

Northumberland class uses InspireData® to measure e-safety amongst its school's pupils



Jane Patterson's year 8 pupils use InspireData to investigate the results of the e-safety survey.

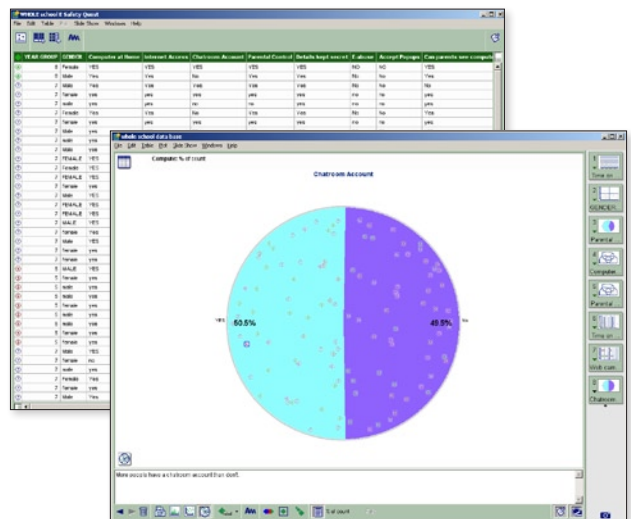
With the growing importance of online safety for children, pupils in Jane Patterson's year 8 class at Seahouses Middle School in Northumberland, United Kingdom were asked to determine the level of e-safety practised by their peers. ICT consultant Steve Robson worked with Patterson to help her pupils collect and analyse data about their online habits. Robson had the perfect tool in mind for the project—InspireData®, the data analysis software that provides a visual way to explore and understand data.

In September of 2008, Northumberland, the third largest LA in the United Kingdom, received an authority wide site-licence of InspireData. Pupils, who had been previously learning about the importance of e-safety in today's online environment, now had a way to actually research and collect risk-related data on their peers' current online habits. The goal for the project was to create awareness and encourage safety among pupils, teachers and parents alike.

ICT lesson time was used for the project, which lasted four weeks. The pupils began by determining the questions they wanted to answer about e-safety. Then, they designed and conducted a survey among year 6, 7 and 8 pupils using InspireData's online e-Survey tool, focusing on questions about pupils' computer and Internet use. Questions included the location of the computer, time spent on the computer, amount of parental control, whether or not pupils have

chat room accounts, and if so the general safety of those accounts.

Once the data was collected, the enquiry team used InspireData to analyse the results of the survey using different plots and charts. By visually interpreting the data, they were able to drill down and determine if pupils were putting themselves at risk. Pupils were extremely engaged throughout the project, and enjoyed the dynamic nature of InspireData's plots. One student commented, "We were able to put our survey data in different plots, like a pie plot or Venn diagram, which made it easy to see the answers to our questions".

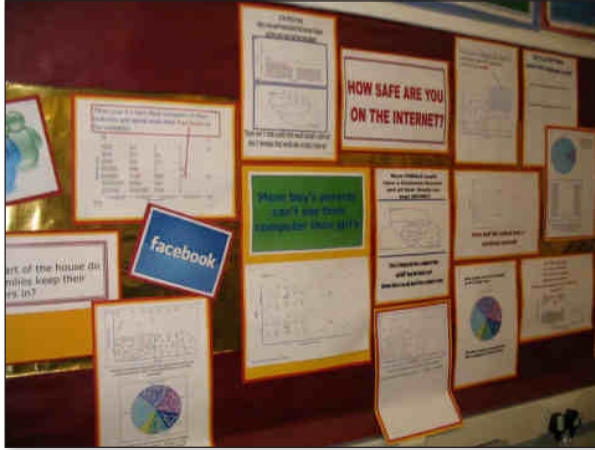


Pupils collected and analysed data with InspireData. This pie plot illustrates that half of the schools pupils have chat room accounts, which helped pupils determine that e-safety continues to be an important issue among their peers.

