



Keeping children and young people safe online: an e-Safety Strategy and Three Year Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2019 - 2022

Consultation Response

We would like to invite you to comment on this draft e-Safety Strategy for Children and Young People in Northern Ireland. We would be grateful if you would use the online questionnaire for your response if possible; this can be accessed here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/eCYP>

If you are unable to respond via the online questionnaire, you may respond via post using the questionnaire template provided below to:

Nikki O'Neill
Business Support Officer
SBNI
The Beeches
12 Hampton Manor drive
Belfast
BT7 3EN

By email to:

e-safetyconsultation@hscni.net

A young person's version of the consultation documents is available here.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/esafety>

**Keeping children and young people safe online: an
e-Safety Strategy and Three Year Action Plan for
Northern Ireland 2019-2022**

CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

4 MARCH 2019

This questionnaire has been designed to help you respond to the consultation on the draft NI Executive e-Safety Strategy for Children and Young People. A copy can be found here:

<https://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/2.%20e-safety%20strategy%20consultation%20document%20March%202019.pdf>

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) will publish a summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The SBNI can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. Before you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, in this case the SBNI. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The SBNI cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances.

YOUR RESPONSE MUST BE RECEIVED BY 29 APRIL 2019

(Please tick the relevant box)

I am responding:

- as an individual
- on behalf of an organisation
- I'm a child or young person
- I'm a parent or carer
- I'm a practitioner, policy maker or other stakeholder

Name: Dr Richard Wilson

Job Title: Chair of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Faculty

Organisation: Royal College of Psychiatrists Northern Ireland

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1. Vision and objectives (page 4)

The strategy **vision** is that all children and young people can make best use of the educational, social and economic benefits of the online world, while staying safe from potential harm online.

The overall **objectives** of this e-Safety Strategy are to support the development of a comprehensive cross-government action plan that will improve e-safety by:

- Reflecting existing evidence of good practice in e-safety approaches
- Engaging with existing e-safety mechanisms in the UK, seeking to add value and not duplicate
- Educating and supporting children and young people, and those responsible for their care and safety, to develop skills and knowledge to stay safe online
- Facilitating the responsible use of digital and internet technology
- Providing information on how to handle online abuse if it occurs and facilitating access to age-appropriate support services including recovery services

Do you think the **vision** best describes what we want to gain from the E-Safety Strategy and Action Plan?

- Yes**
 No
 Partially

Please add any additional comments below:

The emphasis on development of skills & a sense of responsibility is wise but possibly does not reflect wider social trends in these areas where rights are not always considered with respect to responsibility for exercising those rights.

Also...what is "best use"...who determines this?

Do you think the **objectives** best describe what we want to gain from the E-Safety Strategy and Action Plan?

- Yes**
 No
 Partially

Please add any additional comments below:

As above... the steps appear reasonable but how can effectiveness be measured?

2. Definition of e-safety (page 7)

For the purposes of a common understanding, the following definition has been adopted:

E-safety is about using electronic devices in a safe, responsible and respectful way.

It means safeguarding children and young people in the digital world and educating them to keep themselves safe online.

Do you agree with this definition?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

Please add any additional comments below:

Underestimates perhaps the reality that the children most at risk are likely to live in families where socioeconomic disadvantage & exclusion remain the norm.

3. Who should be involved in e-safety? (page 17)

This strategy assumes that a range of people should be involved in keeping children safe online, including parents/carers, teachers, wider practitioners across health, social care and education, internet and technology service providers, the wider community, and children and young people themselves.

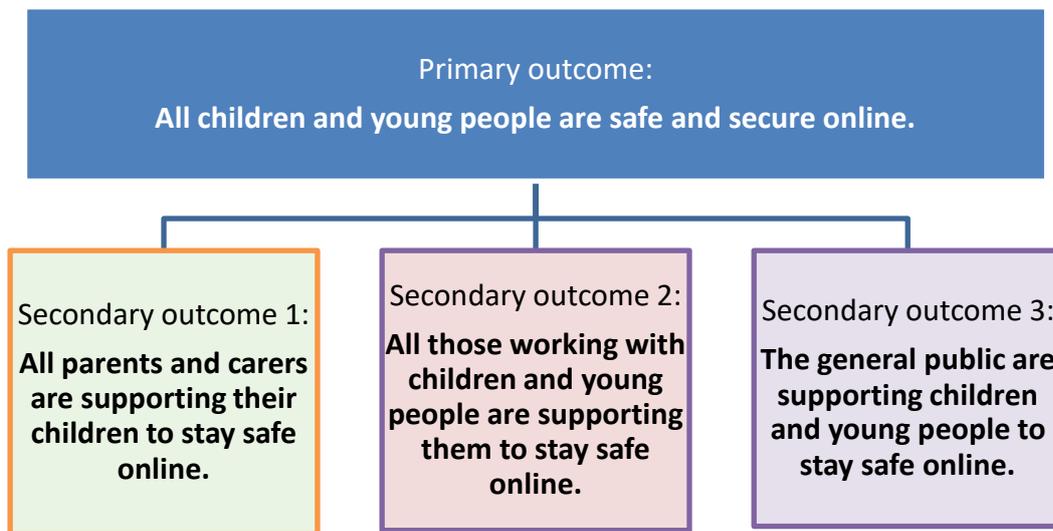
Do you agree with this approach?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

Please add any additional comments below:

4. Outcome areas (page 31)

While aligning to the outcomes set out in the Programme for Government and the forthcoming new Children & Young People's Strategy, this e-Safety Strategy aims to deliver the following outcomes relevant to e-safety:



Do you agree that implementation of the e-safety strategy will help to achieve these proposed outcomes?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

Please add any additional comments below.

