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Many people have recently voiced their concerns that the Digital Age has led to the death of privacy, particularly for children and young people. Whether or not you agree with their concerns, it is apparent that our definition of privacy is evolving as digital technologies allow us to share and access large amounts of personal information with the click of a button. This issue of the ThinkUKnow e-newsletter will examine approaches to privacy and how parents, carers and teachers can guide children and young people in privacy management.

Is privacy really dead?

Research conducted last year in the US found that young adults were more likely to take steps to limit the personal information about them online and change privacy settings than older adults. Research from the ACMA has also indicated that older teens use the privacy settings on social networking sites more than younger teens. What these pieces of research may suggest are that younger internet users need more guidance from adults in how to manage their privacy and, as they grow older, take more steps to ensure their privacy is managed.

Why surveillance doesn't work

It may be tempting for parents, carers and teachers to adopt a "watch their every move" approach to children and young people's online activities. This is often done with the best intentions; it is hoped that by watching over everything children do online we'll be able to protect them from online threats. This approach, however, is

Time2Talk

This section provides some useful conversation starters for talking with young people about their use of technology.

What information should you keep private?

Do you know how to use the privacy settings on your social networking site?

Do you know what information is collected about you by the sites you visit and use?

What are three things you could do to manage your privacy online?

How can your parents, carers and teachers help you to manage your privacy online?

So, how do we teach privacy management?

The key to effective privacy management is to start as soon as children begin to use technology. For younger children, monitoring their online activities is important, but only in conjunction with guiding them on what information shouldn't be shared online and how to manage their privacy. As children grow older, monitoring becomes more

reactive and doesn't educate children and young people on how to prevent privacy breaches.

With the increasing mobility of internet access, via mobile phones, portable gaming devices and tablets, monitoring of children and young people's digital experiences is becoming near impossible. This highlights the importance of teaching young people the skills of privacy management so that they make responsible decisions when no one is watching.

Excessive surveillance may also drive children and young people's internet usage underground, through devices and sources which are unknown to parents, carers and teachers. Not only could this result in young people undertaking risky actions in a completely unsupervised manner, but they may also be reluctant confiding in an adult should something adverse happen to them in this unsupervised environment.

By watching and monitoring children and young people's every move online, we also tacitly condone authorities' unfettered access to personal information. This may lead to young people undervaluing their privacy and accepting organisations collecting their personal information and monitoring their activities. This is in contrast to the actions presently being undertaken by citizens to limit the amount of personal information collected by companies and governments. We need to encourage children and young people to manage their privacy with people and organisations, not simply hand over their information.

difficult and the education they receive becomes even more crucial.

Our top tips for privacy management include:

- Recognise that nothing online is 100% private
- Only use secure sites (identified by https in the URL and a padlock or other security icon) to share personal information
- Once something goes online, it stays online – think before you post
- Search for yourself online – see how much information is out there about you
- Use the most comprehensive privacy settings on social networking sites – your true friends will know how to find you
- Never give away your exact location online.

Most importantly, parents, carers and teachers need to be positive role models and lead by example. We need to model privacy management by taking the necessary steps in our digital environments to manage what information we share and with whom.