

Appendix 7

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parent,

We are planning to use a programme called *Be in Ctrl* as part of your child's Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme. *Be in Ctrl* is an educational resource created in partnership with An Garda Síochána and developed to support schools as they address the topic of online sexual coercion and extortion sometimes referred to as 'webcam blackmail' in the context of the SPHE class.

This resource gives students an opportunity to recognise that the online sexual coercion and extortion of children is a crime, to raise awareness of safe online communication and promote help seeking and reporting.

Be in Ctrl was developed by Webwise, the internet safety initiative of the Department of Education and Skills in partnership with An Garda Síochána and has been endorsed by all the partners in education.

As you are the primary educator of your child in the area of relationships and sexuality, it is very important that our RSE programme is planned in consultation with you. It is particularly important for parents to remain vigilant and reinforce appropriate behaviour online because of the amount of time that young people spend online in the home environment. Webwise provide additional supports, including *The Parent's Guide to A Better Internet* available to download at www.webwise.ie/parents, to help you talk with confidence to your children about the benefits and risks of the online environment. Please feel free to familiarise yourself with the content of the *Be in Ctrl* resource, at www.webwise.ie/teachers/resources, and to contact the school if you wish to discuss the programme further/withdraw your child from SPHE classes while this programme is being run.

Yours sincerely,

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