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In the previous issue of the ThinkUKnow e-Newsletter we looked at ways in which to manage our, and our friends', privacy. But what are we really protecting, and why? In this issue we're going to examine what can happen if our privacy is breached and motivate ourselves into taking action to manage our privacy online.

Fraud and identity theft

Not protecting our personal information or falling victim to social engineering techniques to reveal our private data could potentially lead to fraud. Many studies estimate Australians losing $1 billion a year to fraud, much of which is occurring online. In serious cases, criminals are able to obtain sufficient information to steal someone's identity and obtain loans and credit in their name.

Before clicking on links, opening emails, or divulging sensitive data we need to ensure that we are using reputable sites and have security software installed on our devices. We also need to ask ourselves how safe our data is, how it will be used and whether it's worth the risk?

Drama

Not every person needs to know everything about us, that's why we try and share the really important stuff with only those who are really important to us. When we share too much, about ourselves or others, it can lead to drama and conflict. The saying "loose lips sink ships" could easily be translated into the digital age as "quick sends hurt friends". Posting

Time2Talk

In this section we look at ways to start talking with children and young people about their use of technology.

How common do you think online fraud is?

Have you ever seen an argument or drama online because of something carelessly posted?

What significance do you think your online reputation plays in the ability for you to get a good job?

If someone only looked at your online presence to write your life story, what would your story be?

Life Story

One of my favourite things about family gatherings has always been hearing about my relatives' childhoods and adolescent adventures. Each relative has been able to tell their story in a way that is unique to them, crafting scenes and characters in such a way that a memorable moment is created in the recollection of a memory. What concerns me is my ability to do this to my relatives when I'm older.

In the future, will there even be opportunities to share memories, or will it simply be that my descendants undertake a Google search

personal content about ourselves or others without considering the consequences can damage friendships and hurt feelings.

Before posting content online or sending things through mobile devices, we need to ask ourselves who will see it, how will it affect them, and how will it affect me? Considering our actions before we taken them can help us to avoid unnecessary drama.

Career Opportunities

If we don't manage our privacy well, the mistakes we make as young people could be broadcast online for the world to see, including potential employers. Once something goes online, it is nearly impossible to completely remove every single trace of it, which means it could come back to haunt us at pivotal moments in our lives. Many employers, universities and sports organisations nowadays are researching applicants online before giving them a position. What was posted years ago could easily be found and affect our ability to obtain the job or position we want.

No one can predict our future, but we can take steps to minimise any fallout from our past upon our future by considering what we share online before it is shared. It's also a great idea to manage our digital shadows. Regularly searching through our online presence, cleaning up the past and presenting a professional presence online can help limit the impact of poor early privacy management on our career opportunities.

and form their own stories around my digital memories? We need to manage our privacy online for our present and our future. So before we post anything online, it's good to ask ourselves, "Am I happy for my children/grandchildren to one day see it?"

Privacy management for all

It's not only important for us to manage our own privacy online, but also to respect others' rights to privacy. We need to consider the impact of our actions on others' privacy and put ourselves in their shoes. Just because someone hasn't managed their privacy well, doesn't mean it's our job to exploit their naivety. The greater emphasis we collectively place on privacy management, the greater influence we can have on governments and organisations to also respect our privacy.