

Internet use and Safety in Schools

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Schools in countries with low amounts of internet usage have the highest educated students. However, they also have more homework and longer school days so it may not be directly related.

The number of students (aged 12-17) using the internet at schools increased by 45% from 2000-2005. Most of these teenagers use the internet outside of school. Roughly 1/3 of the 1,100 parents-student pairs interviewed said that other students use the internet to cheat.

Due to the disruption caused when the internet goes down, the National Education Network has released a reliable internet supplier for schools so that education may not be halted.

In 2015, schools started to watch the internet usage and ban websites, apps, etc. which has vastly reduced inappropriate activities in schools on the internet. This, while it does reduce misuse, inhibit teachers who need resources from websites; this is

especially true for bans that require teachers to ask for permission for the use of sources that they would normally have full access to like YouTube videos.

A survey in Safe & Smart: Research and Guidelines for Children's Use of the Internet showed that around 60% of parents restrict internet use, 76% of kids in low-income families depend on schools for internet access, 43% of 9-17 year olds with internet access say that it improved their attitude towards school, 64% of parents would like to be use the internet to communicate with teachers and 56% of parents would like to be able to view their children's schoolwork online.

"The results of the survey present educators with both opportunities and challenges," Peter Grunwald, whose firm researched and produced the report, said. "The opportunities exist because parents think that schools are doing a good job using the Internet with their children. That confidence allows educators to use the Internet in creative and progressive ways.

"The challenges exist for the same reasons," Grunwald added. "Because kids are online at home, parents have heightened expectations for their use of the Internet in school. Parents expect that schools will use the Internet in well-thought-out, educationally valuable ways. If schools fail to live up to those expectations, problems [could arise] in the future," Grunwald said.

We asked an ICT teacher at our school and the ICT technicians and they said the following:

- Incidents (behavior) are significantly lowered thanks to restrictions put in place
- Incidents (technological) tend to only happen if they are very severe
- Teachers tend to be on top of misuse in lessons
- Out of school incidents that leak into schools and a lack of social media training are big problems as they are hard to deal with and teachers tend not to know social media.
- E-Safety lessons are quite good and do prevent many events.
- The statics that 2/5 teachers haven't tried an E-Safety lesson is quite high so may count non-ICT teachers; if not, that is very surprising and hopefully has decreased since the survey of teachers was taken.

To conclude, internet is now an integral part of our schools whether you want it there or not so we need it use it to its best and give adequate education and what to do to prevent problems and allow the students to use the internet to its best.

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