Robson feels that InspireData made the project more meaningful for pupils. "InspireData offers a unique way of exploring data, because the data literally moves right before their eyes, helping pupils understand the meaning of the data. Other data analysis programs tend to be more difficult for pupils to use, and they get caught up in the process of creating plots and graphs, rather than spending time enquiring and analysing the data. InspireData offers simple tools that make data analysis simple and engaging".

The analysis showed some interesting and disturbing results. Although most pupils spend less than one

hour a day on their home computers and have some parental control, over half of the school's pupils have chat room accounts. The survey also revealed that 10 out of 13 pupils who have a webcam and no parental control are male, and at least one person from each year group has a webcam with no parental control. Based on this, pupils were able to draw some very real conclusions regarding the e-safety of their peers.



After completing the project, pupils displayed their plots and results of the analysis on a wall in the school to create awareness about e-safety.

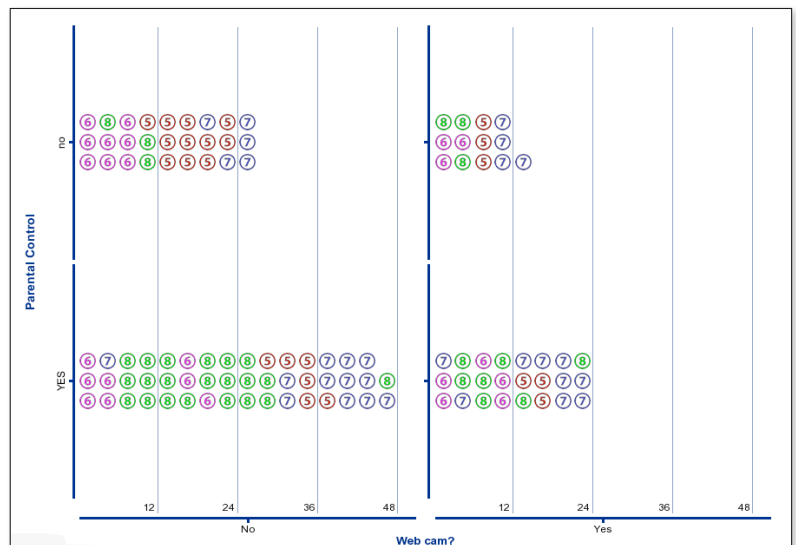
The results of the project were displayed in the plots created by the pupils, and posted on a large wall in the school. Patterson was very pleased with the level of involvement and enthusiasm her pupils had with this project compared to other data analysis projects. "It was great to see how excited my pupils were to work with InspireData every day. By looking at the data in different ways, it really encouraged thoughtful analysis. They would see one relationship, and it would cause them to expand their enquiry to look at other relationships. This experience was so valuable and brought a new meaning to data analysis".

Robson says that in addition to being a fun learning experience for the pupils, the project met many important ICT requirements. "Using InspireData for

this project addressed several critical areas of ICT, such as data handling, data analysis, and data reliability and validity... also important was the very real context of the question, which pupils feel is a serious issue. The application of ICT skills enabled them to analyse the data regarding e-safety concerns, and produce interesting, and somewhat disturbing, results".

Pupils now have the task of deciding the appropriate actions to take based on their analysis. They realized that more education is needed amongst pupils at Seahouses Middle School, as well as amongst their parents. They plan to present their findings to staff, governors and parents, and would also like to do a poster campaign or whole-school assembly to create awareness about e-safety issues. To expand upon the survey, they will invite other partner schools to participate, and will analyse the results even further.

"Pupils really enjoyed using InspireData and liked the way they could drill down into their data and graphically see the answers to their questions immediately. The e-safety survey was an important piece of work which placed ICT learning into a real and immediate context", said Robson. He will continue to use InspireData with Northumberland pupils to conduct engaging projects that build data analysis and critical thinking skills.



Pupils analysed data by creating different plots and charts, such as this chart that shows the relationship between parental control and pupils who have a webcam at home.

**Download a free trial of InspireData at
www.taglearning.com/inspiration_software!**

For pricing and purchasing information, contact TAG Learning
 by phone 01474 357350 or email sales@taglearning.com.

Inspiration[®]
 SOFTWARE, INC
www.inspiration.com/global



www.taglearning.com/inspiration_software
 phone: 01474 357350