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**Club Penguin's Guide to the
Wonderful World of the Web**

CLUB PENGUIN's Guide to the Wonderful World of the Web

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Lucy Woodward,
Head of Club Penguin, UK

WELCOME

Seven years have flown by since we launched Club Penguin, a snow-capped virtual island which allows kids to let their imaginations run free. In exploring the island via their penguin character, playing lots of different games, adopting pet Puffles, decorating their igloo home and chatting with friends, they can acquire life skills, develop their imaginations and learn to express their unique personalities.



Created by three dads, their vision for Club Penguin was to create a safe place online, where their kids could have loads of fun. True to this original vision, at Club Penguin we are passionate about ensuring kids have safe, fun online experiences and that the Internet becomes a tool to aid in their development and learning.

We recently conducted research, which revealed that as many as nine out of ten parents believe that the Internet 'creates incredible learning opportunity for kids' but that more than three in five parents would welcome more guidance in how to get the best out of the web. It is in response to this research that we have created Club Penguin's Guide to the Wonderful World of the Web, an interactive guide to help parents use the internet as a tool to foster their children's love of learning.

Watching my own two children play online has shown me that learning doesn't always have to be linear, curriculum-based and subject-focused. I believe that the more fun we can introduce to a child's education, the more likely they are to learn.

Think about the last holiday you went on with your children. If you walked around a new city, visited a museum, or had lunch in an old cobbled square I bet you were talking to them about the things you were seeing. You probably discussed the weather (us Brits are obsessed with it after all!), admired a different landscape, explained the local people's traditions and tried their foods.

This would have been a constant learning experience for your children – a lesson in geography, design, history, biology and anthropology – but a fun one, where things never got 'boring'.

The Internet and new advances in technologies are giving us incredible opportunities to make learning just as entertaining as a holiday. It's about making learning personal and customised to each child, something that is constantly evolving and goes both ways.

Technology also gives us the wonderful chance to include parents in the learning experiences of our children, in ways that have never before been possible.

I see a not too distant future where our children will be able to play an online game and the experience will be uniquely tailored to the skills of the individual child. They will be able to learn anything from reading, mathematics, problem-solving, language, writing or creative expression at a pace that challenges but does not overwhelm them.

These experiences will help the user strengthen their weaker areas in a fun and confidence-building way, while at the same time giving parents access to information that will help them provide additional support at home.

Most importantly, it will always be fun and safe and like any great holiday, the experiences won't be easily forgotten.

Keeping children safe online is of course paramount. Club Penguin was founded on the guiding principle that it would be a safe place for children to have fun online. As such, we ensured that safety was enshrined in its design right from the start.

Today we employ more than 200 safety staff who monitor player behaviour and we are continually investing in new and innovative solutions to online safety.



Introduction to the guide

Dr. Rachel O'Connell

For more than a decade parents have had to adapt their parenting skills to the presence of the Internet in their children's lives. We guide them on how to use the web to maximise its potential benefits, while minimising their exposure to harmful content.

However, the speed at which things are changing means that learning how to use the Internet and new technologies safely is a voyage of discovery, not only for children but also those responsible for them.



Club Penguin's Guide to the Wonderful World of the Web has been compiled with the help of experts from all walks of life, many of them household names and parents, who have shared their knowledge and experiences of the world online.

Throughout this guide, we show you how technology and the Internet can be used as tools to inspire, excite and foster a love of learning in children, while ensuring they stay safe online. It is intended to help your family get the best out of the Internet and to encourage you to share tips and experiences with other parents.

Mobile phones, tablets and apps have transformed the way we communicate, conduct business, document our lives, play games and exchange ideas. Children become increasingly competent at using the Internet and new technologies throughout their school lives and the information they access online informs how they interpret the world around them.

My daughter is 14 years old and like many other teenagers she has grown up with the Internet in her life. Growing up online means that children are able to record and share details of their lives, pursue their passions and personalise their online presence, all of which helps to shape their identities. Parents play a critical role in supporting their child's online activities.

Personally, I appreciate the positive role the Internet has played in my daughter's intellectual, social, emotional and psychological development. However, despite its unquestionable benefits, I'm sure there are many parents out there who, like me, view their child's Internet use not only with interest but, occasionally, anxiety.

Resources such as Club Penguin's Guide to the Wonderful World of the Web provide a welcome source of information and guidance.

