



Government of Canada

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THE CANADIAN STRATEGY TO PROMOTE SAFE, WISE AND RESPONSIBLE INTERNET USE: A SUMMARY

www.connect.gc.ca/cyberwise



More than one in two Canadians use the Internet

The Internet is a powerful tool. Used wisely it can turn a home, school or library into a place of unlimited information, communication — and family fun.

The Government of Canada aims to make Canada the most connected country in the world — and it is succeeding. On March 30, 1999, Canada became the first country in the world to connect all of its schools and public libraries to the Internet. By early 2001, more than one in two Canadians over the age of 12 were using the Internet.



Children and teens are drawn to this exciting medium, and parents appreciate the benefits that their children can receive from it. Many families, however, are concerned about the risks children face on-line.

Tackling illegal and offensive content on the Internet

Content on the Internet can violate Canada's laws. For example, child pornography and hate propaganda that are **illegal** on the street are also illegal on the Internet — and Canada's law enforcement community works hard to uphold our laws in cyberspace.

Some Internet content, however, is legal — but **offensive** to some people. Like many box office movies, Web sites can contain sexually explicit material and graphic violence. Other sites can offend a family's values, religion or culture.

Balancing freedom of expression with protecting our children

Canadian families want to protect their children from offensive content, but opinions and values can and do vary. Canada must balance protection with freedom of expression — a right which Canadians hold dear.

There is no single solution. That's why the Government of Canada developed a five-point plan to give Canadians the comprehensive support they need.

For the complete Government of Canada strategy, go to: www.connect.gc.ca/cyberwise

WHAT DO CANADIAN PARENTS SAY?

- Two in three parents say education is the biggest benefit of their children's Internet use.
- Half say inappropriate content is their biggest concern.
- More than one in five say their children have come across sexually explicit material, that they are aware of.

What else do they say?

View the study *Canada's Children in a Wired World* at: www.connect.gc.ca/cyberwise

CANADA'S FIVE-POINT PLAN

Using the Internet safely...wisely...responsibly...

1. GIVE CANADIANS THE TOOLS THEY NEED

In Canada today, knowledge is power. One of the Government of Canada's top priorities is to **educate** Canadians about illegal and offensive content on the Internet, and to **empower** Canadians to take action in their homes.

Canadian parents need a variety of options — everything from house rules for Internet use, to Web site labelling, to filters that limit access to undesirable sites. No one tool will suit all families, so the Government of Canada encourages, supports and funds many initiatives.

Looking for help?

Parents, community leaders, and educators can consult the following sources:

- Contact the Media Awareness Network (MNet) for how-to information on finding great children's sites, doing effective on-line searches, tracking where children go while on-line and protecting children from on-line predators (www.media-awareness.ca).
- Check out MNet's Web Awareness: Knowing the Issues (www.webawareness.org) for practical information and hands-on activities to give children "cyber smarts."
- The Internet safety portal, established by the Canadian Association of Internet Providers, provides information about hate propaganda, the use of the Internet to lure children, and consumer issues (www.caip.ca).
- Industry Canada's SchoolNet National Advisory Board has several brochures available to help teachers out in the classroom (www.schoolnet.ca/snab/brochure).
- Librarians can get information on special programs through MNet (see the address above), or the Canadian Library Association (www.cla.ca).
- Missing is a computer game, video and guide that teaches children how to surf safely and warns about child predators. It is available in 10 000 schools and libraries (www.livewwwires.com).

RULES THAT WORK

MNet's Online Rules can be posted beside your computer:

- ✓ When using the Internet, I will always use a pretend name or nickname that doesn't reveal anything about me.
- ✓ I will not open e-mail, files, links, pictures or games from people that I don't know or trust.
- ✓ I will not arrange to meet a friend I have made on the Internet unless one of my parents has been informed and will be present...

Visit their site to get them all!
www.media-awareness.ca

Looking for information on filters or Internet content labelling?

Industry Canada's *Strategis* Web site has a wealth of information on Internet-related topics: strategis.gc.ca/internet

2. WORK WITH SAFETY-MINDED SERVICE PROVIDERS

Since Internet service providers (ISPs) connect users to the Internet, they can perform an important service in dealing with illegal and offensive content on the Internet.

Today, the government works closely with the Canadian Association of Internet Providers (CAIP) and individual ISPs to encourage good business practices throughout the ISP industry. CAIP's Code of Conduct states that members will cooperate with law enforcement officials and adhere to Canada's laws.

For CAIP's Code of Conduct, go to: www.caip.ca/issueset.htm

3. ENFORCE THE LAW IN CYBERSPACE

In Canada, anything illegal off-line is illegal on-line. Canada's laws apply in cyberspace — but the law must keep pace with illegal uses of new technology. Canada plans to amend the *Criminal Code* to better deal with those who use the Internet to lure children.

Eliminating child pornography is a key concern for Canadians. RCMP computer crime investigators are located in all major centres in Canada and the police force works closely with Internet service providers. New Internet training for police officers focusses on the sexual exploitation of children, and includes investigative techniques for search and seizure of illegal computer data.

The fight against child pornography and hate propaganda cuts across the law enforcement community. The Criminal Intelligence Service of Canada coordinates national and international forces to combat child pornography and the victimization of children on and off the Internet.

IS YOUR ISP SAFETY-MINDED?

Your ISP can be your best safety guide. Ask safety questions!

- Does the company adhere to a code of conduct?
- Does it offer family-friendly services such as a "kid zone" or child-friendly search engine?
- Does it make Internet filters, or information about them, available to customers?
- What does the provider do if you make a complaint about something you find on the Internet?

What more can you ask? Go to: www.connect.gc.ca/cyberwise

4. INVESTIGATE HOTLINES

Today, Canadian parents tend not to complain about offensive material even when they want to. Why? They don't know who to call.

In many countries, hotline investigators act as crime stoppers, handling complaints and contacting service providers and the police when necessary. In Canada, government and the private sector are examining the costs and benefits of establishing a hotline to report illegal content on the Internet. More than half of Canadian parents think setting up such a hotline would be very effective.

5. WORK TOWARD GLOBAL ANSWERS

Canada cannot tackle illegal and offensive content on the Internet working alone. Governments, law enforcement officers and industry must find solutions that transcend national boundaries.

Sharing expertise

- CAIP is sharing information with European service providers, and working with other countries to devise international solutions.
- Canada hosts global summits, conducts international studies and is helping draft the Council of Europe's convention on cybercrime.



Law enforcement across borders

- Canadian investigators work with experts from 30 countries in the Interpol Specialist Group on Crimes Against Children.
- To enhance cooperation among G-8 countries working together to share information on Internet-based investigations, 24-hour law enforcement points of contact have been established.

By working together, Canadians are creating a healthy environment to promote safe, wise and responsible Internet use.

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For a copy of the complete strategy, call (613) 947-7466.



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