Keeping Information Safe: Practices for K-12 Schools

Abstract

K-12 educators and support staff are largely unaware of the threats and vulnerabilities associated with the information systems they use. For example, confidential and sensitive information can be stolen, lost, and exposed to the public. This threat is especially pertinent to Indiana educators and support staff, who are obligated to protect sensitive information such as Student Test Numbers under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA, which is one of the nation's strongest privacy protection laws. These individuals need opportunities to learn about the threats and countermeasures associated with information protection.

To improve the technological and information security literacy in K-12 schools in the state of Indiana, the Center for Education and Research in Information Assurance and Security (CERIAS) at Purdue University wishes to develop an end-user training and awareness program targeted at pre- and in-service K-12 educators and support staff.

This proposal was written specifically for the repurposing of an existing set of modules to better suit the K-12 audience and address information protection needs specific to the K-12 audience. This proposal will fund necessary work to modify existing content, exercises, case studies, and assessment mechanisms to better suit the K-12 audience, as well as the technical development, evaluation, and dissemination of the modules both in courses at Purdue University and throughout K-12 schools in the state of Indiana. Two populations will be served: The primary audience is 1) in-service K-12 educators who hold a bachelor's degree or higher in education or a related field and 2) K-12 support staff who operate computers as end-users and/or handle sensitive and confidential information. Beginning in the summer of 2004, this audience will have the opportunity to learn about protecting information by experiencing "Keeping Information Safe: Practices for K-12 Schools."

The secondary audience consists of participants in the Purdue University undergraduate teacher education program. "Keeping Information Safe: Practices for K-12 Schools" will be used in conjunction with teacher education courses taught on campus, including EDCI 270, Introduction to Educational Technology and Computing; EDCI 271, Classroom Applications of Educational Technology; and EDCI 564, Integration and Management of Computers in Education.

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