have to be?

To have your own channel and upload videos, the terms and conditions of YouTube state you have to be 18, although you can be 13 with parental permission. The terms and conditions also seem to 'suggest' that you have to be 13 to view videos on YouTube. Realistic??

As with other social services, this restriction is in place due to advertising.

Apart from generic searches such as 'music', the top search on YouTube is MINECRAFT.

For parents of younger children, consider giving access to YouTube Kids, rather than the full YouTube service. It's free, no sign-up and it's multi platform. You can see a review I did HERE

RESTRICTED MODE within YouTube is a way of restricting objectionable content. It isn't perfect, but it can help to stop your children seeing inappropriate content on their computer or other device. Restricted Mode is available on web browsers, and on the apps on most devices and is really easy to set up. Click HERE to see a video.
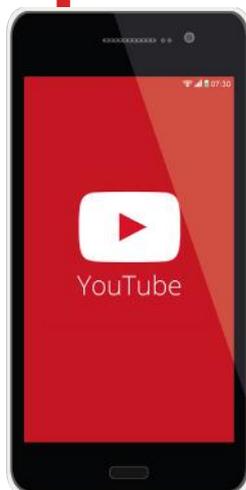
Have that conversation with your child about what they are doing on YouTube; have they got their own YouTube channel, do they upload videos? I speak to lots of children who state they upload videos onto YouTube but their parents aren't aware; on rare occasions this content has been of significant concern.

DOING IT TOGETHER
Advice for parents

YouTube is a big part of online life for many children and young people, from watching games to funny videos, and even the strange phenomenon of unboxing videos.

I use YouTube a lot for various things such as DIY tasks (seriously), to get advice and opinion on certain professional topics, and to view sketching tutorials which is a new hobby of mine.

There are so many positives to using YouTube, but as with anything there are negatives too; out of the hundreds of millions of videos that are on the platform there is a completely unknown number of videos that are wholly inappropriate, regardless of age.

It isn't difficult to stumble on these inappropriate videos. For example I'm interested in figurative sketching which means learning about anatomy, different poses etc., and of course some of these videos will show artwork of the naked body. But just a couple of clicks on the 'recommended videos' can take this to a whole different level.

The curiosity of some children or the use of innocent search words can very easily lead them to videos that you (and they) would not be happy with.

It's important that you understand what they are viewing on sites such as this mainly for your own assurance, for example many children I speak to like the PewDiePie channel. It sounds like a cute channel name, but trust me when I say it's anything but cute. It's one of the most famous channels on YouTube and PewDiePie (the man) makes a serious amount of money from this channel, and yet the language is questionable. Have a look yourself and see what I mean.

- Talk to your children about the channels they watch and assure yourself that these are appropriate.

- Does your child have his/her own channel? Some children I speak to have their own, and also say their parents aren't aware. Check, and see what they're uploading.

- Apply the Restricted Mode settings as shown on a previous page. Do it with your child so that you can explain why you're doing it. Equally, let them know that if they see something concerning they can talk to you about it.

- For younger children, consider using the YouTube Kids app instead.

- Learn how to report (flag) inappropriate videos.

SEN-D

We know that for children and young people the internet can be a really empowering space. Students can disclose as much – or as little as they choose about themselves - although there is still the age old problem of over-sharing, but this can be a problem for young and old alike!

When a child or young person has additional needs they can reinvent themselves and be just about whoever they want, and part of that persona may not be someone who wishes to share any additional needs or vulnerabilities.

This can mean that children and young people become more vulnerable by virtue of the fact that allowances made for them in their offline world may not be made in the online world.

I would like to think that our world is changing and just because a child or young person has special educational needs or a disability this does not mean that opportunities to grow, develop and experience the same opportunities as a mainstream child are unavailable to them.

The internet is such an enabling space and allowing children and young people to make, share and comment on spaces such as YouTube can help students to grow in confidence and allow them to take control over their online

presence as well as make connections with other like-minded people.

Of course we need to ensure we are educating students around the potential risk, on these

sites so it is important to ensure that we revisit online safety messages regularly with all children and young people.

Should I use YouTube in the classroom?

One of the amazing things about using YouTube in the classroom is that for children and young people with communication or processing difficulties, using YouTube will allow them to revisit the content that is being delivered as many times as needed until they have grasped the information or lesson that is being taught. There is no eye contact required, which reduces anxieties and no body language to decode.

Using YouTube can therefore make learning a far more pleasurable and calmer experience for all involved.

As a teacher, you may want to set up your own channel and upload lesson content and plans so that students can access these outside of school time as a revision guide or as a way to set homework and remember that you can also

share with parents and carers the work that has been carried out in the classroom.

Don't forget to ensure that this is sanctioned by the school's senior leadership team first!

As always great care should be taken when using generic YouTube clips in the classroom. You should always watch clips that you are going to use in their entirety and with the volume turned on. Some clips may start off perfectly useable but be aware that they can change part way through. Some common issues that teachers report include explicit language or images. There are several websites that will import specific YouTube clips which will allow you to reuse the same clips over and again without fear of inappropriate content or advertisements popping up when you are least expecting it.

You can of course just use YouTube as an easy way to keep up to date by following organisations that support SEND children and young people such as the National Autistic Society, and the National Deaf Childrens Society. These organisations have a whole bank of resources including films and research on YouTube which educators may find useful. These channels are regularly updated and showcase current thinking.

