

CHILDNET INTERNATIONAL

PROMOTING INTERNET SAFETY THROUGH THE “JENNY’S STORY” FILM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PILOT STUDY



1) BACKGROUND

“Jenny’s Story” is a hard hitting film based on the true story of Jenny* a young teenager who chats to a stranger online using Instant Messenger. The film shows how through online chatting, Jenny reveals personal information which results in her being contacted in real life, and ultimately hurt.

**Jenny is not the girl’s real name and her part in the video is played by an actor*

In November 2004, Childnet in association with Lancashire Constabulary started a careful evaluation of the film and associated teaching resources in 12 schools in Lancashire over a six week period. This executive summary presents the key findings from over 2000 pupils and 19 teachers. The pupils are aged between 10 and 15 years (Years 6-10, Key Stages 2-4). This feedback enabled Childnet to make important changes to the film, support material and the supporting advice leaflet for young people. Furthermore the quantitative research gave Childnet a very up-to-date picture of the way in which young people are using interactive technologies outside of schools, as well as their current understanding of safety messages and the impact the film had on them.

2) AIM OF PILOT

The pilot sought to evaluate the Jenny’s Story film and associated teaching resources had has as 4 main aims:

- A. Is the film and associated resource appropriate for use in secondary school?
- B. Would it make an impact on pupil’s online behaviour through giving them a realistic real life example of the consequences of giving out personal information?
- C. Would the teachers see the relevance of this subject to the curriculum?
- D. Would teachers feel equipped to deliver this material?

3) KEY FINDINGS:

A) Is this film and associated resource appropriate for use in secondary school?

Of the 19 teachers who took part in the evaluation, all felt that it was appropriate material for secondary school pupils. One suggested “*all children need this advice*”. Most teachers felt the appropriate age group for the film was between 11-14 on first arriving at secondary school. 100% of the teachers said that they would recommend the film to other teachers. Common adjectives used to describe their initial reactions

were: *'Thought provoking', 'Appealing' 'Contemporary'*. Several teachers commented that the film was not long or detailed enough.

Teacher comments included,

'I thought that the DVD was good I had a very positive experience delivering it to all my classes'

'It's powerful and does stimulate discussion'

'Some students thought that Jenny was very naïve until we discussed the reasons why and how it may have happened'

B) Would it make a difference to the online behaviour of the pupils?

- ⇒ 80% of pupils involved in the pilot believed that watching Jenny's Story had increased their awareness of the dangers/risks of trusting someone that they do not know on the internet.
- ⇒ 72% of pupils believe that watching 'Jenny's Story' has changed their view about introducing an unknown person to a friend on the internet compared to 17% of pupils that had introduced someone they had met on the internet to a friend before watching the film.
- ⇒ The impact on pupils' behaviours and attitudes after viewing this film is significant. This is indicated by the decrease from 18% in the number of pupils who would share personal details with people they have not met face to face, to less than 3% after viewing the film.
- ⇒ There was also a significant increase in the number of pupils that would tell other people if they agreed to meet with someone that had met online, from 14% before watching the film to over 95% subsequent to watching Jenny's Story.
- ⇒ When asked what was the top thing they liked about the film the most common pupil response was that it was a real life story and was an honest account.

C) Would the teachers see the relevance to the curriculum?

Most teachers felt that the resource has relevance to the PHSE curriculum, although a significant number thought it was as relevant across three disciplines of ICT, PHSE and Citizenship. When asked if they thought it was an effective way to teach internet safety, 100% answered yes, adding comments like *'relevant to the age groups'*, *'powerful'* and *'real life'*, and that many discussions had arisen because of it.

D) Whether teachers would feel supported enough to deliver this material?

15 out of 19 teachers felt equipped to deliver this material in terms of their knowledge of internet safety and felt that the support material was vital to explain the background and to be able to answer questions thoroughly. The response forms confirmed the usefulness of the support material with comments such as: *'useful easy to follow'* and *'comprehensive'* and *'good for non ICT specialists'*.