



## ThinkUKnow e-Newsletter - Volume 3 Issue 11

There is a certain phrase I haven't heard anyone say in such a long time: "I wish you could see this!" Previously, I may have heard this whilst looking out at a fantastic vista, a chance meeting with a B-grade celebrity or just enjoying an amazing meal. These days, I just see a mobile phone pulled out, the click of a camera, and then the furious tapping on a screen to share the image with anyone and everyone. So why are we so obsessed with capturing every moment of our lives and is it such a good idea?

### From analogue to digital

Taking photos used to be an expensive exercise. Not only did you have to buy a camera, but also film and processing costs and never with the certainty that you had taken a good photo. With digital photography, however, the cost of taking photos and even printing them is very affordable and accessible. With most mobile phones also including a camera function, the ability to take a picture is both portable and omnipresent.

Photographs also used to perform the primary function of memory - capturing moments to aid in the recall of events and activities. Now, the functions of communication and identity formation seem to take priority as photos are rarely printed, but are instead posted online for others to see. The rise in mobile phone apps such as Instagram and Photosynth, as well as improvements to in-built mobile phone cameras, give users the ability to take better quality images, and share them more efficiently with friends, families or a global audience.

### Time2Talk

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

**How many photos have you uploaded on Facebook/twitter/instagram?**

**How many photos are you tagged in?**

**Do you think about the effects of sharing your photos?**

**Do you want more control over your photos?**

### Advocating ethical creation, consumption and sharing

Photography can be a fantastic creative pursuit for young people and may even be a career option for them. We never want to stifle this creativity, but we need to encourage young people to be ethical creators, consumers and distributors of photography.

Ethical creators - young people need to think about their privacy, relationships and reputation when creating images. Geotagging of images is increasingly prevalent and should be a consideration for young people, along with the personal information they could be revealing in an image. Taking photos of others involves a consideration of consent and the impact on others' reputations. Finally,

## Young people and photography

From before a child is even born, their photo (of sorts) has been taken. Ultrasound and sonogram pictures are shared amongst family and friends and even posted online. It's not until shortly after their born that a child actually comes face to face with a camera and that is only the beginning. These days, parents wish to capture every moment of their child's development and are able to do so with their 'always within reach' camera phone. And then the school photos begin. Is it such a surprise, then, that children these days are often much more comfortable in front of a camera than previous generations?

Children and young people are also taking photos of themselves and posting these online, often as profile pictures. Young people are able to take multiple pictures of themselves and choose the one they like best to share with others. Developments in digital and mobile cameras now make it even easier for people to take photos of themselves by flipping the display to face the user.

We have, as amateur photographers, a great degree of control over the construction of our image. We can choose pose, lighting, add a filter to enhance the effect or even edit out blemishes and red eyes. But once that image is shared online or via text, our control diminishes significantly as that image can be shared, manipulated and duplicated endless times.

### You can't take it back

Once something is shared online, there is very little chance of ever deleting every single copy and this is also true for images. The photos which young people take and share today, will very likely remain on the internet for many years to come. This can have negative impacts on their future opportunities, particularly career prospects, if the image is inappropriate or offensive.

Of particular concern are the sexually explicit images taken of and shared by young people. Not only could this constitute the production of child

how the image contributes to the young person's digital shadow should also be considered.

Ethical consumers - demand often drives supply; if young people are viewing and downloading inappropriate images, such as pornography, it can lead to more people creating those images because they know they'll be seen. Young people also need to consider the comments or feedback they provide about images. This includes commenting on people's Facebook and Instagram photos in a respectful manner.

Ethical distributors - once an image is shared, it can rarely be taken back, so young people need to consider what they are sharing and with whom. This is relevant not only when it is a picture of yourself, but also pictures of others. An image should never be shared without consent and a useful tip is to think "if that were a picture of me, would I be happy for others to see it?" A recent app tries to give users greater control over the lifespan of their image - Snapchat allows users to determine how long their image can be seen by the recipient before it disappears. The app, however, is not foolproof as users can take a screenshot of the image on their phone which remains after the photo disappears.

We need to keep speaking with children and young people about ethical creation, consumption and distribution of images, and model the positive behaviours ourselves, if we hope to see a reduction in harms associated with inappropriate images.

## Cyber Safety Updates

Want more info on video game safety? Check out Stephanie Brantz' blog post at <http://www.mouthsofmums.com.au/5-video-game-myths-busted/>. You can also view videos on setting up parental controls on consoles at <http://www.igea.net/category/parents/video-parents/>.

A new campaign, 'Keep it tame' has been launched promoting respect both online and offline. We can use phones, tablets and computers to do awesome stuff, but things can turn nasty if we use them to disrespect each other. It all depends on what we choose to do. Go to <http://keepittame.youngandwellcrc.org.au/> and check out how you can start making the right choices.

pornography (see our page on sexting)  
but the images can never be  
deleted. Young people may feel  
comfortable taking these images of  
themselves, even happy to share it with  
someone, but are they really comfortable  
with those images being seen by an  
unknown audience?

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