Traci Good

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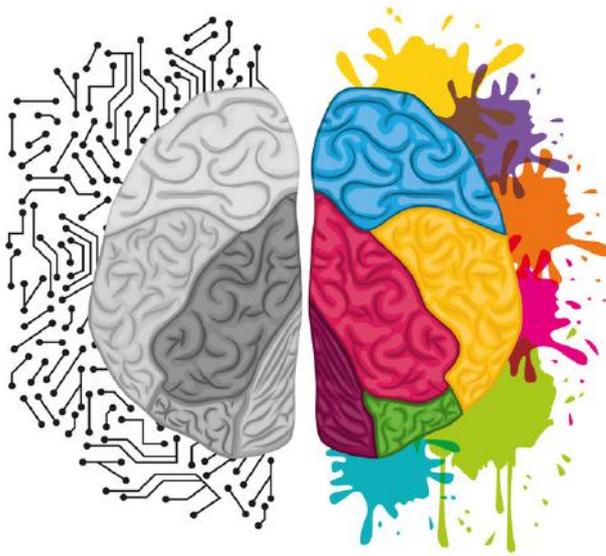
Social Learning Theory

Warning: trauma is defined as a deeply distressing or disturbing experience. These regular articles will cover topics which some may find upsetting. Please consider the title of the article before reading and before sharing with others who may find the topic distressing or disturbing

Catherine Knibbs is a Child/Adult Trauma Therapist and Author. (BSc, MBACP (Accred) UKCP Adult Psychotherapeutic Counselling).

She is the leading researcher on cybertrauma in the UK, specialising in online abuse in all forms and provides consultancy, education and training on this topic.

She is a consultant for an AI online safety robot called Oyoty, writes for Internet Matters and other organisations and in her spare time is completing a dual MSc in Child and Adult Psychotherapy. Cath can be contacted at:

www.cybertrauma.com

There has been a substantial amount of research into children viewing violence and aggression on television and the relationship this has with the level of violence that children show.

In the 1960's a Psychologist called Bandura showed some children a video of adults hitting and kicking a "Bobo Doll'

Video link: http://bit.ly/2lEOmgu

In this experiment the children who were about 5 years of age watched this video and copied the behaviour; some of them even copied the phrases used by the adults.

This is known as 'social learning theory' and can be seen in the behaviours of children in nursery/early years settings when they copy their parents.

I'm sure that some teachers/nursery staff and childcare practitioners will have seen this first hand when children stand with their hands on their hips, or wag their fingers at their peers in the classroom, it can be quite funny, endearing, or at times worrying if this behaviour was to mimic any form of emotional/psychological or physical abuse.

In general this is one of the ways we can identify safeguarding issues. Children under the age of 7 are very susceptible to be-

haviours they see modelled by people older than themselves. However as children mature they are able to assess other peoples behaviour and using a 'moral' viewpoint and critical thinking skills they can work out if they wish/want to copy that behaviour.

This occurs through a process called 'empathy', 'mentalising' or 'theory of mind' which means children can put themselves into the shoes of another person and using a process

of if…then…they work out that if they carried out that behaviour what may happen.

What social learning theory has allowed us to do in the academic world is find a correlation between watching/viewing violent media and the prevalence of that behaviour in those who viewed it. That means we can say the following: When (children) are exposed to violent media on television there is an increased 'likelihood' that this will also increase

the possibility of them (children) copying that behaviour. This may also lead them (children) to carry out this behaviour in the future.

Social learning theory can be applied to YouTube in the same way. Recent research by Childwise (who conduct the biggest study, yearly, in the UK with children around issues of digital media) have found that Youtube has 'overtaken' watching television as a means of young children entertainment.

Report link: http://bit.ly/2kKVCZ0

This means that children can be, could be and possibly are being influenced in a way that we can associate with the material that they are viewing. In short this means that if children are viewing material on YouTube that is violent, aggressive, rude, racist, ageist, sexist, (misogynistic/misandrist), lacks empathy, uses humour around cyberbullying, is pornographic or highly sexual in nature then this behaviour may be copied.

Furthermore my recent research looked into how YouTube videos can influence babies and toddlers and their development. A brief description of this is; a young child who had regularly watched videos of dolls/babies on YouTube used the words diaper and pacifier in my therapy room, not the english equiva-

lent of nappy and dummy. Babies can become fixated with the colours, sounds and the stimulation of this information that is right in front of their eyes (their brains are not ready to process this level of information), however what is lacking is the feedback that babies need in order to grow new connections in their brains and help them develop social and language skills.

But YouTube is not all bad; children can learn how to tie their laces, how a volcano works, share tips and tricks for homework through to gaming. They can consume information in a more visually stimulating way than can often be demonstrated in a classroom (eg volcanoes!) and this can only be a good thing.

What is necessary, and in my honest opinion mandatory and should be taught to children, are critical thinking skills. They should be given a platform to assess the information they receive and be able to develop the skills to question and challenge this.

Videos don't always tell the truth, not everyone is an expert and the content of the videos can be discussed after viewing to enable children to develop those skills such as are there any counter arguments? Why do people do the things that are classed as racist, aggressive, political and so on? Question, question and question everything you watch.

