



Web Security and Maintenance Services

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Privacy, Security & Virus Information

Free Downloads for Teenagers? Or Another Risk For your PC?

McAfee is urging parents to check with their kids this summer – and keep a close eye on their online activities.

June 2006 – McAfee Inc., the global leader in intrusion prevention and security risk management, today announced findings from new research which states that Europe's teenagers are prepared to risk their home PC security for free content. As the holidays fast approach, and teenagers set to spend more and more time online, the risk to the health of the family computer could be greater than ever.

The study of 615 teenagers aged 13-17 across six European countries (UK, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, and Italy) found that 40% are unconcerned by the risks of viruses and other threats. Also, when downloading music or video content, over half (56%) regularly use illegal file sharing sites like Kazaa and Limewire, well known sources for virus breeding content.

The study also showed the widespread apathy among Europe's teenagers – many teenagers were simply unaware of the dangers to their computer. Many European teenagers are simply unaware that their digital content, such as music and photos, are completely at risk every time they use this file sharing software.

The statistics speak for themselves - a third (30%) of those teenagers rarely check to see if their security software is up to date. While almost a quarter (24%) don't worry about internet security when they surf the net. The rest, 21% of those teenagers, trust the other members of their family to keep the PC up-to-date and secure.

Further startling statistics from the McAfee® Teenage Security Study include:

- **37% of European teenagers do not scan email attachments** or downloaded files for security threats to their computer.
- **Only 15% of teenagers actually purchase music legally from online shops**, such as iTunes. While over half (56%) regularly use illegal file sharing websites such as Kazaa.
- **Dutch teenagers are the most unconcerned computer users** - with 52% not worried about Internet security when they go online. The Dutch are also Europe's most regular users of file sharing software at nearly 74%.
- **German teenagers, it appears, are unconcerned with their personal privacy** - a quarter (26%) of German teenagers admit to giving their personal details out in Internet chatrooms.



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Security Naivety

Many teenagers simply do not understand the widespread ignorance associated with Internet security. McAfee's research reveals a lack of understanding amongst teenagers about the implications of not having virus protection on their PCs. Almost 46% of those surveyed are unaware that a security breach could cause them to have all their personal photos and mp3s deleted as a result of a virus.

Most teenagers surveyed (43%) did not realise that their computer could be taken over by hackers. Many did not realize that their computer could be used to send spam emails – while a third of those surveyed did not realize that their personal documentation could be stolen right from their computer.

Interestingly, Europe's most security-aware teens are British – with 72% understanding of the fact that their digital content could be lost through infections – and 81% aware that hackers could steal their personal documents. Compared with France (64%), those interviewed did not realize the risks to their digital content. Also in France, over 45% of those surveyed were unaware of the risks associated with Internet downloading and personal information.

A Black Hole of Knowledge

Although many teenagers understand what a computer virus is, a large portion of teenagers are not aware of the more serious and sophisticated threats. 79% of Europeans surveyed admitted to not knowing what a 'phishing' scam was, while 45% had never even heard of spyware.

British teenagers once again proved their knowledge of computers, as 87% of those questioned were aware of spyware. About a third of those British teenagers surveyed admitted to knowing what the term 'phishing' meant. Compared with Spain, where only 5% had heard of phishing, British teens appear to be the most knowledgeable computer users in the EU.

Finding the Right Location For Your Home PC

Parents throughout Europe admitted to not knowing what their children are doing online – as a third of those surveyed stated that their home computer was located within a bedroom, and not an open communal location. For many British and Dutch teens, their computers are already found in an open area of the house. However, in places like Italy (50%) and Germany (43%), many parents have not caught onto the idea of locating a computer in a safe, open location.

"Teens are educated and busy Internet users, however, as this research shows, they do not fully understand the consequences of online security," said Sarah Whipp, Senior Director, Marketing, McAfee EMEA. "Families need to understand the potential risks of having their children online, whether this is stolen personal documents or their own personal safety, and educate them how to use the Internet responsibly and carefully."

McAfee's online security software works hard to protect your family from online threats. McAfee helps to ensure that whatever children do online, their parents can rest easy knowing that their PC and digital content are safe. Quite simply, McAfee makes it easy for parents to protect their home PCs from existing and future threats. McAfee SiteAdvisor® is a free tool designed to add the best in security for your home PC.



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The McAfee SiteAdvisor identifies dangerous websites that are known sources for adware, spyware, spam, browser attacks and online scams. With McAfee SiteAdvisor, teens can use the Internet knowing they are completely protected and spyware free. As a result, teens can stay safe while they browse and search the internet, avoiding dangerous websites. Easily colour-coded, this software highlights whether a website is safe by indicating a red, yellow, or green light. This way, parents can know for sure whether or not the website they are using is safe.

McAfee's Internet Security Suite offers a full package of protection against viruses, hackers, spam, spyware and adware, phishing scams and identity theft. In addition, McAfee offers automatic security updates, so you don't have the hassle of having to pay attention to the latest security threats. This means a hassle-free approach to surfing the Internet.

To find out more information about protecting your computer, visit www.mcafee.com to find out more information about McAfee's security solutions, or download a free copy of McAfee SiteAdvisor today.at children can use.