

**'Students safest using the internet when they are trusted to manage their risk'<sup>1</sup>**

In the digital world it is critical that young children learn best practices in digital literacy and online safety early. The Cyber Champions programme mobilises young professionals to go back to school as business and IT role models, and to raise awareness about best practices in online behaviours, e-safety and the importance of having a positive digital footprint.

Research shows that:

- 99% of 8-17 year olds have access to the Internet, 18% come across harmful or inappropriate content online<sup>2</sup>
- 21% of parents are concerned about their children's' social networking activities<sup>3</sup>
- More than half of parents think children share too much online<sup>4</sup>

## Introduction

Cyber Champions is a not-for-profit organisation that runs an exciting community giveback initiative, working with partners across the private, public and voluntary sectors, to create a better networked society. Its aim is to support stakeholders to deliver best practices in digital literacy and online safety awareness to schools and youth organisations across the UK. Since its launch at the House of Commons in June 2011, over 3000 children across the country have participated in Cyber Champions workshops and the programme is evolving to engage other audiences including parents.

The Cyber Champions are young professional volunteers motivated to make a difference to their local communities and future generations. As well as raising awareness of digital best practices, they are also great business and IT role models being uniquely placed in their ability to connect with the next generation. The young professionals also have the opportunity to develop their own interpersonal skills, gain knowledge of areas such as cyber security and information assurance and grow their network. Many employers therefore, value it as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) and professional development schemes. The initiative is also supported by 'Cyber Guardians', leaders and specialists in business, who contribute knowledge and expertise, and volunteer as mentors for the Cyber Champions.

The Cyber Champion workshops aim to provide an early awareness of good digital literacy skills and best practices in the online world. The simple lesson plans incorporate an activity kit with learning materials from relevant sources including CEOP<sup>5</sup>, the Grids for Learning, Get Safe Online and also signpost to specialist resources.

Getting involved is easy. **If you are inspired by the Cyber Champions programme and want to make a difference, join our growing team of volunteers and partner organisations at [cyberchampions@ypnglobal.com](mailto:cyberchampions@ypnglobal.com).**

**Or visit:** [www.cyberchampions.org.uk](http://www.cyberchampions.org.uk) for further information.



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<sup>1</sup> Ofsted report, *The safe use of new technologies*, at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Ofcom Media Literacy Audit 2009

<sup>3</sup> PC Advisor, May 2011

<sup>4</sup> PC Advisor, May 2011

<sup>5</sup> Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre