



Helping parents make informed choices if sharing about their children on Social Media:

'Respectful Sharenting'

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What is 'Sharenting'?

- When parents (or others e.g. grandparents) 'share' about their 'parenting' ('Sharenting') online on Social Media, Blogging, Vlogging, Live Streaming, within groups, chat rooms on both closed or public platforms
- Could include narrative/text, 'posts', comments, stories, moving or still images.



Why focus on this topic?

- As a mother of tech-savvy kids and keen tech user- personal interest
- As a trainer in E-Safety- what does the evidence say?
- It's a 'marmite' issue- some people think it's narcissistic but others find it to be their 'lifeline'
- Lack of information that is evidence-based on this topic. Technology has overtaken our ability to legislate or educate for a digital age – future implications?
- It's fascinating!



CURRENT TRENDS (2018)

1. Women spend more time online than men
2. 18-24 year olds spend more time online each day than any other age group
3. Adults check their phones on average every 12 minutes
4. 65% of under 35s look at their phone within five minutes of waking up (40% of adults)
5. 60% of under 35s check their phone 5 minutes before lights out (37% of adults)
6. 78% of adults have a smartphone and are the most popular internet-connected devices
7. 9% of adults deliberately provide false information, when required, to avoid spam
8. 6% of adult internet users say that in the past year they have had online contact from a person who was pretending to be someone else
9. 23% of social media site users say they wouldn't tend to check whether the information in news articles/stories (they read on social media) is true.
10. By 2030 "sharenting" will account for two-thirds of identity fraud facing young people over 18

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- Today's child will have around 1,000 photos of them uploaded by age 5 (Nominet, 2015)
 - 85% of parents are careful about access issues. Only 15% worry what their children will think as adults about this (Ofcom, 2017:35)
 - 'Oversharenting' noted as a concern- children's identities or location easily found
 - Security settings not checked regularly



What did the review focus on and why?

- What are the implications for children's rights' to privacy and parents' freedom of expression rights
- What are the evidence-informed recommendations for sharenting
- **Aim:** to develop a resource for parents to help them make evidence-informed decisions about sharenting



Modern Family Album...



- ‘Embarrassing Polaroids and stories were small-scale mortifications at worst’ (Wayne, 2016)
- Can record memories from pre-birth to post-death
- ‘Today’s parenting is becoming a digitally shared experience’ (Brosch, 2016:233)
- Search engines can ‘index and cache the information, providing an opportunity for infinite rediscovery’ (Steinberg, 2017:844)
- Reach in the digital age is unprecedented and incomprehensible



Why do people Sharent?

- Connecting – it’s convenient
- Self-expression
- Advice giving/receiving
- Sharing all sorts of experiences
- Raising awareness or funds
- Finding like minded others within virtual communities, groups



Summary: Positives/Benefits

- Modern photo album (pre-birth!)
- No end to storage space
- Keeps friends and family updated
- Connects people online
- Can help others in similar situations (e.g. child illness, specific parenting issues) reduce isolation
- Time/space no issue



Summary: Negatives

- Not always respectful of children's privacy or dignity
- Shared with unintended audiences (even 'friends only' sharenting problematic)
- Could 'objectify' children
- Creates digital footprint that can have future implications
- Data mining by others including companies
- SM is only free in 'monetary' terms- you pay with your "data"
- Vicarious discipline or 'Pack parenting' (Greaves, 2017)

"I was so embarrassed I cried": do parents share too much online?

From first smiles to teenage experiments, a generation of children has had their every move posted by their parents. What can they do about it?



Themes were noted:

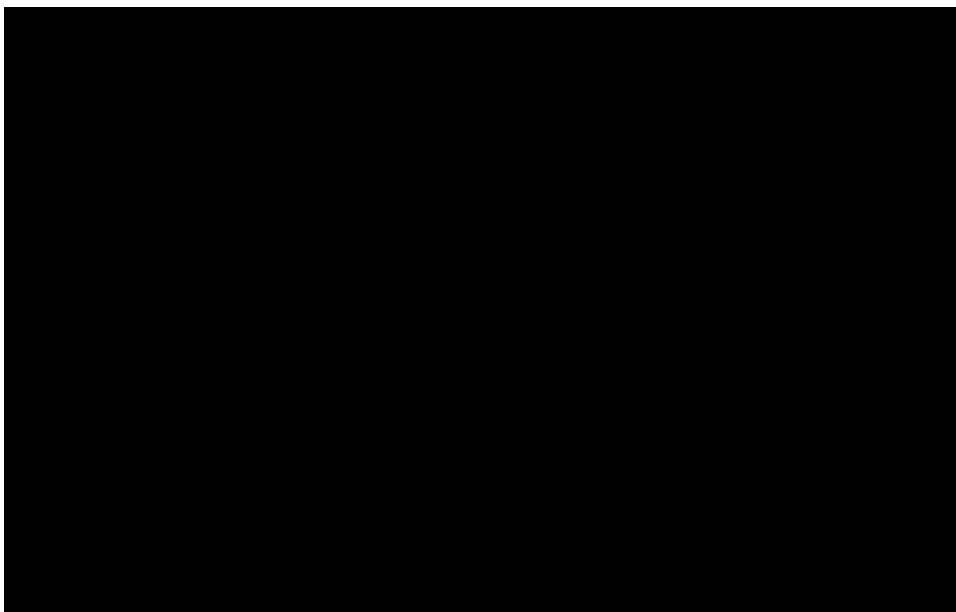
- Gender
- Advice seeking and giving
- Convenience, to Connect, Compare or Compete on “Fakebook?”

Rethinking concepts of:

- ‘Trust’
- ‘Culture’
- ‘Community’
- ‘Family’ and whose ‘right’ to family life?
- Objectification of children, monetisation of childhood and calculability of worth
- Permanency of parental expression and digital footprints
- Power dynamics and the framing of narrative and image rights
- A child’s right to privacy and safety



[If You Shared In Real Life Like You Do Online....](#)



If you are giving advice...

- Non-adversarial approach (“I’m right, you’re wrong” **doesn’t** work!)
- Positive approach- what are the benefits not focused on over-inflated risks or ‘scaremongering’
- Move from focusing on ‘rights’ to universal values e.g. ‘respect’ and ‘consent’
- What is your agency/workplace’s online presence to signpost parents or counter inaccurate information giving?



Recommendations

Do consciously choose who, what and how you share and think about future implications. Do you want their future employer, partner or school mates to see *that* photo?

Do consider whether you would like that information, photo or video to be shared about you? If the roles were reversed, would that be ok?

Do encourage a culture of mutual respect- ‘netiquette’ and consent about online behaviours and sharing. Ask permission 😊

Do discuss and agree online family privacy rules the same way we negotiate ‘offline’ privacy rules.

Do remember children learn from you about what’s okay to share online. If they see that ‘anything’ is okay to share, that doesn’t help with their own boundaries about sharing



Recommendations

Don't share anything that could place children at risk (e.g. their location, school uniform, date of birth, etc.). This information is easily collected by data harvesters and others.

Don't share anything embarrassing or private (sitting on the potty, naked/semi-naked, any state of distress e.g. tantrums, upset, afraid) or anything breaching parent/child trust.

Don't 'Pack Parent' or vicariously discipline children by shaming on SM and asking friends to comment e.g. messy room.



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To share or not to share?

'With each parental disclosure, a bit of the child's life story is no longer left for the child to tell under her own terms.

Equally important to the right of the child to one day narrate her own story, is the child's right to choose never to share the information at all'

(Steinberg, 2017:877).

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Thank you!

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