PARENTING TIPSHEET
CHILDREN'S PERSONAL INFORMATION

Most young people are pretty savvy when it comes to protecting their own personal information online. To be sure, talk to your children and ask them to show you how they protect their personal information online.

1. PRACTISE CREATING STRONG AND UNIQUE PASSWORDS TOGETHER

Creating a strong, unique password for every online account is key to improving online safety. A strong password is a long (more than 8 characters) and random mixture of letters, numbers, symbols and capitals. Passwords should be different for every site and changed regularly.

2. DON'T SHARE PASSWORDS

Discuss the importance of not sharing passwords with others, even best friends. Decide whether parents should be an exception to the rule.

3. SET UP DEVICES TO AUTOMATICALLY LOCK

Encourage children to set a passcode/password on their devices so the screen locks while it's idle (switched on but not in use).

Also set the device to automatically lock after a few minutes. Go to the device's settings to choose a lock passcode and set up auto-locking.

4. KEEP IT PRIVATE

Talk to your children about what personal information is and the importance of keeping it private. Decide on what is appropriate for them to be sharing online. Make sure only family and friends can see what your child is doing. If children are using social media, work together to turn on and strengthen privacy settings regularly.

5. BE SUSPICIOUS ABOUT SCAMS AND OTHER TRICKS

Encourage children not to click on suspicious links in emails, posts, texts and tweets. Delete them. Remind them that if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Discourage the downloading of free games or videos – they could come with spyware (tracking software installed on a computer without the owner's knowledge) and viruses.

6. THINK ABOUT LOCATION

Almost all smart devices have an inbuilt Global Positioning System (GPS). GPS is a satellite navigation system that smartphone users use for map navigation.

You might not always want the world to know where your child is so review the 'location services' or 'location settings' on your child's tablet or mobile device and, for those services that you can, turn off GPS for the camera, chat and any apps you're not comfortable with.

WHAT IS PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Personal information is information that identifies you.

This could include:

- full name
- address
- phone numbers
- usernames and passwords
- date of birth
- email address
- bank details