

Parenting at the speed of light #4 Parents....this is for you



Cybersafety sessions are often structured around how you can help your child, and what a child should not be doing on social media.

This, however, is about you.

When you comment on a public post, you are often engaging with complete strangers. Depending on the discussion you are entering into you may encounter people you wouldn't invite into your home, or talk to at a party. You certainly wouldn't tell these people when and where you went on holiday, how old your children are, their names, where they go to school, where you work, the area you live and what kind of stuff you own?

You would be careful in real life, so why not online?

Risks to your children

Further to this, when you comment on your child's school's Facebook or Instagram page – you are publicly stating you have an association with the school. That means you could have a child there. Depending on the nature of the post you respond to you may confirm this fact. Should someone click on your name, what sort of profile will they find? Have you just revealed too much about your family?

Parents, most of the security on your accounts is not as strong as it should be.

Think about what can happen when you geotag a photo of your child into their school and then have a public Instagram or Facebook account. We see this a lot during school awards ceremonies, first day of school and at other special events.

Think about this scenario.

Someone who doesn't have a child's best interests at heart happens to be driving past the school, they pull over and use Instagram to search the name of the school and see photos of your child that you have geotagged to the school. They click on your name and go straight to your account because your Instagram is not set to private or your Facebook isn't as private as it could be. Then, that stranger could quickly learn a lot about your life and therefore be very convincing to your child if they see them walk out of the school and say to them "Mum told me to pick you up" think about it if your child says how do you know my Mum? They could answer with a whole lot of information about your life based on what you are posting. Right down to where you last went on

holidays and the name of the dog.

Please be aware when you are taking photos at your child's school and posting them there may be kids in on no publish lists because of protective custody or escaping domestic violence etc in the background of the image, and you could unwillingly put them at risk.

Also if you take photos of your child with their friends always make sure you have permission from the parents of the other children before you post pictures of their kids online.

We all ask our kids to keep their accounts set to private...time to lead by example.