The real secret to getting the most out of the Internet is for us to help our children harness its power to develop life skills - that's what this guide aims to help you with. Club Penguin's Guide to the Wonderful World of the Web has eight chapters. You can read our experts' advice and personal accounts on:

Play

Inclusion

Explore

Nature

Life

Sharing

Learning

Giving

Club Penguin's Guide to the Wonderful World of the Web has been compiled with input provided by experts from all walks of life, many of them household names and parents themselves, who have shared their knowledge and experiences of the world online. Throughout this guide, the Internet and new technologies are viewed as tools that can inspire, excite and foster a love of learning in your children while also ensuring they stay safe online. It is intended to help you and your family get the best out of the Internet and to encourage parents to contribute their own tips and advice for using the web to encourage children to build vital life skills.

Play

Gabby Logan
BBC Presenter



Say the word 'play' in relation to computers and most people will instantly think of children zipping about in the virtual world of video games.

I believe that quite the opposite can be true.

That the Internet has revolutionised the way that children are able to play and take part in sports. Rather than keeping them stuck indoors behind a monitor, the web can inspire them to get out and be more physical.



It's widely acknowledged that one of the most effective ways for children to develop and learn new things is through play, having fun.

I have seven-year-old twins and when they went to pre-school aged three, the whole year was centred on play. I was hugely impressed by how clever the games were.

They learnt about weights, measures, letters, and counting through games. Even dinner time gives them the opportunity to learn, where foods come from, how they're grown and how they can be cooked.

Chapter at a Glance

Piggyback onto the inspiration that London 2012 provided to young people and use the Internet to get your children to watch, learn and get involved in a wide range of sports.

Encourage your kids to check out video sharing websites to learn new routines, review tactics or study the competition!

To motivate your children to take part in sport, suggest they contact coaches for hints, tips and guidance or alternatively sporting role models via their websites or social media channels.

Take the initiative and find a sports club near you by researching online. There are many online tools to help parents manage the diaries and logistics of their sport mad families!

The Internet makes learning fun in a similar way. My children play online educational games such as Mathletics (www.mathletics.co.uk), which teaches sums while you compete against others around the world, and Word and Number Shark (www.wordshark.co.uk), which helps with reading, spelling and numeracy. They look so excited when I say they can play those games for half an hour – I would get a completely different reaction if I said "let's do your schoolwork".

My children also enjoy playing on Club Penguin (www.clubpenguin.com), where they love creating their own penguins and exploring all the games and activities.

The Internet has also completely transformed the way children watch, play and compete at sport. I have always had a passion for sport; I was an international rhythmic gymnast as a teenager and am now a sports presenter on television. I can only imagine how different things would have been if we'd had access to the Internet when I was a young competitor.

To start with I would have been on YouTube (www.youtube.com) non-stop, looking at routines, checking out what the competition was doing and what I needed to do to improve. I am still in touch with my girlfriends from that time and we are always sharing videos saying "Wow, look how good this routine is!"

Back then, we only saw the best rhythmic gymnasts, like the Russians and Bulgarians, in competition, so their routines were always a surprise. Now you can see them perform online at the touch of a button. It's fascinating to watch and I'm sure it is one of the reasons why athletes have improved so much in recent years.



The Internet also offers endless possibilities in terms of training. When I was away from home, if we'd had the Internet I could have emailed my coach back home and asked 'why isn't this routine working?' Remote coaching is so much easier to do now.

I remember queuing up at a telephone box with my 10p piece to call home for a few minutes on a crackly line. Now young athletes can show their families what they're doing in real time thanks to the likes of Facetime (<http://www.apple.com/mac/facetime/>) and Skype (www.skype.com). The web allows families to stay in touch and for youngsters who are training away that can give them tremendous support.

The London 2012 Olympics (www.london2012.com) were incredibly inspiring for young people and the uptake of a wide range of sports has been huge. We owe a lot of this is to the Internet. In the last four years alone, advances in technology have opened up incredible new possibilities for watching sport and our children are benefiting hugely.

In Beijing we thought the facilities, access and information we had at the BBC were all hi-tech but that was nothing compared to what we were able to do for London 2012.

