Parents Cautiously Optimistic on AI in Schools: Content Safety and Data Privacy Among Top Worries

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Norton experts share top tips for a safe and successful school year

TEMPE, Ariz. and PRAGUE, Aug. 21, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- AI continues to shape our daily lives and education is no exception. While AI offers promising enhancements to education, ethical and safety implications give many parents pause. With 93% of parents of school children ages 5 and up concerned about AI being used in the classroom or at school, Norton, a consumer Cyber Safety brand of Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), today released deeper insights into what parents think about their children using AI and shared best practices to safely navigate the back-to-school season.

With open discussions, we can embrace innovation while guiding children to use AI technology safely and responsibly.

"Keeping our children safe starts with open, ongoing conversations. The Smart Talk, created in collaboration with National PTA, helps families talk about digital safety and promote personal responsibility with technology. With open discussions, we can embrace innovation while guiding children to use technology safely and responsibly," said Kim Allman, Head of Corporate Responsibility and Public Policy at Gen.

Parents' Perspective on the Dangers and Benefits of AI in Education

A recent Norton survey found parents of school children ages 5 and up have mixed opinions on their children using AI. Among the top concerns:

- 51% worry about their children coming across inappropriate content.
- 50% are concerned that AI-generated content may be biased or incorrect, and they fear an over-reliance on technology.
- 46% are apprehensive about their children sharing personal data online.

Despite these concerns, many parents remain optimistic about AI's role in their children's lives, touting the various ways that it can be used to a child's advantage in the classroom. Norton found:

- Nearly half (49%) of parents noted they would approve of their child using AI to complete schoolwork, out of the 35% of parents who support their oldest child using AI in the classroom.
  - 69% believe it should be utilized for research in classrooms or at school.
  - 48% trust lesson plans and curriculum created with AI tools.
- On the other hand, only one-fourth (25%) of parents with children ages 5 and up are very confident teachers will be able to identify assignments or essays produced by AI.

Helping Keep Kids Cybersafe

Here are some tips to help keep your children cybersafe at school this year:

- **Protect Personal Information:** Educate your children on how to safeguard their personal information, especially when it comes to interacting with AI platforms or chatbots. Norton 360 with LifeLock offers comprehensive protection including antivirus, malware, ransomware and identity theft protection, in case your child's personal information falls into the wrong hands.
- **Verify Website Safety and Use a VPN:** It is important for you and your children to check the browser connection and the URLs to ensure a site is secure, even more so when accessing AI tools or platforms. Norton recommends using a Virtual Private Network, like Norton Ultra VPN, to help provide real-time protection against scammers while also offering secure password management and alerts.
- **Enable Age-Appropriate Settings:** Using AI settings designed for different age groups will help ensure your family is set up for success when handling AI tools and platforms. Additionally, parental controls like Norton Parental Control will help you monitor and manage your child's online activities.
- **Promote Integrity and Responsibility:** Norton advises parents and teachers to talk with children and students about the importance of integrity and mindful behavior as a foundational step of Cyber Safety. For example, The Smart Talk—co-created by National PTA and Norton—is a tool to help individual families have tailored conversations about household tech decisions and how to be responsible digital citizens.

For more information and resources on how to stay Cyber Safe in and out of the classroom, visit norton.com.

About Norton

Norton is a leader in Cyber Safety, and part of Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), a global company dedicated to powering Digital Freedom with a family of trusted consumer brands. Norton empowers millions of individuals and families with award-winning protection for their devices, online privacy, and identity. Norton products and services are certified by independent testing organizations including AV-TEST, AV Comparatives, and SE Labs. Norton is a founding member of the Coalition Against Stalkerware. Learn more at www.norton.com.

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