GET INTO...
Safer Internet Day

January 2021

Safer Internet Day (SID) is a large-scale international annual event that supports and promotes safe use of the internet among children and youth. The celebration brings together parents and caregivers, children, educators, policy-makers, media and industry representatives and other key stakeholders to raise awareness, help empower individuals and build a better internet for young users.
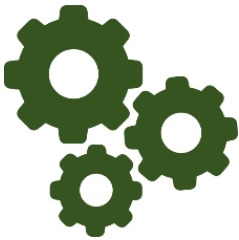
The 2021 Safer Internet Day takes place on 9 February.

First introduced in the European Union in 2004, Safer Internet Day is now celebrated in more than 140 countries every February – from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. SID offers a valuable platform for engaging with a range of crucial issues, such as online safety, digital identity, digital citizenship and online wellbeing.

From basic IT skills to privacy, online safety and media literacy - library professionals have vast experience helping their communities navigate the internet. That's why SID offers a well-suited platform for libraries to further engage with these topics – and libraires' experiences can make an invaluable contribution to SID discussions and celebrations.

How Safer Internet Day is organised

Around the world, many Safer Internet Day Committees operate to help bring this campaign to their countries. Within Europe, country-level Safer Internet Centers play a key role in mobilising action around Safer Internet Day – and throughout the year. The Safer Internet Day Coordination Team works on campaign planning, and is based in Brussels, Belgium.

Many supporters and interested organisations also plan and carry out their own Safer Internet Day events and initiatives individually.

The SID website – saferinternetday.org – is a key hub for latest information and coordination. It offers a platform to showcase and highlight SID events taking place in different countries, as well as helpful contacts and resources to help stakeholders organise their own activities.

This comes to a head on the annual Safer Internet Day in February (the date is announced on the SID website in advance). The stakeholders host their (individual or jointly organised) events to raise awareness and offer engaging learning opportunities for their communities. Each year, SID has an overarching theme and a set of core messages that stakeholders work to promote.

Every year, the day sees a wide array of activities – as you can see, for example, in the 2019 SID public report – games, quizzes and competitions, helplines, broadcasts, and more.

Alongside the central SID website, in many countries there are separate detailed listings of SID events taking place. For example, listings and maps from Germany, Latvia and the UK all feature various events that took place in libraries in 2020.

Why engage with SID?

With the recent rapid shift to digital in many spheres – from education to leisure, from work to social – it is crucial to make sure that our communities have the skills to take part, productively and safely.

Libraries traditionally play a key role in offering digital skills learning opportunities and support for users who are less confident going online – including initiatives tailored to young library patrons. Privacy and safety are integral elements of these. This is why Safer Internet Day offers a valuable platform for libraries to highlight and amplify this work:

- A focal point for their year-round work to support safety and privacy of young patrons. SID is an opportunity to further build engagement with your community, raise awareness on key issues around children's safety and wellbeing online, and highlight existing library offerings which help address these.

- A network of like-minded stakeholders (local, national, or international) with whom libraries can collaborate to champion safe and responsible internet use among young people.

- A way to stay up-to-date and keep track of the latest developments and discussions on online safety and wellbeing. It can also help find inspiration and discover more good practices and ways to offer learning opportunities around this topic.

What Can You Do?

The 2021 Safer internet Day takes place on **9 February**. This year's theme is: **"Together for a better internet".** There are many different ways libraries can participate:

1. Organise an event tailored to children. There are many possible event formats which can also take place online:
   - quizzes
   - games
   - lessons
   - competitions (e.g. picture, video essay, short story…)
   - thematic storytimes, and more!

You can also make use of the SID resources collection, which boasts a range of useful materials - from games to lessons plans - in various languages.

2. Host an (online) event for parents and caregivers. Workshops, webinars, discussion groups – there are different activities you can organise to help caregivers tackle the tasks of keeping their children safe online.

3. Reach out to relevant stakeholders in your area. You can work with civil society organisations to set up an event together, invite guest speakers to your SID activities, or get in touch with local schools to broaden your reach!

4. Take a look at the SID events and activities in your country. You can get in touch with the national Safer Internet Day Committee or Safer Internet Center, if one exists in your country - and explore more ways to cooperate!

5. Raise awareness about the day and its key messages – for example, through social media. The SID website offers templates and visuals you can make use of.

6. Let us know what you are doing!