

Sex, videos, friends, games hot with kids online: Norton

August 12 2009, by Glenn Chapman



Children are seen looking at a computer screen during an on-line electronic entertainment event in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Children are searching online for videos, social networks, games and, yes, porn as they grow up in an Internet Age, according to computer security firm Symantec.

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Symantec on Tuesday released a list of the Top 100 searches conducted by children whose computers are tied to an OnlineFamily.Norton service that lets [parents](#) track their offspring's' Internet activities.

The most popular search term was Google-owned video-sharing hotspot [YouTube](#), where children go for snippets ranging from Japanese anime and silly viral videos to dance routines and help with math homework.

"Seeing YouTube on top is no surprise," said Symantec Internet Safety Advocate Marian Merritt.

"Kids use YouTube as a starting place for entertainment as well as for education purposes."

Something unexpected was the tendency of children to rely on search engines to find websites such as Google, Facebook, MySpace and Yahoo! in what could be a sign that they don't fully grasp the Internet address system.

[Google](#) and wildly popular social-networking service [Facebook](#) were the second and third top search terms respectively.

"Sex" came in fourth, just ahead of [social-networking](#) service [MySpace](#) and "porn," which was the sixth most common query.

"Any of us who have been teenagers are not surprised kids look for information about sex," Merritt said. "I think we have all gotten over our shock that the Internet has porn."

Symantec studied 3.5 million searches made by OnlineFamily.Norton service users worldwide between February and July of this year.

Late king of pop Michael Jackson was among the top ten search queries, along with online auction pioneer [eBay](#) and a fictional "Fred" character that is a children's favorite at YouTube.

A homemade "Swimming with Fred" video starring a pre-teen boy had

logged more than 30.5 million views at YouTube as of Tuesday.

"I watch them; I don't get it," said Merritt, who has three teenagers of her own. "Perhaps that is one of the definitions separating parents from kids."

The online activity monitoring service does not secretly snoop; it announces its presence onscreen and dispatches animated dog characters to warn children when they are heading for territory set as off-limits by parents.

Merritt sees the service as helping parents stay in tune with children as their lives move increasingly online.

She maintains that real-time online monitoring provides casual chances for parents and [children](#) to have "The Talk" about porn, sex, trusting strangers and other delicate topics.

"You can see what they are searching; who they are instant messaging with, and what social networks they are on," Merritt said of OnlineFamily.

Since its launch in April 2009, OnlineFamily.Norton has provided parents using the service with more than 90 million "teachable moments" with their kids, according to Symantec.

"We've found through the Norton Online Living Family Survey that both parents and kids want to speak with each other more frequently about their day-to-day lives, not just the big issues," Merritt said.

OnlineFamily.Norton service is offered as a service online and is available only in English.

It is being offered free through the remainder of the year and Symantec has yet to determine what it will charge for the service.

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