

**Reading Level 2: Safer Internet Day**5<sup>th</sup> February 2013**Topics:** internet, cybercrime, cyberbullying**Learning points:**

- vocabulary
- present perfect simple and continuous

1 Today is Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> February, which is 'Safer Internet Day' in the UK. For the past 10 years, three children's  
2 charities and organisations have been holding 'Safer Internet Days', which aim<sup>1</sup> to achieve<sup>2</sup> more responsible  
3 use of the internet. The internet has become more and more central to our lives – and children today have  
4 never known a world without the internet - but children must learn how to stay safe when they are online.  
5 Children's charities are very concerned<sup>3</sup> about the risks of the internet, which they say is currently<sup>4</sup> one of the  
6 biggest dangers for children in the world.

7  
8 An increasing number of child abusers<sup>5</sup> have been contacting children via chat rooms, social networks and  
9 instant messaging. Modern technology allows potential abusers to contact hundreds of children at once, and  
10 from anywhere in the world. After they have made contact with a child, the abuser can threaten<sup>6</sup> the child  
11 and get his or her passwords, or make him or her do whatever the abuser wants in front of a webcam.  
12 Sometimes abusers send children indecent<sup>7</sup> text messages or photographs to use as blackmail<sup>8</sup>, or force<sup>9</sup> the  
13 child to send indecent images to them.

14  
15 In addition, about 14% of children in the UK are victims of cyberbullying, which is a growing problem. Across  
16 the EU and the USA, up to half of all children experience bullying online at some time. In middle school, girls  
17 carry out<sup>10</sup> more cyberbullying than boys. They often spread lies and rumours<sup>11</sup> about each other via text  
18 messages or as posts on social networking sites, where they can post and share unkind pictures that  
19 embarrass<sup>12</sup> or make fun of<sup>13</sup> the victim. Sometimes bullies pretend<sup>14</sup> to be someone else. More than 25% of  
20 children aged 7 to 11 have seen something unpleasant<sup>15</sup> on the internet in the last 6 months. Six out of ten  
21 children aged 12 to 15 own a smartphone now, with cameras, internet access and instant messaging apps, but  
22 two thirds of these phones do not have content filters.

23  
24 One UK charity has been calling for schools to give lessons on cybersafety to children, from as young as 5  
25 years old. It also wants parents and carers to talk more to their children about internet safety and internet  
26 behaviour, because this helps to protect<sup>16</sup> children. Children have to learn how to make safe decisions on the  
27 internet as part of growing up, just like learning how to interact with strangers or to walk through a city.  
28 The website [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk) gives advice to children, parents and teachers. For example, children  
29 have to learn to stop using some websites or messaging apps; parents can set filters to block content; and  
30 victims should change their usernames, email addresses and passwords.

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<sup>1</sup> to aim = zielen

<sup>2</sup> achieve = schaffen

<sup>3</sup> to be concerned = besorgt sein

<sup>4</sup> currently = aktuell

<sup>5</sup> child abuser = Kinderschänder

<sup>6</sup> threaten = drohen

<sup>7</sup> indecent = ungebührig / unangemessen

<sup>8</sup> blackmail = Erpressung

<sup>9</sup> to force = zwingen

<sup>10</sup> to carry out = ausführen

<sup>11</sup> rumour = Gerücht

<sup>12</sup> to embarrass = verlegen machen

<sup>13</sup> to make fun of = sich über jdn lustig machen

<sup>14</sup> to pretend = vorgeben / vortäuschen

<sup>15</sup> unpleasant = unangenehm

<sup>16</sup> to protect = schützen

