A Parent & Carer's Guide to the Internet

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East Dunbartonshire Leisure & Culture Trust provides Computing and Internet access for children and young people. If you wish your child to make use of the service, you must sign a consent form. To ensure that the experience is as informative and as safe as possible, parents/carers are urged to read the following guidance and information.

• The Internet

This is an important resource which enables computers to connect to computers all over the world via a telephone connection. Library staff will be able to offer advice on how to access this resource, and to recommend websites for children and young people.

• The Advantages

The World Wide Web makes it possible to do research, tour museums, play interactive games or get help with homework. Children and young people can acquire increasingly important IT skills. It is generally recognised that the best learning is done while having fun.

• The Disadvantages

There is no editing of material available on the World Wide Web. It may be inaccurate or inappropriate. Web browsing is not always the best way to find out something. While East Dunbartonshire Leisure & Culture Trust will use filtering systems to block access to material generally considered offensive, no system is foolproof. Personal safety is another issue, as children and young people may come across sites which make them feel uncomfortable, or be asked to give personal details.

• The Recommendations

While there is a risk in allowing children and young people access to the Internet, it can be greatly minimised by educating them in the principles of Safe Surfing, and by ensuring that parents and council services work together to apply commonsense guidelines. Parents/carers are encouraged to spend time on-line with their children, and it is particularly important that children of primary school age and under should be accompanied the first few times they book a PC. This is because using a PC in an East Dunbartonshire Library automatically provides access to the Internet. Parents and guardians should consider these points carefully before signing the consent form if their child is a library member, as this will enable children to book PCs.

Ultimately, Internet use by a child or young person is the responsibility of their parent/guardian.

• Further Information

If you would like more information, there are a number of other resources available. This is one in a series of leaflets on using computers in East Dunbartonshire Libraries. When a child or young person books a session on a PC, they will find suggestions on a number of child-friendly sites to try.

Alternatively, you can e-mail the Children & Families Team at libraries@eastdunbarton.gov.uk