# ecpat

# make-IT-safe

**www.make-IT-safe.net**

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

POLICIES  AWARENESS  MOBILIZATION  PROGRAMMES  MATERIALS

make-IT-safe is a global campaign to make internet and interactive technologies safe for children and young people everywhere.

Our objective is to get the IT industry and governments to take responsibility for making online and interactive technologies safe for children and young people.

The make-IT-safe campaign unites children's organizations in 75 countries in building a global coalition for IT child protection through

• Awareness building among young people, the public, key organizations and industries working with children online.
• Lobbying of the IT sector to adopt policies, programmes and other measures to make IT safe for young people
• Advocacy with governments and international bodies to take specific steps to ensure IT is safe for children and young people.
• Campaign that gathers support for the above actions through an open ended online petition that will reach policy makers

ECPAT monitors and publicise responses from the IT industry, governments and the public through the campaign and to gauge progress and advances and address gaps.

## Why do we need the make-IT-safe campaign?

There are nearly 2 billion internet users around the world. Billions now have camera and internet enabled mobile phones and connect through a variety of new technological tools. These figures are rising rapidly everywhere. **Children and young people are leading users** of these interactive technologies – of the internet, chat rooms, web cams, peer2peer, mobile phones and electronic games. And they use them everywhere - at home, at school, at a friend's house, at internet cafés.

These technologies bring great benefits, but also great risks for children and young people particularly when they are not aware of the potential danger they may encounter online or are unprepared to recognize and respond to them – risks of sexual exploitation, exposure to ill intended sexual exchanges and grooming which is a gradual process of relationship building aimed to entrap a young person for exploitation or instigate them to self harm or for viewing or making of compromising and potentially damaging images of themselves.

**SEARCH**

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Some IT companies and governments are working to protect children and young people online. But it's not enough. The proof is there every day in our courts, the news and in thousands upon thousands of injured children. That must change.

Children, parents, educators and children's organizations and groups all have their part to play. But only the IT industry and governments can deliver the technological, legal, social and financial resources that will have the reach needed to ensure the safety of children and young people online and in interactive technologies.

We need to bring a new urgency to making IT safe for children and young people. So the make-IT-safe campaign throws down a challenge to the IT industry to take responsibility for making itself, its goods and services, safe for children and young people. It further calls on Governments to work with the industry for such solutions and set a framework and timeframe to plan action that is to be taken.

# What does make-IT-safe want the IT industry to do?

The ECPAT campaign calls for the IT industry to commit technical expertise and resources on a global scale to combat the dangers to young people from its technologies – just as it does for spam, viruses and other threats that stand to affect their operations on the internet.

ECPAT and others joining the campaign are lobbying IT companies and leaders to form a global IT platform dedicated to child safety which will:

- support and fund  a wide-spread public education campaign to build awareness and response for child protection online - in all the major languages
-  set and implement global industry standards and protocols for child protection
-  fund research to map the experiences of children in terms of their safety on the internet and related technologies
- fund research for technological tools to combat child abuse and exploitation online

# What does make-IT-safe want governments to do?

The make-IT-safe campaign is also lobbying governments to:

- adopt laws and policies that set the normative framework for protection of children in ICT and ensure the IT industry takes steps protect children and young people in deployment of its products

- enable international co-operation by law enforcement agencies to combat child abuse and exploitation online

- provide proper care and protection for children exploited or exposed to harmful images, interactions and messages online and in interactive technologies

# Why this approach?

The campaign calls for action to protect children in online and interactive technologies at two levels: globally and nationally.

A unified, global response to IT child protection is vital because it is a worldwide problem beyond the solution of a single IT company, government or locality. Some IT companies are already working on IT child protection, but only here and there. These companies must now take the lead in establishing a worldwide IT industry platform that sets its approach to child protection.

Strong national responses are also vital to underpin a global solution. Individual IT companies and governments must also act to ensure IT child safety in their country. Governments must ensure their laws and policies offer support and leave no loopholes or safe havens for child abusers or pornographers or others using IT platforms to entrap and harm children who generally shift their online operations from country to country to exploit gaps in IT child protection laws.

## What actions is make-IT-safe taking?

The make-IT-safe campaign is based on four key actions:

- Building a strong, united, global voice for IT child protection through our open ended online petition
- Direct lobbying by the ECPAT network of the IT industry and governments
- Monitoring and publicising IT industry and government responses through our campaign website and the international and national media
- Raising awareness and building capacity on the issue among children, parents, schools, industry actors and others to mobilize a strong public ground base for action
- Keeping IT child protection on the agenda at all relevant international forums

## What is the make-IT-safe online petition for?

By signing the make-IT-safe petition, children's organizations and other concerned groups and individuals can lend their voice and weight to the campaign. The IT industry and governments cannot easily ignore a strong, united, global voice for child protection expressed through the online petition.

Everyone who signs the petition also adds weight to the make-IT-safe campaign's direct lobbying of the IT industry and governments. The IT industry and governments will have to pay attention to such a widespread, unified call from their customers and citizens.

## What else can make-IT-safe supporters do?

Supporters can also join the ECPAT campaign to lobby the IT industry and governments.

ECPAT is particularly engaged in mobilizing young people to join the make-IT-safe campaign and to lend their own voice and influence on matters that impact their lives.

We encourage everyone who supports IT child protection to write, email or visit their own IT service providers to ensure their goods and services protect children and young people. This can include the companies which provide their home and work phones, mobile phone services, their ISP and local Internet café.

We are also encouraging supporters to write, email or engage with their own government, for example, the Tele-Communications and Children's Affairs Ministries, to seek information on child online safety initiatives at national level and to call on them to adopt and implement policies to ensure IT child protection. This can include members of Parliament, political parties, Cabinet Ministers responsible for children and telecommunications, and the heads of telecommunications ministries. Where assistance is required write to ECPAT and we will work with you.

Supporters can also help by raising IT child safety issues in their local media through letters to the editor, press releases, or by calling radio and TV shows.

On the make-IT-safe website, we have put some sample letters and other campaign publicity material which supporters can use to highlight IT child safety issues in their local communities, schools and other organisations.

## What are ECPAT groups doing in their own countries?

ECPAT groups will continue their direct lobbying of IT companies in their own countries and of their governments to adopt policies and protocols to ensure child protection.

Actions the IT companies can take include: setting up internet hotlines, installing technological systems to filter and/ or monitor images and messages harmful to children, agreeing to reporting mechanisms and protocols for closing down sites with harmful content, working with law enforcement agencies to monitor, report and track online child abuse images and child abusers, and working within their industry to get these standards adopted widely.

Governments are also being lobbied to sign up to and implement international child rights instruments, and to adopt and implement domestic legislation and policies for IT child protection.

# What is ECPAT doing internationally?

ECPAT International and its members and partners are lobbying key IT industry and policy bodies to take the lead in setting up a global IT industry child protection platform, and worldwide standards, research programmes and educational campaigns.

ECPAT is also actively involved to bring the IT child protection agenda to the Internet Governance Forum, the body that follows up on agreements made at the World Summit on the Information Society, the key global initiative that charts the course of ICT development.

The IT industry is heavily represented in the IGF forum providing an important platform and channel for active engagement by children's organizations for collaboration on child safety. Thus ECPAT leads a working group – or 'Dynamic Coalition' on child safety and protection-in the IGF and will continue to give this work high priority.

for more information:
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