Empathy video: http://bit.ly/2lubqws

Cathy

www.cybertrauma.com
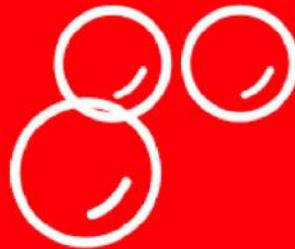
FREE for schools http://bubble.school

NO APP FOR THAT

DIGITAL PARENTING

Mark is a former school leader with more than twenty years of experience in the classroom, leading successful faculty departments, being a local authority lead teacher for his subject and responsible for some of the world's most innovative 1:1 programmes.

He is one of the UK's most in-demand keynote speakers, independent strategic consultants and trainers and a passionate advocate for the purposeful use of technology linked to pedagogy.

https://ictevangelist.com/

Being a parent is tough. There are no number of books read or children taught that can prepare you for life as a parent. There is no app for that! As my children grow, so they want to use technology. They have access to many different types of connected devices, from games consoles to tablets to keyboard-driven devices.

Fortunately in regards to keeping them safe in regards technology, I am lucky in that I'm pretty knowledgeable about the ways in which I can keep them safe through technological means. I can ensure that the games console isn't connected to the Internet and I can use the great little app 'Our Pact' that allows me to limit screen time on their iPad minis. There are lots of little hints and things I pick up through my everyday work that many parents don't have access to.

Certainly there are website resources available to parents through a simple Google search; great new tools too such as GoBubble from the team that brought us eCadets is a social media tool for young people that provides lots of safety features built right in. Sometimes though, life can get in the way with busy schedules both from home and at work and some things can slip by.

What to do?

How can you then as a parent do more to support your child with their interactions in a digital space? Well, as with many things, it isn't necessarily just about restricting access to things like iPads and consoles, it is equally important to think about the relationships you have with your children.

Like many children, mine can be a bit naughty from time to time. With siblings too, just like friends in school, they fall out from time to time. Just as it is in school, honesty and a culture around telling the truth and talking about concerns and issues has been something that often works well with young people.

That's not to say that it always works. Absolutely not, however when you look at the best advice around working with your own children on things digital, this culture can play a large part in helping young people navigate the difficult online spaces we exist in.

Your children will make mistakes. To err is only human after all, and if you have a culture with your children where they feel secure in confessing about their mistakes or concerns, the chances are that if any issues do occur they are much more likely to come to you with them.

Yes, of course you'll do similar things to me in terms of screen-time, protection, access to websites, parental controls, so forth and so on. It is that open culture of discussions on what is acceptable online and what is recognised as good digital citizenship that will ultimately play a significant part in protecting your children in the future. Sure, just like when learning to ride a bike you might fall off, but you will get better and eventually your child's virtual stabilisers will come off. Best they are prepared for that future so they can act responsibly.

Responsible action whilst online isn't just about being mindful of what you say and do either. A large part of being responsible lies in the area of your actions too. One such area of responsible digital citizenship is that around the use of images.

Google Images

Google Images is very often a good example. How often do you go to Google Images when you need an image to use on a document you're making?

Perhaps it's for a birthday invitation. Maybe your child likes Marvel Avengers Lego. Off you go to Google, type in 'Marvel Avengers Lego' and then find a suitable image. Copy it and paste it straight into your document. Simple. But is it right? Most probably not! Google Images, just like its Google Search compadre, is just a search engine. The images aren't actually owned by Google or even actually on their search engine. The images are referenced from source, i.e. from their original websites.

These images are also most likely safeguarded by copyright. Now I'm not the Google Images police but it is important that we know this information. Part of our responsibility as educators is to role model best practice to our pupils. By the same token as a parent this is something that I try to do with my own children too.

Google Too!

Speaking of Google too, have you tried Googling yourself recently? How did that go?

You might think I am vain but I regularly Google myself. Googling myself means that I am able to keep an eye not only what I am putting online but what others are saying too. You can even set up a Google alert so that you can receive an email if something is found by Google relating to you.

To do this, simply visit Google Alerts:

https://www.google.co.uk/alerts

Why not try doing this activity with your children, although you might just like to check it yourself first!

THINK!

Something I came up with some time ago around the acrostic 'THINK' is the poster on the following page, with the idea of keeping things True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary and Kind when doing things online.

Downloaded many thousands of times and shared across the world, it might be something useful to share with your children too. I believe it encapsulates the key elements of what responsible digital citizenship should look like. Maybe next time you use technology it might help you to THINK too.

To summarise, there is no one set way to keep our children safe and to be 'good digital parents'. Despite everyone's best efforts, accidents still happen, people still make mistakes, the world isn't a perfect

BEFORE YOU

tHink !!!!

t is it true?

H is it helpful?

i is it inspiring?

n is it necessary?

k is it kind?

@ICTEvangelist

Darren Laur is known as 'The White Hatter'.

Living in British Columbia Canada along with his wife Beth and son Brandon, he has dedicated his life to public safety. A recently retired and well-respected Staff Sergeant with the Victoria City Police Department he has a strong background in online and social media investigations.

Darren has very kindly allowed me to share this recent blog; you can see more great blogs full of tips and advice on his site:

https://www.thewhitehatter.ca/

What Eleven Teens Had to Share with Me About Their Use of Social Media

CAVEAT:
Given that I travel internationally teaching on the topic of internet/social media safety and digital citizenship, I have both seen and learned that what I am about to share with you can differ from province to province, state to state, and even school to school. Although some of the information that I will share below does cross over in many circumstances, some may not, especially when it comes to what social networks are most popular with teens.

On January 28th, I was able to bring together eleven teens ranging from grades 9 to 12 from several different school districts to participate in what I call the "Teen Social Media Think Tank."

