

Social Media and Online Bullying

Today, the students at Ponsonby Intermediate had a presentation about Social Media and the effects it can have on the well-being of students.

During this talk we discussed ways to keep ourselves safe, the age limit on Social Media sites, how we should behave online, and how our behaviour can affect others online.

Online Bullying - Ponsonby Intermediate School's Policy

Students are unable to access Social Media sites at school through the school wi-fi. This means that online bullying through these sites is very unlikely to happen during school time. However, if a parent brings to our attention an incident that involves online bullying we have a moral and social obligation to act accordingly.

Each incident that is brought to our attention is dealt with on a case by case basis depending on where it took place, who is involved and the severity or inappropriateness of the behaviour. It is also important that these incidences are dealt with as collaboratively as possible with the parents whose children are involved.

Our main priority and responsibility is to educate and raise awareness around the potential harm caused by Social Media as well as ways students can keep themselves safe such as:

- Never share their password unless it's a parent or guardian
- Do not sign up to Social Media sites if they do not meet the age restriction
- Report abusive or offensive behaviour to a trusted adult
- Do not reply to offensive or abusive behaviour

All the students will be learning more about this in our health classes. We encourage you to discuss the content of these health lessons at home with your child.

We also feel it is important to work together with parents in raising awareness and putting systems in place to keep your child safe. Some things you can do at home are:

- Know their password to Social Media sites
- Make sure they are on the devices in a shared space - eg lounge, dining room
- Time restrictions on devices and clear expectations when using the device
- Parental locks such as Watchdog on the internet provider
- Discourage your child from signing up to social media sites if they do not meet the age restrictions

Teachers and parents must work together to ensure the students are getting a clear message about how to keep safe and behave online.

We also encourage you to check out the following website for further help and information about this topic, www.netsafe.org.nz