

# KEEPING YOUR CHILD SAFE ON THE INTERNET

# Internet Safety Facts

- There are many benefits for children using the internet
- When kids use the Internet the educational advantages are endless. The Internet is used by schools, universities, libraries, businesses and more. The Internet is a virtual encyclopedia.
- And you don't have to be a computer geek to use the Internet. It is incredibly easy. Use it for homework, communicating with friends, games, shopping and even business.

# Internet Safety Facts

- It is important for parents to know Internet safety
- The internet gives great benefits to everyone ... most of all children. And with all of its advantages, it has disadvantages which can create dangers for children.
- It is critical that every parent and every childcare giver know everything there is to know about the Internet and the possible hazards it creates for children. Learn how to deal with them ... learn the Internet rules.

# Sign a Child/Parent Internet Safety Agreement between you and your kids.

## **Child/Parent Internet Safety Agreement**

*Review the following agreement with your children, sign it and post it by the computer as a reminder.*

1. I will tell my parents right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
2. I will not give out my address, telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parent's permission.
3. I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
4. If I get a message that is mean, or makes me feel uncomfortable, I will not respond. It is not my fault if I get a message like that, and I will tell my parents if I do.
5. I will work with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online, and areas that I am allowed to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.

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Child

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Parent

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Parent

## **How to tell when children spend too much time on the computer**

- Too much time or too little time is subjective. Only you will know for sure and each child is different. Some kids really use the computer for studying, emailing their friends and playing games, while others spend hours surfing, going into chat rooms and even going into adult web sites that are not appropriate for children.
- If your child tends to research homework, they can hours on the Internet and if they are seriously into games and chatrooms they can spend days on the Internet. Kids are great at switching from one screen to another, making it difficult for you to know what they're really doing.

## **How to tell when children spend too much time on the computer**

- Once you know the facts and rules, and your child's needs on the Internet, you will create your own timeline as to how long your child will spend on it.
- However, when children spend too much time on the computer they can tend to neglect their studies, chores and social activities. It is very easy for children to They may also run up heavy telephone bills.

## How to know what your children are doing online

- Understand that kids are very curious about a variety of subjects. Often they will use the Internet to view material that is only appropriate for adults.
- Although you want to respect their privacy, you need to know what they do with their time every day ... especially on the Internet. Learn how your kids surf the Web. Sit down with them and ask them to show you the sites they surf. Get familiar with their patterns of use and time spent online. Learn the potential threats that they can be exposed to and look for changes in behavior. Remember that many mobile phones now offer Internet access.

# Emails and Chatrooms

- Kids love sending and receiving email, instant messaging and the interaction in chatrooms. Be sure you know who they're sending emails to and who they're getting emails from. And be sure you know if they're visiting chatrooms, which ones, and what goes on in those chatrooms.
- Chatrooms can be misused. There isn't a chatroom on the Internet where you won't find at least one adult sexual predator. It's a fact of life. They masquerade as kids and teens and make indecent proposals ... often luring children and teen to meet them. These meetings are set up for one reason -- to harm children and teens.

# Emails and Chatrooms

- Privacy is important ... but parents in New York thought their teen daughter was innocently talking on chatline phones and after checking phone bills and internet logs, they learned she had run away to meet an adult male who she had been talking with.
- Luckily they were able to find her but they couldn't undo the harm that their daughter suffered.
- Kids and teens need to know that unless they absolutely know the person they are communicating with over the Internet, not to accept everything a person says online at face value. They must understand the online danger they could be in and be alert.
- When your children are on the Internet, post Internet safety rules and facts right by their computer.

# Mistakes

- We all mistype addresses into web browsers and search engines. And our children can too. That mistake can bring us to sites we do not mean to visit.
- Stress to your children the importance of typing correct addresses. Discuss rules about ending up on sites that are not appropriate.

# Communication

- Communicate openly with your child about what they do online. By having an open relationship with your children, you can discuss a range of issues such as the kinds of materials, situations, or people they may mistakenly come across. Keep talks low-key and discuss all of the situations that could happen on the Internet.