When I put the call out for participants, I specifically stated that I was looking for teens who would not be frightened to speak their mind, no matter the topic, and trust me when I say this group of teens did not disappoint.

This group of teens comprised of six young women and five young men, who represent a variety of different sub-cultures within their schools such as leadership, athletics, academics, and the LGBTQ community. In other words, I believe we had an excellent diverse cohort that could bring a variety

of different thoughts and opinions from their specific experiential social media lenses.

Every year, I have asked students via social media, about what they are doing online. This year I decided to do it face-to-face, which I must admit, allowed me to get a better understanding given that I could also read emotion, voice tone, and body language into the discussion.

The purpose of this focus group was to help me, the adult, understand what teens are doing online. With this information, it would help me to stay current in my social media safety presentations when speaking with tweens and teens.

Too often I find that many of those in our industry share information that is dated, and not relevant to where our audience, the teens, find themselves online today. Although I, too, am a digital citizen who navigates the ever-changing waters of social media, I bring an adult "filter bubble" that creates a perception that may be different from our tweens and teens who don't have the same filter. As a social media safety educator, I believe that a teen perspective offers me better insight and understanding into the who, what, where, when, how, and why of how tweens and teens are interacting online and using social media.

My goal was not to make our discussions on their use of social media rigid, sterile, or judgemental, but rather, I wanted an open, flexible, and free-flowing exchange of thoughts and opinions. What better way to get the party started than feeding all of them with pizza and their choice of soda or water? This allowed a further breakdown of barriers between those students who did not know one another, which was about half the group. During the feast, each student shared a quick introduction of themselves and then we began our discussions.

SOCIAL NETWORKS:

Our first discussion surrounded social media and what sites these students were using. In fact, I asked them for their top 5, at which time several of the students started to laugh.

Now thinking that I should have asked what was their top ten sites, most of the students in the room stated that they were really only using 3 on a continual basis which were

1. **Snapchat**
2. **Instagram**
3. **Facebook**

Yes, other sites like Youtube, Twitter, Musical.ly, and Tumblr were mentioned, but Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook were definitely the top 3 when it came to this group. This made sense to me given that some of the peer-reviewed research we are seeing specific to social media shows that teens are becoming more "Social Media Homesteaders" (staying true to a few).

When I asked why they ranked these social networks in the above-noted order, here is what they shared:

Snapchat:

This is the app that everyone is using to communicate primarily with one's closest friends.

It was all about the ease and functionality of this social app that makes it attractive to them, combined with some of the fun that the filters provide.

The other main reason why these teens stated that Snapchat was so popular is that it offered instant gratification to the user, given how it allows them to be more themselves, not being as guarded in their content given what we adults call the ephemeral nature of the app. This teen group also acknowledges however, that this could create a double-edged sword, and one still needs to be careful about what they share on Snapchat. All students also understood that things just don't disappear.

Instagram:

This social network was all about sharing "specific and well thought out pictures" with others over an extended period of time, that would not disappear like they do on Snapchat.

Several students also mentioned how they like the new live streaming function that Instagram now provides.

Facebook:

Facebook is all about sharing information with school groups, friend groups, and family. It 's about getting your message out to the masses. One student also mentioned that they use Facebook as a way to filter YouTube given that she doesn't have to search YouTube for videos she likes, she usually finds them on friends' Facebook feeds. Several other students agreed with this comment as well. When I asked why Facebook had dropped to the number three spot, all stated that it was becoming too complicated given that they were trying to be all things to all users, rather than specializing in one or two things like Instagram and Snapchat do. If anyone is reading this from Facebook you might want pay attention to the last sentence.

When I asked the students about the "unwritten rules" surrounding the use of these social networks, here's what they shared:

Snapchat:

- No nudes. It was surprising to hear how all students voiced this rule in unison.

- Don't send "Streaks" more than 2 times a day, 3 tops. A "Snapstreak" is how one keeps a private message going with a good friend over an extended period of time. It's one of the features that is built into the Snapchat app that almost turns it into a competitive game with others

Instagram:

- Don't post more than three pictures a day.

- Don't like your own pictures.

- Don't go crazy using hashtags in your postings.

- Don't try to start and stop comments.

- Don't go back and like posts from two years ago ("that's just creepy")

Facebook:

- Don't share gross stuff or vague stuff to get attention
- Don't call yourself beautiful and everyone else beautiful.
- Don't send chain messages

When I asked about "friends" and "followers" it was refreshing to see how this group on average provided numbers under 100.

Sure there were some who had 200 to 300 followers, but this was the exception rather than the norm. When I asked why they thought the numbers are lower today on average when compared to two years ago, many stated that if they didn't know the person face-to-face, then they would not invite them in.

They also stated how age matters. When I asked for clarification on this statement, the consensus was that those in junior high school can be attention seekers thus why they will invite everyone and anyone. Interesting observation, and one that I would also agree with.

When it came to messaging one another, their top three apps were:

1. WhatsApp.
2. iMessage: - all but one of the students had an iPhone
3. Facebook Messenger

What are the up and coming apps?

All agreed that live streaming such as HouseParty, Periscope, Instagram Live, and Facebook Live was now in play.

When I asked why, one of the participants shouted out, "Because our generation loves real-time attention", everyone else nodded their heads in agreement except one student who didn't see the benefit of live streaming given that she just doesn't like to put herself out there.