We had 26 streams for every sport at the Games so even if what you wanted to watch wasn't on BBC One or Two, you could watch it online at any time. Every single sport had a full profile. Before, young people would have no choice but to watch the same mainstream sports like swimming and athletics. They might have seen five minutes of a hockey match, a few minutes of diving, and two routines of rhythmic gymnastics.

Now children can watch some of the more unusual sports, like handball or archery, and then easily find out where their local club is.

This change opens up so many more possibilities for our children. Your child might not be skilled in a main sport, they might be a different shape or size than field athletes for instance, but the Internet helps them to find a sport that works for them. Every child has the right to enjoy sport, playing it as well as watching it, and we are fast getting to a place where that is the norm.

The BBC (www.bbc.co.uk) has simple guides to all the sports showcased at the Olympics and information on how to try them yourself and DirectGov (www.local.direct.gov.uk) allows you to search for sports clubs in your local area.

Run by Sport England, Spogo (www.spogo.co.uk) allows you to find out your nearest leisure and sports facility, with over 50,000 listed on the site. There is a useful tool that allows you to search for facilities by sport.

The Internet also makes sporting role models more accessible to our children. Most elite athletes now have websites, Twitter accounts and Facebook pages and are often happy to reply to messages from young fans. Children can look through picture galleries, find out about their heroes' backgrounds and how they started out their careers. You should always sit with your children, however, when they are researching athletes online to ensure that they don't strike up conversations with strangers who have set up fake accounts and profiles.

I love to use my iPad to look up interesting facts to excite my children. If we are talking about High Jump for example, we would guess at the highest anyone has ever jumped and then look the answer up online.

Even joining sports clubs and taking part in events is so much easier with the Internet, as the complex planning that we used to face is no longer needed.



The County Sports Partnership Network (www.cspnetwork.org/en/) provides a directory of local sports bodies and ideas to inspire young people (and old!) to get active.

My parents had four of us to look after, so if we all wanted to do something different the research and logistical planning was quite intense.



Nowadays, this planning can be done instantly at any time of day. You can keep on top of your children's clubs through email and websites. When you're a busy mum or dad working, it might be 10pm at night by the time you get round to thinking about the next day's clubs, timings and locations. If you've got to do it with personal contact then it might stop happening.

So in terms of getting your children active and out and about, sometimes sitting at a computer really is the best place to start.

HOW DO YOU USE THE INTERNET TO KEEP YOUR KIDS ACTIVE?

The Internet is a vast resource through which to help children and young people develop and grow through play, whether it be physically, emotionally or educationally. Now, more than ever, the opportunities are endless.

Note from Lucy Woodward



From the thousands of letters and pictures we receive each week at Club Penguin HQ we know kids like to get creative at home. Within the 'Community' section of Club Penguin there are lots of activities that will keep the most energetic kids occupied for weeks. From recipes and colouring pages to arts and crafts and games to play outside.

Visit <http://community.clubpenguin.com/> to stock up on some ideas



Explore

Neil Oliver

Historian and Television Presenter

I've always had a great love affair with the past. From an early age I was fascinated by the idea of what had gone on in the world before me.

Both of my grandparents fought in and survived World War One and this gave me a strong personal connection with the past. It fuelled my desire to find out as much as I could about history.

Nowadays, the Internet has made the link between the past and the present stronger than it has ever been. It makes the documentation of discoveries, the sharing of ideas, and the vast libraries of historical information accessible to anyone who wishes to look. Our children can delve back as far as the beginning of time with just a few clicks of a button.

When I was a child I would go to the local library and hunt for a book about a subject I was interested in. Now that same search is done in seconds by typing what you are looking for into an Internet search engine. In my role as a presenter for the BBC's series *Coast and A History of Scotland*, the web is an invaluable tool. Vast amounts of information can be consumed in the time it once took me to find the right book.

The sheer quantity of information and facts at our fingertips does, however, mean that children can easily get lost as they explore online. While I would find one book on a subject such as the Ancient Egyptians and read it from cover to cover, the Internet can quickly lead you off your path as you follow links to other subjects that catch your interest.

While we should always allow our children some independence in their explorations, it is also important to support and guide them.

Chapter at a Glance

Use the Internet as a window to the world to find out about the past and encourage your children to find out more about what they are learning in school.

Support and guide your children's online learning, making sure they stay focused and gather information from reliable sources.

Online learning can be an opportunity to explore new places. Go online for a virtual tour, discover new places to visit, find out about events and print off maps when going somewhere new.

