Cyber Champions across the UK support Safer Internet Day (SID)

On Safer Internet Day, 7th February 2012, over 500 school children participated in Cyber Champion workshops across the UK

Our global reliance on the internet is increasing and with 'over 80% of children using the internet at home'[1], exposure to the virtual world is part of their daily routine. This year Safer Internet Day focused on connecting generations and educating each other, with the slogan: "Discover the digital world together... safely!" Young Professionals across the UK are doing just that as part of the Cyber Champions initiative.

Cyber Champions are young professionals who volunteer their time to support local schools and communities by running e-safety awareness workshops. In support of Safer Internet Day, Cyber Champions workshops were held in schools across the UK including Lillian Baylis, St Marylebone, George Green Secondary and Bangabandu Primary schools in London, St Mary's in Lancaster, Park House in Newbury and Peak 11 schools in Derbyshire.

The recent ENISA[2] report on 'Information Security in Education' called for children, youth, their peers, parents and others to join in the sharing of best practice when it comes to being safe online. Cyber Champions is a great cross-generational initiative that is enabling young professionals to share their experiences with young children – by creating a savvy peer-to-peer environment children are receptive to the messaging and more open about the questions they have on the subject of online safety. In turn, the young professionals involved in the Cyber Champions initiative are supported and mentored by 'Cyber Guardians' – senior leaders in business and in positions of expertise in their field.

Research from Insafe found that 'teacher's engagement with children's internet use is least amongst 9-10 year olds'[3]. As students start secondary school and begin to socialise more online, they are vulnerable and subject to greater risks if they are not made aware of how to maintain a positive digital footprint. To help address this Cyber Champions are promoting best practice in online safety awareness early and working primarily with children from the ages of 8 -12 years. Since its launch in June 2011, over 1600 school children have benefitted from the Cyber Champions initiative.

If you are inspired by the Cyber Champions programme and want to make a difference, join our growing team of volunteers and partner organisations.

For more information contact us at cyberchampions@ypnglobal.com

---

[1] Safer Internet Day, 2012; http://www.saferinternetday.org/web/guest;jsessionid=09C38074D0C6AD6BD7C9955DB32A6590
[2] ENISA: European Network and Information Security Agency
[3] Safer Internet Day, 2012; http://www.saferinternetday.org/web/guest;jsessionid=09C38074D0C6AD6BD7C9955DB32A6590

YPNGlobal - "The power of young professionals networking globally"