I then asked the students what did their day in the life of a teen social media user look like, and all stated the same thing:

- As soon as they get up, check and send Snapchat streaks.
- Get to school early to check Instagram, Facebook, and any messages.
- In class, send messages to others; the kids called it "sneaking"
- After school and once home continue to engage with friends online via their social networks or messaging apps.
- Just before hitting their pillow to go to sleep, check for any new streaks.

It's important to note that this is a constant ongoing process from the time they wake up, until they go to bed.

CELL PHONES:

Surprise, surprise, every one of the students owned a cellphone. The cellphone of choice was the iPhone and one student owned an Android phone. Also, no doubt that mobile is the number one way our teens are accessing the internet and social networking.

When I asked how many were bringing their cellphones into the bedroom at night when going to bed, all put their hands up.

One student then immediately spoke up and stated, "we know about blue light and sleep deprivation issues surrounding cellphones."

A big smile came across my face given that this proved to me that education is working. She further went on to say that older teens are not as active on their phones at night when compared to those in junior high school. Another teen observation that I would agree with.

It was then interesting to hear how all of the students in this group who do have cellphones in their bedrooms at night, place them on silent (other than their alarm clocks) and position them in their bedrooms where they are not at arms reach of their phone.

One student in particular stated that they self-recognized that they were communicating on their phone too often and too late into the night so that he was constantly tired. Several other students nodded their heads in agreement. This provided me with some insight that most, not all, older student are recognizing digital contra-indication that can have a negative effect on one's emotional, psychological, and even physical well being, and that they themselves are taking measures to minimize these challenges.

When I asked about the **"Fear of Missing Out"** (FOMO) and having to read messages that may be coming in at all hours of the night, the group shared that this is more a concern at the younger ages than in high school. Many in the group stated that only a message from a really good friend that

they have assigned a specific ringtone to would cause them to check their phones once in bed. Once again, this is refreshing to hear given the challenges of sleep deprivation and the effects it is having on learning once at school.

PRIVACY AND SECURITY:

All of the students in this group stated that they were aware of security and privacy issues. Several also knew that the day of this gathering was "Privacy Day." All students utilized passcodes for their phones. Some passcodes were weak and many had already upgraded to a minimum of a six digit passcode… Excellent!!!

In regards to to their three specific social networks, all students utilized privacy settings provided by the vendor, and all stated that if they didn't know a person who was asking to be friended or followed, they would always check them out first. Many stated that if they didn't know the person then they wouldn't invite them in.

One student shared a countermeasure that they use against people who they don't know wanting access to their social network; they just do not reply and do not delete the request, they just let it sit there. Several other students were doing this as well. When I asked why, the student stated, "if you delete their request they will know and then they may continually hound you. Just letting the request sit there does nothing, and often this person will just go away." Smart thinking!!!

SEXTING:

On this topic I must confess how impressed I was with how open and honest this group of students were. THANK YOU!!!

When I asked how many students have seen a sext recently, ALL raised their hands. One student even admitted to sexting with another student. When I asked if sexting was as widespread as adults believe, ALL stated yes, but this is where the discussion became very interesting. Remember those "filter bubbles" i spoke about earlier?

The students proceeded to share with me how adults equate sexting to youth actually having sex, and this isn't true in their world. Yes, some are having sex, but sexting is not the cause. One student stated, "we are using sexting as a form of dating intimacy while maintaining virginity in some cases." Their message, hooking up in their digital world is different than our adult world.

Although all had seen sexts, not all students are sexting as was the experience of this group where only one out of eleven admitted to sexting. Two students stated that at their school sexting was about being popular, being a part of the " in group." If you wanted to be popular and a part of the in group, then you sexted. A new form of digital peer pressure that we need to address in my opinion.

A student stated that at their school, it's a small group of people who are all sharing the same small group of pictures. Most of the group also agreed with this statement. So although nudes are freely available, it appears to only be a specific group of students that are doing it in their eyes.

When I asked if they had concerns about a nude becoming public that were meant to be private, all stated "yes." One student stated, "I know that if I send a nude it will probably get shared so you shouldn't be surprised when it gets shared."

A common theme that this group shared with me is that often sexting in high school is an intimate action taken in a relationship, in junior high its more about

"look at me." Once again, that attention seeking behaviour that was mentioned earlier.

This group did acknowledge that there are some in high school (usually the boys) who are tricking younger girls into sending nudes that they will further use to sexually exploit the person who sent them. In the past, these high school boys were known as "LG Slayers" (Little Girl Slayers). According to this group, these type of high school boys are now called FB's (Fuck Boys/Bois).

When I looked at the reasons why students were sexting, here's what they shared:

- For some, it creates another step in the intimacy/relationship ladder.
- It's similar to a one night stand without having to have sex.
- To be popular.
- Being vindictive (revenge).

When I asked about the current abstinence-based education surrounding sexting, they all laughed. In fact one student stated, "Don't do it, it doesn't work with our generation."

Why? My belief is that most of the anti-sexting message only surrounds the negative and not the other positive outcomes that many of these teens experience from this behaviour. This only strengthens my belief that we need to start promoting a hybrid "Harm Reduction" message when it comes to sexting (age appropriate, of course). Yes, when things go wrong specific to sexting they go really wrong, but the fact remains that the opposite can be true as well. In high schools, I take the following harm reduction approach to this topic: "I don't want you to sext, but if you do…

- Make sure your face is not in the picture.
- Make sure you are not wearing any jewelry that is identifiable to you in the picture.
- Make sure there are no scars or tattoos that are identifiable to you in the picture.
- Make sure that you are not wearing any kind of clothing that is identifiable to you in the picture.
- Make sure the background in the picture is neutral and not identifiable to you.
- Make sure any metadata is scrubbed from the picture before it is sent.

Many senior students who sext are integrating the above-noted countermeasures already. In fact, I learned about these countermeasures from students I spoke to in the past about this specific topic.

These harm reduction steps are important because now if your sext becomes public, the teen has plausible deniability. The student can now say that's not me, that is someone else. If there is anything in the picture that can identify the teen, then this is where very bad things can and do happen.

The reality is that really good research has supported the fact that the message of abstinence does not work in most cases when it comes to sex, drugs, and other important issues. This is why we need to combine with harm reduction strategies in my professional opinion. I know for some this is a difficult path to follow, but having been involved in many sexting cases that have gone bad, if the teen would have had some harm reduction training on this challenge, I believe it would not have reached the crisis it did.

Another interesting sidebar that came out of the sexting discussion was something that I am going to call "Digital Relationship Abuse." This is where a boyfriend or girlfriend will use digital technology in an attempt to control/spy on their partner by looking at private messages or pictures sent from others, constantly sending messages asking them where they are and what they are doing or placing spyware on their partner's phone or laptop

In our group, we actually had a boyfriend and

girlfriend who acknowledge that this was an issue early in their relationship that they worked through successfully. Once again this is something that we adults and educators need to be alive to and talk about specific to what is a healthy relationship, both on and offline.

SCHOOLS, TEACHERS and SOCIAL MEDIA

All the students acknowledged that the majority of their schools allowed the use of social media to some degree, BUT all wished that more class time be dedicated to using social media in the learning process. A majority of students spoke about the app "Kahoot," (this app utilizes gamification for learning) and how some teachers that are using this app make learning fun. Several stated that if they weren't having fun in class, they would just start to "sneak" (send messages) to other students using their phones.

When I asked if schools were doing a good job at teaching good digital literacy all stated "NO". The message was clear that most, not all, of what many schools are sharing is no longer relevant, and does not reflect today's teen digital reality.

The students stated that what teachers are sharing has been passed down by the school and much of the information is too dated. All also acknowledged the fact that this was not necessarily the fault of the teachers, they are just teaching what they have been provided as teachers.

PERSONAL THOUGHTS

The two hours I dedicated to this teen meeting of the minds felt like thirty minutes to me. All eleven teens were fully engaged, and were not afraid to voice their thoughts and opinion with my wife and I, or with the other students in the room. Here's what I learned:

It's clear to me that rather than depending upon written questionnaires, which have their place, to help us learn what our kids are doing online, having face-to-face focus groups provides way more insight based upon emotion, tone, and body language.

Senior High School students are definitely becoming more "digitally aware." Many have moved from treating social networks like the wild, wild
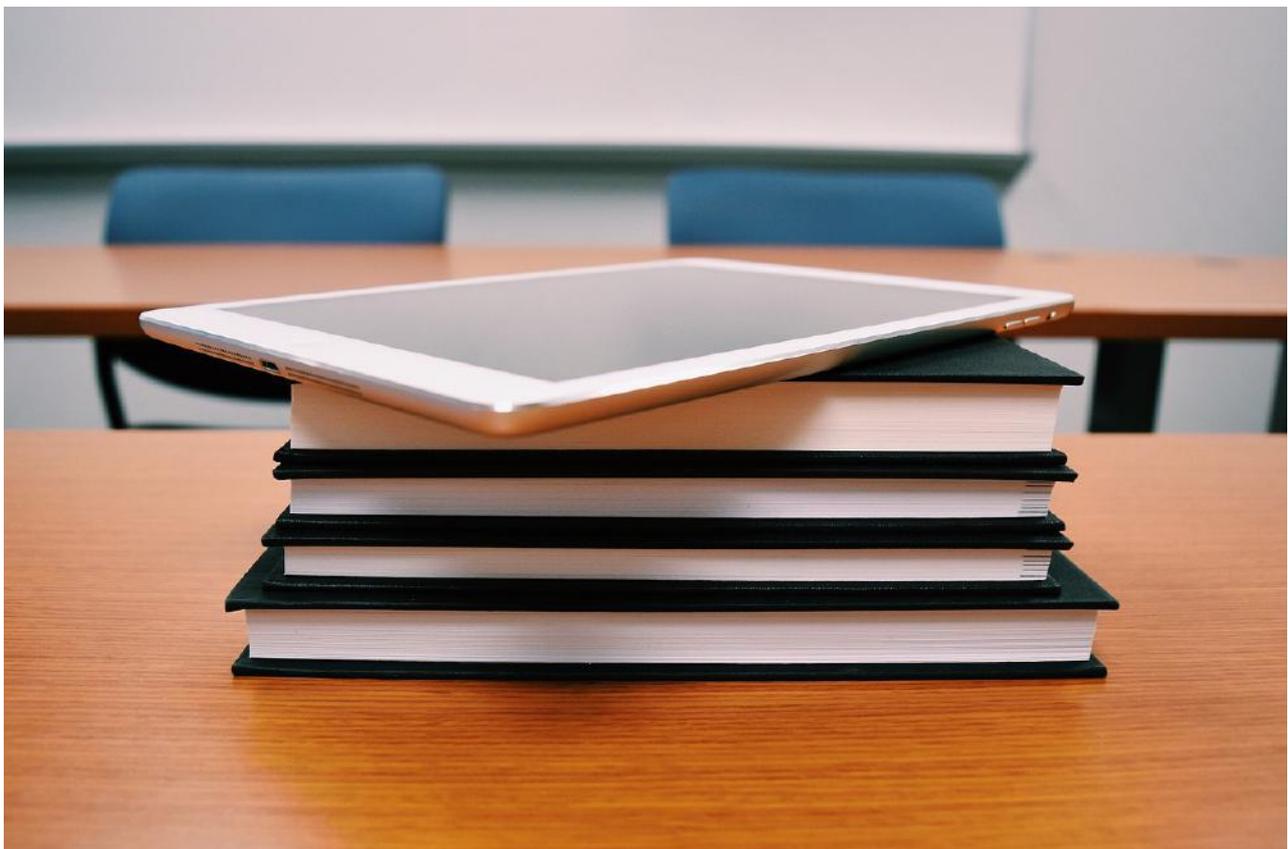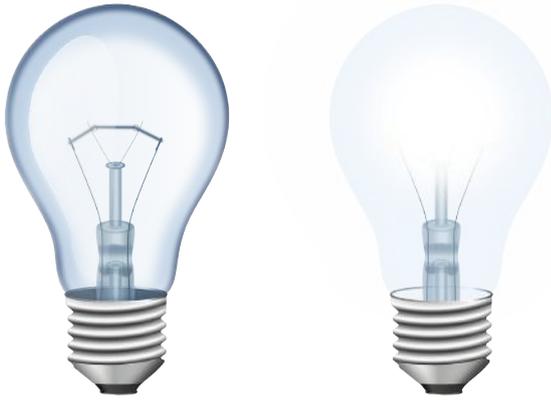
west, joining everything and anything that comes out, and becoming more selective "homesteaders." Like a Swiss Army knife, they are picking and choosing specific social networks as tools to meet their social needs.