Page numbers of document don't seem to line up with this question. Whilst the harm reduction orientation is laudable, it is difficult to see how improvement can be measured.

Are there any further outcomes that you feel this strategy should consider?

- Yes**
- No**
- Partially**

Please add any additional comments below:

How are these proposals to be funded & who will have oversight?

5. Core principles (page 33-34)

This strategy sets out a number of core principles to guide work to support e-safety:

- All children and young people have the right to access and make use of the knowledge that the online world provides, as long as the information doesn't cause harm to themselves or others
- All children and young people must be equally supported to stay safe online, and respect the rights of others to be safe online, regardless of where they live.
- All children and young people must be educated and empowered to access the online world safely, rather than be restricted.

We will...

- Take a joined up approach to e-safety, with all departments committing to improving e-safety outcomes for all children and young people.
- Make use of innovative new tools and methods provided by the online world in order to disseminate information.
- Take an evidence based approach, ensuring that e-safety training and support services are based on both evidence of need and 'what works' to keep children and young people safe online.
- Take an outcomes based approach, recognising the need to evaluate impact on the lives of children and young people.

- Ensure the meaningful participation of stakeholders, including children, young people, parents and carers (including corporate parents) throughout e-safety policy and service development.
- Recognise a tiered approach to e-safety service development and delivery, acknowledging that children and young people all have different needs at different stages in their lives.

Do you agree with these principles?

- Yes**
- No**
- Partially**

Please add any further comments below.

In theory this is ok but the means for translation into practice is not clear or indeed how it is to be paid for.

6. Key pillars for action (page 35)

This e-Safety Strategy proposes three key pillars for action to ensure that we achieve our vision of keeping all children and young people safe online. These are:

- a) Creating a sustainable e-safety infrastructure for Northern Ireland
- b) Educating our children and young people, their parents and those who work with them
- c) Developing evidence-informed quality standards for e-safety

Do you agree with these three pillars for action?

- Yes**
- No**
- Partially**

Please add any further comments below.

It is a fair enough framework in the general sense but again pretty divorced from the reality of modern life & the challenges faced by many families.

Are there any further pillars for action which you think this Strategy should address?

- Yes**
- No**

Please add further details below.

Deal more effectively with poverty, inequality & exclusion.

7. Areas of activity (pages 35-42)

Under each key pillar for action, several areas for activity have been identified.

a) Creating a sustainable e-safety **infrastructure** for Northern Ireland:

Summary of key actions.

- Strengthening of links between NI and wider UK e-safety structures
- Developing an e-safety coordination role via SBNI
- Developing a central repository of e-safety information and signposting
- Provision of a baseline level of filtering for Wi-Fi in public areas:
- Developing a consistent approach to e-safety in schools through strong Departmental direction and enhanced education for schools on technical provision

Do you agree with these key areas for action?

- Yes
 No
 Partially

Please add any further comments below

Fair enough in terms of structure but ignores those at most risk i.e. kids out of school or not socially connected.

Are there are further areas of activity that this strategy should address under this key pillar?

- Yes
 No

Please add further details below.

As above.

b) Educating our children and young people, their parents/carers and those who work with them:

Summary of key actions.

- Developing a consistent approach to e-safety messages for children, young people, parents, carers and practitioners.
- Embedding a culture of e-safety within schools, colleges and children and youth services and organisations.
- Skilling up practitioners who work with children, young people and families.

Do you agree with these key areas for action?

- Yes
 No
 Partially

Please add any further comments below

This is lofty in principle but short on detail.

Are there are further areas of activity that this strategy should address under this key pillar?

- Yes
 No

Please add further details below.

As above

c) Developing evidence-informed quality standards for e-safety:

Summary of key areas for action

- **Understanding the scale of the problem.**
- **Strengthening self-assessment processes for e-safety**
- **Reviewing current legislation in line with emerging e-safety trends and revision where required**
- **Developing a chartermark scheme for e-safety training.**

Do you agree with these key areas for action?

- Yes**
 No
 Partially

Please add any further comments below

Ok....please consider adding an additional strategy for high risk groups ...ie those who may be disconnected from familial & social structures eg due to poverty, mental illness or social disconnection syndromes - as in some subtypes of autism.

Are there further areas of activity that this strategy should address under this key pillar?

- Yes**
 No

Please add further details below.

As above

8. Governance and accountability structures (page 46)

A proposed governance and accountability structure has been set out in the draft strategy.

Do you agree with this proposed structure?

- Yes**
- No**
- Partially**

Please add any further comments below.

Appears somewhat top – down in its structure? - thus reducing engagement potential.

9. Measuring impact (pages 47-50)

This e-Safety Strategy will take an Outcomes Based Accountability approach to measuring impact, in line with the draft Programme for Government/Outcomes Delivery Plan and other key strategies.

A number of indicators have been identified to help measure how well we are achieving the outcomes of the strategy. (pages 47-49)

Are there any of these indicators that you don't think accurately reflect progress towards the desired outcomes?

Please provide comment below

Generally ok though there does not appear to be any actual apparatus or the funding for such to collect this data.

If such were available robust reliability checks would be advisable.

If there are any additional indicators which you think would better reflect progress towards the desired outcomes of the strategy, please provide further comment below.

Any further comments

Please use the space below to provide any additional comments you may wish to make in relation to this draft e-Safety Strategy for Children and Young People.

This is well intended & high on principle....I think the strategy would benefit from a less top down approach, transparency around funding for the various aspects & taking a more evidence based approach to match the approach to need - especially for higher risk groups.

Many thanks for taking the time to respond to this survey.

For further information on this consultation, please contact:

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