

CHILDREN AND INTERNET SAFETY

Category: Dispute Resolution,Media and OTT,Privacy Law, Infosec, and POPIA
written by Diana Schwarz | March 13, 2018



Children and Internet Safety

An issue that is becoming more highlighted in Society and awareness albeit slowly is starting to spread. With more and more incidents of cyberbullying, child pornography and the like being covered by the press, parents, teachers and caregivers are finally starting to ask questions and take note of child safety on the internet.

Social Media platforms have a huge responsibility to ensure child safety online. Thankfully platforms such as Google and Facebook are stepping up to the plate in terms of their responsibility in respect of education and child safety.

Google and Facebook host the Europe, Middle East and Africa ("**EMEA**") Child Safety Summit. NGOs, governments and industry from around Europe, the Middle East and Africa come together to meet the challenges of empowering parents and children with the tools and skills they need to make the most of everything the Internet has to offer. Both Google and Facebook believe in technology's ability to unlock creativity and have stepped up to ensure that parents and children have the tools and knowledge they need to make smart and responsible choices online.

Most social media platforms have put in place safety settings and reporting procedures to assist with social media infringements. These assist children and parents to be safer on the internet by implementing privacy and safety settings. If children experience cyberbullying, cyberstalking, online grooming or any other unsavoury practices online there is guidance on how to report these incidents.

However the most important tool to create awareness around these issues is Education! Educating children, parents, teachers and caregivers on the dangers of the internet and how to deal with them is key.

The Film and Publications Board ("FPB") make a great effort to promote this cause as well, having recently hosted Safer Internet Day and doing a number of outreaches to educate on these issues.

Media Monitoring Africa ("MMA") is at the forefront of these issues as well, being responsible for the implementation of the Web Rangers programme across South Africa with the generous help of various

partners. Web Rangers is a digital literacy programme designed to allow young people to gain critical skills and knowledge around online safety that they use to create innovative campaigns that promote safe internet usage and champion their rights in the digital world. The programme is about creating young digital citizens who know how to use the internet responsibly and encourage their peers to do the same.

PPM Attorneys do their bit as well being a partner to the Web Rangers Programme. Diana Schwarz an Associate Director at PPM provides social media danger seminars to schools, parents and teachers on these issues discussing social media law, the dangers of the internet, how to stay safe online and what the legal implications are. She will also be attending the EMEA Child Safety Summit in Dublin, Ireland this year.

Every school should have a social media policy in place.

Are you as a parent aware of internet safety for your children? Are the schools your children attending dealing with these issues adequately? What can your organisation do to promote awareness and assist with these issues?

We all have a duty to protect our children for they are in fact the future of our world.