Internet Safety for Children

The increasing popularity of social networking sites and mobile phone texting have presented society with problems in how to protect children online. More and more youngsters are becoming victims of Internet predators and bullies. Parents are finding it more difficult to ensure their kids are safe online. Gone are the days when Mum and Dad could keep an eye on their child's surfing with parental controls on the family computer. Today's new mobile and networked world poses new and dangerous threats to online kids. Two recent initiatives aim to teach children about cyber-safety. Internet safety will soon be taught in UAE schools, while in Indiana, USA, parents will attend an Internet Social Networking conference.

The UAE has launched a nationwide programme aimed at educating students on how to use the Internet safely and avoid suspicious websites. Spokesman Jay Bavisi said: "Advances in instant communication media, including the likes of Twitter, Facebook, and other instant messaging services, drive the very fabric of our modern society. Parents, siblings, teachers and children alike will need to understand the dangers the connected world presents." The Indiana conference will explore topics like cyber-bullying, sexting and online child exploitation. Local attorney Steven DeBrota said: "The number one way to keep a kid safe is for them to be skeptical. If they do not believe automatically what people tell them, they will be safer."