PRESS RELEASE

9 February 2021

On Safer Internet Day, BSI advises on remote schooling cybersecurity

Safer Internet Day takes place on 9 February, with the aim of making the World Wide Web a better and safer place for everyone. With many children continuing to learn remotely due to the pandemic, the reliance on technology is expanding alongside the cybersecurity risks. This year, BSI are encouraging parents, guardians, and schools alike to review cybersecurity best practices and strengthen their information resilience.

With schools adapting to the advantages of technology to maintain learning, implementing virtual learning platforms and device requirements, participants may not be aware of the required security levels. This year for Safer Internet Day, the Consulting Services team at BSI has highlighted the following cybersecurity considerations that can support safer remote learning and internet use for children:

- **Manage access to online collaboration and education platforms:** Review the security settings and ensure that there are two factor authentications (where possible). Make sure that passwords are not shared and only enable access permissions that are required. For example, permitting access to share location, browser history, or more specific personal details other than name, email address and class details to access the platforms should not be required

- **Ensure that device security settings are optimized:** The latest security software needs to be installed regularly on devices to strengthen its protection online, select auto-update to ensure it is never missed. This applies to any computers, laptops, tablets, and mobile devices used for school learning. Consider implementing a child mode setting also depending on age of the user and activity or access to platforms required to be used

- **Review set up for virtual classroom calls:** Manage privacy of the household and user by making sure the setting default is off for camera and microphone and switched on only when required. Consider using a blurred or virtual background to protect home privacy

- **Setting up a call:** Review access to calls, ensuring that lobby or waiting rooms are set up for video call sessions so that all guests can be monitored, and the room host can grant access to prevent uninvited or inappropriate attendees. If there is a need to record a session, permission is required from all attendees and knowledge of where it may be used

- **Advise children to check before sharing any personal details:** This includes any requests for personal data across any required platforms or applications to be used as part of remote learning such as birth dates, email addresses or physical location

- **Review online school schedule and check in regularly:** Be aware of the daily class schedule and check-in on breaks as appropriate. If unsure, check that any calls that children are joining are valid school calls by viewing the recipient invitation and confirming the attendee list before allowing them to proceed

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- **Be proactive with reporting any online inappropriate behaviour or content:** Review and discuss the seriousness of any incident before proceeding with appropriate actions. If there has been a violation of rules (for example, relating to social media platforms) raise it with the platform in question. Children merit special protections under data protection laws. If there are any concerns contacting the relevant Data Protection Authority is advised

Mark Brown, Managing Director, Cyber Security and Information Resilience, Consulting Services at BSI said: "Safer Internet Day provides us with an opportunity to review what we are currently doing and how we can do it better. Recent information society [1]figure's have highlighted the use of websites and portals for educational communication in Ireland increasing from 14 per cent in 2019 to 21 per cent in 2020, and it is anticipated that it has grown even further since the start of the school term earlier this year. Advances in technology has meant that remote schooling can happen and now is an opportune time to educate the next generation on how to look after their security online by reviewing the steps we have highlighted."

"The online community is vast and differs greatly from the controlled environment that schools provide. A great way to grow awareness of online safety now and for the future is to develop a nurturing and open environment in the home, where online risks can be discussed, security reviews implemented and advice shared," concludes Mark.

The Consulting Services team at BSI provides an expansive range of solutions to help organizations address challenges in cybersecurity, information management and privacy, security awareness and compliance. For more information visit bsigroup.com/cyber-ie

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Notes to editor:
[1] Reference to CSO stats released in November - Information Society Statistics - Households 2020

About BSI
BSI is the business improvement company that enables organizations to turn standards of best practice into habits of excellence. For over a century BSI has championed what good looks like and driven best practice in organizations around the world. Working with 84,000 clients across 193 countries, it is a truly international business with skills and experience across a number of sectors including aerospace, automotive, built environment, food, and healthcare. Through its expertise in Standards Development and Knowledge Solutions, Assurance, Regulatory Services and Consulting Services, BSI improves business performance to help clients grow sustainably, manage risk and ultimately be more resilient and trusted.

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About BSI's Consulting Services
BSI's Consulting Services for Cybersecurity and Information Resilience headquarters are based in Sandyford, Dublin, where it manages and secures corporate information for BSI's global clients.

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