Given that this group has grown up with social media, they have learned by experience, rather than academic lecture and development, something that academics sometimes do not give enough credit to. Given this fact, teens have learned from mistakes made (sometimes very tough mistakes) and have developed their own valid countermeasures to avoid making these mistakes again. We adults need to learn and share what these countermeasures are with other tweens and teens who may not be aware of them.

After listening to the students talking about privacy and security, I do believe that all were still too over dependant upon privacy settings; believing that once set, it will prevent their personal information from being shared or leaked. We still have work to do in this area specific to this reality, given that I believe that they still don't understand that no matter what your privacy settings everything you do online is public, permanent, searchable, exploitable, copiable and for sale.

How we talk to students about sexting has to move from the abstinence/criminal model to a hybrid harm reduction model. Adults need to look and approach this challenge from the teens filter bubble. Now the hard question, at what age do we start having this discussion (age appropriate) given that I have now seen sexting as early as grade 4?

Digital Relationship Abuse is becoming more of a reality, and this is something that parents and educators should not only be alive to, but also talking to tweens and teens about. What is a healthy human relationship and how does technology play a roll, both good and bad?

It was very interesting to hear how this group acknowledges the fact that some Junior High students in their social media communities are more about attention seeking "look at me" behaviour

In today's world, schools are a part of the digital village and play an important roll in providing their students with digital literacy skills. According to this student group however, most schools and teachers still have a long way to go. Lessons being taught are dated and no longer relevant to today's teen's online reality. I believe that we have to become more asymmetrical in our approach to this challenge. Much like I did with this focus group, I think teachers and the Ministry need to start turning to their students for guidance rather than other adult experts all the time. This also comes down to the fact that Education Ministries need to start funding training budgets.

This group of students once again strengthened my belief that most are being good digital citizens, and most are doing super uber cool things online. Older teens have become experts at what they do online, and my hope is that we adults start listening to them more, given that they have so much to offer, and that we fail to recognize or even acknowledge, given our sometimes dated and uninformed adult filter bubble.

From an Adult looking in

Darren

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APPS

Wayne Denner inspires and motivates thousands of young people, parents, educators and professionals, delivering talks and up to the minute resources on online reputation, protection and well being, benefits and risks of social media, employability and entrepreneurial topics in Ireland, UK, US and UAE.   www.waynedenner.com

Name: Monkey

Age: Rated 12+

Web: http://monkey.cool

New Smartphone App allows Facetime with random Stranger

Well it seems that it's now possible thanks to new App 'Monkey'. It's founders Ben Pasternak (17) and Isaiah Turner (18) have described it as 'Snapchat's for your real-life friends'.

Monkey is for your internet friends.' Pasternak has claimed the app has made 215,000 users in 5 weeks.

So how's it work?

Once you register for the Monkey App, you verify your phone number, age, Snapchat name and whether you are male or female – it then asks you to allow access to your contacts. Once this is done, 'Monkey' will try to connect you with people from across the world of a similar age.

Once connected both users have to 'add time' to continue with the FaceTime, otherwise the chat will disconnect. When FaceTime has been enabled there's an option onscreen to add the person as a friend on Snapchat.

According to a recent Interview in 'The New Yorker' Monkey's aim is to be 'Chatroulette without the pervs.'

