

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT THE 2019 SAFER INTERNET FORUM

What is the Safer Internet Forum?



For two decades, the European Union has played an important role in promoting a safer and better internet through a range of legal measures, funding programmes and self-regulatory initiatives. With a new Digital Europe programme being shaped, the Safer Internet Forum (SIF) 2019 will celebrate 20 years of safer/better internet funding, while identifying some of the key European challenges and opportunities which lie ahead.

This year's edition of the Safer Internet Forum will explore digital respect as an antidote to online violence in various forms. The [#DigitalRespect4Her campaign](#), launched by the European Commission earlier in 2019, highlights the challenges for girls and young women, especially, and an inclusive and respectful online culture for all EU citizens is a European Commission priority. Children and young people should feel safe and respected online; equally, they should feel able and empowered to be active public participants in digital life.

Against this background, [Thordis Elva](#) will deliver the keynote presentation, outlining the issues and challenges at stake, with a focus on the responsibility and opportunity all stakeholders have to shape a positive online environment, where children and young people feel empowered to be agents of change, while fully enjoying and exercising their rights in the digital environment.

There will be opportunities to hear the perspectives of different stakeholders including youth, teachers and parents, with a number of hands-on “deep dive” sessions also. Forum participants will learn from those working to combat digital violence, as well as those individuals who have been affected by it but who fought back. This is a societal problem which is facilitated by technology but, ultimately, it is about behaviour and hence everyone has a role to play.

The full agenda is available at <https://www.eiseverywhere.com/ehome/sif2019/agenda/>.

Why do we want to involve parents?

Parents are a key target group for online safety awareness and empowerment actions but are sometimes difficult to reach and engage with. For SIF 2019, we are more actively involving a group of European parents, asking them to bring in a family perspective, elaborating on the challenges and opportunities they see for children and young people in a digital world. This will help to ensure their voice is properly represented when parental concerns and responsibilities are being discussed. They will also have the opportunity to meet, at SIF, a similar group of youth and teachers, while liaising with online safety professionals and decision makers from across Europe.

How will it work?

The involvement of parents will be organised as follows:

- On **Monday, 4 November 2019**, a briefing session will be organised, from 12:15 to 13:45, at European Schoolnet (Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels). The objective of this session will be twofold:
 - A general introduction to the topic of online safety/media literacy/digital citizenship.
 - A more detailed introduction the Safer Internet Forum programme and format.

Please note: Participation in this session is obligatory!

- On **Thursday, 21 November 2019**, the group of parents will take part in the Safer Internet Forum at Hotel Crowne Plaza Le Palace (Rue Gineste 3, 1210 Brussels), from 09:30 to 17:15. Parents are warmly encouraged to actively contribute to discussions throughout the day. The SIF will bring a mix of plenary sessions with room for Q&A and more hands-on interactive workshops in smaller parallel groups. Depending on needs and interest, we may also invite some parents to play a more active speaker/respondent role during the day, but this will be discussed and agreed upon in advance.
- All parents are also invited to join the SIF Gala Dinner on the evening of Thursday, 21 November 2019. The time and location will be confirmed at a later stage.

How do I sign up?

Please respond to the [this survey](#) by **Wednesday, 30 October 2019, at 16:00 CET**. Do not hesitate to circulate this briefing document to other parents from the network of European Schools. The available places will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

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