Safer use of the internet

Google has launched a web page on keeping safe on the internet, which is directed at schools and also contains information for parents to help their children at home; the link is:
https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/en_uk/

'Be Internet Legends' empowers younger children to use the web safely and wisely, so they can be confident explorers of the online world - to make the most of the internet, children need to make smart decisions.

Although the contents are directed at schools and parents, there is a code with I think could be useful when working with young people in the Scouts, particularly younger age groups.

The Internet Legends Code

BE INTERNET SHARP

Think Before You Share

Good (and bad) news travels fast online, and children can sometimes find themselves in tricky situations with lasting consequences. But what can they do to prevent this? The answer: understand how to share smartly with those they know – and those they don't.

Every Word Matters

- Treat online communication the same as face-to-face communication.

- If it isn't right to say, it isn't right to post. If in doubt, get guidance on what kind of communication is (and isn't) OK.

- Personal details about family, friends – and yourself – should stay private.

BE INTERNET ALERT

Check It's For Real

People and situations online aren't always what they seem - we all need help to know how to tell the difference between what's real and what's not.

Spot the Signs of a Scam

- If messages about 'winning', or getting something for 'free', feel too good to be true, they probably are.

- Things getting too personal? Ask yourself, why would someone have private information about you?

- Always think critically before doing anything online – and learn to trust your intuition. Be on your guard for phishing attempts – which are efforts to steal information (such as login or account details) by pretending to be someone you know in an email, text, or other forms of online communication.

BE INTERNET SECURE

Protect Your Stuff

Personal privacy and security are as important online as they are in the real world. Keeping valuable information safe helps children avoid damaging their devices, reputations and relationships.

Create a Strong Password

- Make it memorable, but don't use personal information, such as names or birthdays.

- Use a mix of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, symbols and numbers.

- R3pl@ce le++ers wit# sYmb0ls & n^mb3rs 1ike Thi$.

Switch It Up

- Never use the same password on different sites.

- Create a few different variations of the same password for different accounts.

BE INTERNET KIND

Respect Each Other

The internet amplifies everything: good things seem more exciting, bad things seem much worse and can hurt. A great rule to live by online, as well as off, is 'treat others as you would like to be treated yourself'. Children can have a positive impact on others and stop bullying in its tracks by refusing to join in.

Set an Example

- Be a force for good. Use the power of the internet to be nice, not nasty.
- Stop the spread of harmful or untrue messages by not passing them on to others.
- Respect others' differences.

Lead the way

- Block mean, upsetting or inappropriate behaviour online.
- Step in and provide support to those being bullied.
- Encourage everyone to speak up against, and report, online bullying.

BE INTERNET BRAVE

When in Doubt, Discuss

When children come across something they're not sure about online, they should feel comfortable talking to a trusted adult. Adults can support this by showing they're open to talking, even about difficult or embarrassing things.

Encourage Appropriate Behaviour

- Set clearly defined rules and expectations around technology, and let children know of any consequences there might be for inappropriate use.
- Rather than having one big 'internet safety conversation', keep the dialogue going by encouraging children to ask questions whenever they want.
- Encourage children to talk to other trusted adults such as teachers, family friends or relatives as well.