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The Lawyers Hub celebrating Safer Internet Day 2024: Inspiring Change in the Digital World

Safer Internet Day, initiated by EU Safe Borders in 2006 and later adopted by the Insafe Network of Awareness Centers, was designed to emphasize the importance of internet safety and promote responsible use of digital technology. Today, Safer Internet Day, celebrated annually on February 6th, transcends geographical boundaries, rallying countries worldwide to foster online safety and responsibility.

The theme for Safer Internet Day 2024, “**Inspiring Change. Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online,**” calls for active participation in creating a safer digital environment. It encourages individuals to leverage their influence positively and adapt to the dynamic nature of the online world. This theme underscores the importance of collective action in fostering a culture of safety, respect, and empathy online.

In an era where digital interaction is a fundamental aspect of daily life, Safer Internet Day underscores the critical need for awareness and education on internet safety. It serves as a reminder to evaluate our digital habits, implement robust security measures, and advocate for a respectful and inclusive online community. Celebrating this day reinforces the message that internet safety is a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration among users, tech companies, and policymakers to mitigate online threats and foster a positive digital landscape.

The day is a call for us all to have **digital citizenship**, the responsible use of technology by anyone who uses computers, the Internet, and digital devices to engage with society on any level. It encompasses digital literacy, ethics, etiquette, online safety, norms, rights, culture and more. To be a good digital citizen, you have to act ethically, responsibly, and legally, respect the rights and feelings of others, and engage in positive and constructive digital interactions.

As defined by [Avast](#), a digital citizen is a person who has access to digital technology with rights including the right to privacy, data protection, freedom of expression, freedom of communication,

ownership of your own identity and not be hacked, phished, or spied upon. In today's world, a significant amount of our interactions occurs digitally. Therefore, it's crucial to behave responsibly online.

The principles of respect, responsibility, and engagement that we follow in our physical communities should also guide our behavior in the digital landscape. It's essential to realize that our actions in the digital world do have tangible effects in the real world. The practice of digital citizenship significantly influences the well-being of individual internet users and the online community as a whole. It fosters a positive online environment where individuals can freely express themselves and interact with others in a meaningful way.

Being a good digital citizen is by displaying courteous and respectful behavior online. This involves using

- Proper language, tone, and manners in digital communication.
- Protect others' personal information as you would your own.
- Avoid sharing sensitive details without permission, and be cautious about tagging or mentioning others in posts.
- Recognize the diverse perspectives and feelings of those you interact with online.
- Honor the work of content creators by crediting them appropriately and seeking permission for use when needed.

At the Lawyers Hub, digital citizenship is an important part of our digital inclusion and digital literacy initiatives, which aim to ensure people in every community around the African continent have the online tools, knowledge, and resources they need to actively participate in our modern, digitally-driven society.

Digital citizenship works hand in hand with **Digital safety** which involves identifying and taking measures to protect against potential risks when using devices, apps, and the internet. Digital security could also be used to protect your personal data from being used and sold by companies. Remember to always read the privacy policies before you sign into any application, websites or online service providers.

Kaspersky highlights some of the key [internet safety rules](#) that you and your family should follow, some of which are:

- Make sure you're using a secure internet connection,
- Choose strong passwords,
- Enable multi-factor authentication where you can,
- Check that websites look and feel reliable,
- Review your privacy settings and understand privacy policies.
- Be careful of suspicious links and where you click,
- Be careful what you post and where,
- Be careful what you download.

Digital etiquette is also one crucial factor in the online space. It is your conduct online and use of technology. The virtual nature of social media and the privacy of using individual devices can embolden some to say or do things in cyberspace that they would not do in person. Appropriate behavior for digital interactions should follow the same social guidelines as face-to-face interactions. Digital etiquette also extends to conduct beyond the screen how and when you use your devices around others in different social settings. Let's take a look at the threats and crimes experienced in the internet world;

Online Threats and Cybercrimes

While the internet offers a plethora of opportunities for communication, learning, and entertainment, in today's digital landscape, it also poses threats such as cyberbullying, phishing, identity theft, online scams, and cyberstalking. This escalation in digital threats is exemplified by Africa's staggering 12% year-on-year increase in weekly cyberattacks, averaging 1900 attacks per organization. Notably, the financial sector bears a significant portion of these attacks, with ransomware incidents globally surging to 66% in 2023.

The Sophos X-Ops' [Active Adversary 2023 Report](#) further underscores the gravity of the situation, revealing that compromised credentials are now the primary cause of data theft and ransomware attacks. In 2023, 56% of the analyzed attacks were attributed to stolen name and password information, representing a 26% increase from the previous year. This alarming trend underscores the urgent need to prioritize the security of login credentials.

Given the severity of these threats, it is imperative for individuals, platforms, and governments to take collective responsibility for safeguarding online experiences and interactions. This entails holding both

tech companies and policymakers accountable for ensuring internet safety. Tech companies must design safer platforms, offer robust privacy options, and promptly address reported abuses. Conversely, policymakers play a vital role in enacting and enforcing laws to protect users, particularly vulnerable groups like children and the elderly, from online threats.

At the forefront of advocating for internet safety is the [Lawyers Hub](#). Our commitment is to empower individuals with knowledge in critical areas such as Data Protection, Intellectual Property, and Artificial Intelligence. Led by seasoned industry professionals, we offer insights and globally recognized certifications that bolster credibility and open doors to new job opportunities.

Through our comprehensive courses, including the [monthly Certified Information Privacy Professional Training \(CIPP/E\)](#) and the [Europe-Africa Artificial Intelligence Policy Summer School](#) scheduled for 17th-31st May, we aim to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. Join us in our mission to create a safer internet for all.

In our rapidly evolving digital age, this day serves as a global call to action for individuals, families, and communities to unite in making the digital world safer and more secure for everyone. As we celebrate Safer Internet Day 2024, let us all strive to inspire change, make a difference, manage our influence, and navigate the ever-changing online world with safety, respect, and empathy.