

Hector's World™ ... and your child



The internet offers your child a wealth of education and learning opportunities, entertainment, and exciting ways to connect to friends and family. Many children are now beginning to explore this exciting online world at a very young age.

Learning how to utilise information, behave ethically and responsibly, manage risks online and employ technology effectively, are important skills for all 'digital citizens'. When your child first goes online you can introduce them to Hector's World, a free online animated educational programme for children aged 2-9 years old which offers children a fun and magical world in which to learn and play.

Hector and his underwater friends promote the skills and values children need to grow into confident, knowledgeable and caring members of the online community - the 'building blocks' of digital citizenship.

Parents have a very important role in digital citizenship education, as do grandparents, older siblings and caregivers. You can:

- Visit www.ectorsworld.com with your child and enjoy browsing through the site. You will need broadband for the children's portion of the website (Silicon Deep), which is probably available at your local library if you do not have it at home. There is also a whole section of the website just for parents (see the parents' section on Information Island).
- Install the Hector's World Safety Button™. It is free to download (from Information Island) and is available in several versions (for XP and Vista operating systems). If you have an XP system, you can even select different language and accessibility options. A button for the Mac operating system will be launched soon. Help your child learn how to use the button; it will become a very positive part of their use of a computer.
- Help your child explore the various venues and activities in Silicon Deep. You might like to start by visiting the Town Hall and introducing your child to the Hector's World characters. You can also:
 - Visit the Library, download a colour-in storybook and read it with your child.
 - Check out the Workshop, print out a character hat and help your child to select an online nickname to display on the hat.
 - Visit the Music Club and download the music files and song sheets and sing along to the Hector's World songs.
- Watch the Hector's World episodes with your child (you'll find these in the Episode Theatre in Silicon Deep). There are special Parent Discussion Points available on Information Island which can help you support your child's learning. While you are in the Episode Theatre, check out the new Hector's World resources for preventing cyberbullying.
- Enlist the help of older siblings in educating the youngest family members about Hector and his friends.
- Talk with your child's school about how they are using the Hector's World resources.
- If you have internet filtering at home, add www.ectorsworld.com to your list of safe sites. You can learn more about online safety and security yourself; www.netsafe.org.nz is a good place to start.