Monkey App is currently rated as 12+ in the app store and is trending as of 25/1/2017. It's also up there in the Top 100 Chart of free apps.
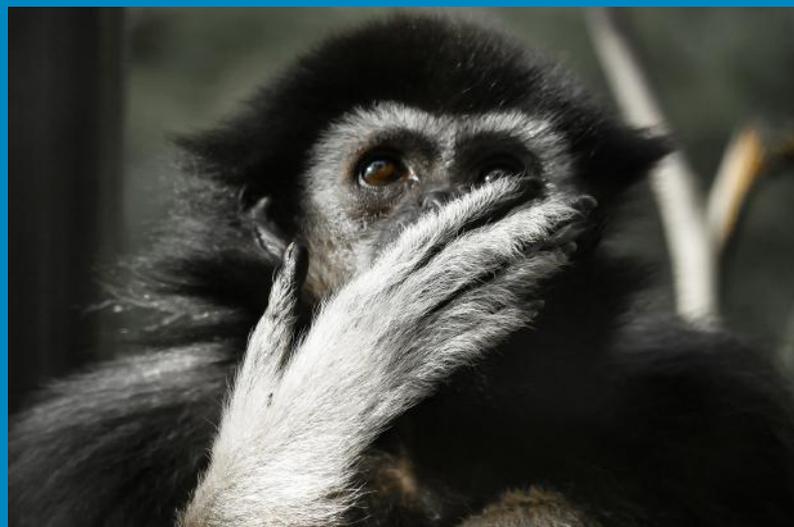
Any e-Safety concerns?

The 'random nature' of FaceTime Chat requests - Yes - its random. For example, when testing the App I accepted a chat request from a guy sitting in a pub drinking beer. Once the chat was accepted it was difficult to end it. It appeared I could only do so by closing out of the app hitting the home button or letting the countdown timer end.

You don't actually need to connect your real Snapchat username to start finding people to chat with. I used the word 'test' and it allowed me to go right to the discover screen to find people to FaceTime.

Once you have Monkey set up, it's very easy to go back in and change your age profile to either younger or older.

In testing, the App appears to have no user reporting, privacy or safety tools in place where you can block or report anything inappropriate.

There is no real verification in place. It seems to verify that the Snapchat username is actually that of the account owner on the Monkey App. Though in settings there is an option where you can choose who you would like to speak with - Girls or Guys. If, for example, you wanted to chat with girls only via the app, you need to login to Facebook to verify your gender.

Turner (one of the founders) says 'One of the big problems is that all the apps out right now are built by a bunch of adults'.

'We are both the creators of the project and the end user which isn't really the case with things like Snapchat'.

Despite the apps very simple sign up process making it easy to fake your age, Pasternak, maybe naively added 'I feel like it's an underground world to adults' and while Chatroulette was well known for serving up sexual content, neither founders are anxious this will be a problem in their 'extremely clean community'.
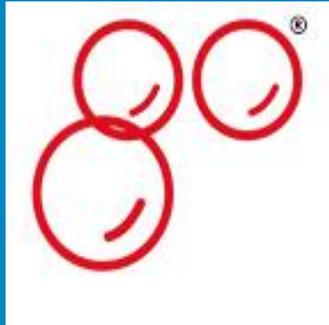
Hope their optimism is right.

So while Monkey still needs access to your contact list, it's been designed by youngsters and looks like the app that will help millennials make friends through common interests.

Wayne

www.waynedenner.com

Resources and Links
for Schools

Go Bubble

FREE FOR SCHOOLS:

All the fun of social media, with the bad bits taken out.

A social network designed specifically for children under the age of 13, this is a brand new initiative from the award-winning eCadets.

hhttp://bit.ly/2fnLoKF

Media Smart

Media Smart have created some fantastic new resources for schools to discuss advertising.

Social media, body image and more is covered in these resources.

http://bit.ly/2fmsdOR

The Power of Images

For Safer Internet Day 2017 the UK Safer Internet Centre launched a report into the role and influence of images and videos in young people's digital lives.

Click on the link to see the report.

http://bit.ly/2kWHImD

Online Safety for all school staff.

E-learning training for all school staff. The training is differentiated to your role in school and can be completed over a 12 month period. Upon successful completion, and passing a short test, staff are awarded a certificate.

http://bit.ly/2bYjB3Q

For more regular links and to keep up to date you can follow me on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/esafetyadviser

#DITTO

Resources and Links
for Parents

YouTube for Kids

This link will take you to a YouTube video I created in May 2016.

It's basically a short, 10-minute review of the app to give a balanced opinion and my personal view of the app.
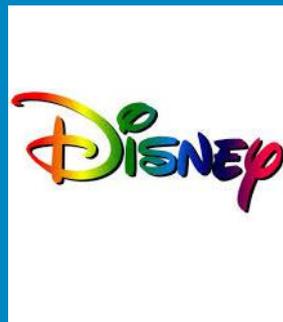
http://bit.ly/2bUfFzM

How to use Snapchat

A guide for parents - if you're curious about how it works or what it can do, or even why it's so popular with young people, give it a try for yourself.

http://read.bi/2kWA6k7

Tips for younger children.

Are you looking to start that all-important internet safety message with younger children?

Here's some great tips and conversation starters from Disney.

http://bit.ly/2lGCxWT

What children learn from PewDiePie and others

This is an article featured in the Irish Times in regards to som eof the questionable content on some of the big favourite YouTube channels that children like to watch.

http://bit.ly/2moUvLA

For more regular links and to keep up to date you can follow me on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/esafetyadviser

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