My six-year-old son is very visually focused and I think his approach to searching the Internet is a useful one for children his age. When he has a homework assignment he starts by looking for images about the subject online. Last term he had a project about sea creatures and was obsessed with looking at pictures of giant snails and crabs.

With the Vikings, pictures and drawings on the Internet triggered him into thinking about how strong they were and whether they could fly. Images allow him to put his own interpretation on things and they fuel his desire to find out more, to continue exploring and discovering. It is easy to get bogged down in facts on the Internet, but for children it is about lighting sparks in their imagination rather than getting them to memorise reams of information.

**HOW DO YOU
ENCOURAGE YOUR
KIDS TO RESEARCH
NEW FACTS ONLINE?**

As an archaeologist and author, I am obsessed with historical facts being correct. The Internet can throw up lots of conflicting and inaccurate accounts that can be confusing for children, so it is helpful to guide them to respected websites that you trust. The BBC History site (www.bbc.co.uk/history) is a fantastic resource for children.

It is simple to navigate, has dedicated sections for children and, as parents, you can be confident that they have their facts right. Rather than overloading youngsters with information, it boils weighty topics like the Vikings and the Scottish Wars of Independence into a few paragraphs, giving them key themes, names and dates.

The National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com) is also a superb starting point for children interested in finding out about history, nature and archaeology.

Although these well-established sites are great learning tools, it is also fun to help your child do their own exploring online. For example if you type in 'Ancient Egypt' into Google, it comes back with nearly 10 million results. If you let your child take the reins, with your supervision, they are sure to find some unusual and unexpected perspectives to talk about at school.



It is incredibly important for children to be encouraged to explore; to uncover their own treasures and read about the wonders of the past and the discoveries of the present. We can't hope to help our children understand the issues of the present, from global warming and climate change to the economic meltdown without first teaching them as much as possible of what went before.

I love inspiring my children to think about the world around them. We live in Stirling, which is a hub of Scottish history. I walk the children up to the castle, which was home to kings and queens for centuries, and they imagine the battles that were fought in the landscape around it. I tell them about the Battle of Bannockburn and the Battle of Stirling Bridge where William Wallace had one of his greatest victories.

You could use the web to devise a treasure hunt, such as 20 things your child has to spot when you go out for a walk as a family. It could include interesting carvings on walls or buildings, flags or clocks and you can enjoy telling your children the stories behind each one as they find them. It encourages them to think about the world around them and be imaginative.

History gives us a great reason to enjoy where we live and these days you don't have to be a historian to bring your hometown alive for your children. A simple Internet search will tell you everything you need to know about the landmarks and buildings you pass every day and perhaps take for granted. It's exciting for children to discover what they were once used for, the people who lived there and the stories they hold.

The Internet also allows you to print off maps which are great to give your children when you visit an historical site, it gives them something tangible to hold and they will love using the map to take the lead.

These days you don't have to live in London to visit the British Museum. Simply go to their website (www.britishmuseum.org) and you can look around their latest collections. For example you can currently explore 'The History of the World in 100 Objects', looking through pictures and descriptions of fascinating objects that are up to two million years old.

The Internet is a fantastic tool for inspiring budding archaeologists. The website of the Young Archaeologists Club is particularly good (www.yac-uk.org), with information on events and places to visit near you, as well as an interactive maps. For years I was involved in battlefield archaeology and the Register of Historic Battlefields hosted on the English Heritage website (www.english-heritage.org.uk) provides wonderful ideas for day trips to take with your children. If you want to visit Flodden in Northumberland for example, the register will tell you how to get there, summaries of what happened in the battle and who the main protagonists were.



The Internet is much the same – a huge map of information to be navigated. And, like any map, once you understand how to read it properly you can go anywhere and discover anything.



Note from Lucy Woodward



At Club Penguin we know that many of our players are only just taking their first solo steps online but that this is only the beginning of their online exploration. To equip all our players for the Wonderful World of the Web, on joining Club Penguin children have to sign up to the Club Penguin Rules: Respect others, no bad words, stay safe online and no cheating. These rules can be applied to any website so [click here](#) to print them off for some safe, online exploration.

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Wonderful World of the Web

To contribute your own tips and advice on how to help your children get the best out of the web and foster their love of learning, join the discussion at www.facebook.com/DisneyforMums