# Communication

- Be honest, open and comfortable. The more comfortable you are, the more comfortable your child will feel. Openly explain that emailing personal information about themselves to a strange adult on the Internet, or viewing sexually explicit or adult oriented materials are not appropriate and what can happen. By being open and honest, your child won't feel as though they've done something wrong. They should never be afraid of telling you they've visited or emailed someone from these sites.
- By discussing these things before they happen, you can prevent your child from being a story in the media.

# Kids At Risk

- If you find any record of inappropriate conversations or pornographic photos, do not panic!
- Talk calmly to your child about your concerns. If you fear your child is truly in trouble or at risk, seek help.

## Signs that indicate your children are being abused online:

- If your child becomes secretive about their time online
- Uses computers in other than their own such as at homes of friends, Internet cafes, or libraries
- Uses encryption software
- Downloads files onto discs where you cannot see information
- Displays changes in behavior or acts out sexually
- Becomes withdrawn and loses self-esteem
- If your phone bill or child's cell phone bill is unusually high
- You see unfamiliar phone numbers on your bill (800 numbers do not appear on phone bills)
- Your child disappears while talking on their cell phone

## IMPORTANT NOTE

Kids may hesitate to give out their home numbers but will almost always give out their cell phone numbers.

Pedophiles will call and send text messages directly to children.

# Child Protection Safety Measures

- Kids are very computer savvy and can pretty much figure out protective software, security measures, password changes, etc.
- If you have computer passwords and PIN numbers, measures should be taken to protect those at all costs.
- Sometimes protective software can be disabled. Be sure that it isn't switched off.
- Check that security systems and additional internet accounts have not been added to your computer and that previously installed software hasn't been blocked or diverted.

# Cyberbullying

- A middle-school girl was on vacation and a rumor circulated via text messaging, that she had contracted SARS while on a trip to Toronto. When she returned no one at school would talk to her.
- And for an overweight Japanese boy who was changing clothes in the school locker room, his pictures had been emailed to all his friends.
- These rumors, threats, gossip and humiliation - are nothing new ... but today bullies are starting to move beyond slam books and whisper campaigns to e-mail, websites, chat rooms, and text messaging.

# Cyberbullying

Websites and screen names allow bullies anonymity if they want it, and it can be difficult to trace.

Now bullies can extend their harassment into their victims' homes and schools.

- Kids should not put up with it. They should tell someone they trust ... their parents or teacher -- someone who can find a way to stop it.
- If kids get upsetting or scary messages, they should document everything by dates, times received and save the emails. This can be reported to the police.
- As careful as kids should be with giving out their mobile phone numbers ...they should be equally careful giving out their email.

# Spam

- Spam is unsolicited email. It can be annoying and sometimes offensive. Parents should discuss with their kids who they are sending and receiving emails from.
- One of the best ways to deal with spam is to not open it and delete it.
- Check out merchants privacy policies when purchasing something over the web. When in chat rooms, your child should not allow their personal profile to be published and should not give out their email address ... nor should they ever allow email addresses to be posted on any web site. They should remain as anonymous as possible.

# Spam

- If you have younger children, set up a list of people they can send and receive emails from and block the rest. Ask your Internet Service Provider how to do this.
- Firewall and anti-spam software programs are other ways to keep out unwanted emails and spam. You can also set up a spam email address in addition to your regular email address. Give those close to you your private email address and all others the spam email address.

# Cyber Bullying

- Cyber Bullying is social terror by technology ... and it's on the rise.
- When a kid of any age, up to 18 is threatened, humiliated, harassed, or humiliated via use of technology --- this is Cyber Bullying.
- This social online terror is used through e-mail, cell phones, pager text messages, instant messaging, Web sites, online personal polling Web sites. It is done by kids deliberately and repeatedly and is used by an individual or group with the intention of harming other kids and teens.

# Cyber Bullying

- Kids use technology to talk to their friends and make new ones. While most kids use the Internet responsibly, others are using all of this technology to terrorize and Cyber Bully!
- Cyber Bullying is the perfect way for bullies to remain anonymous. So anonymous, the bully has no fear of punishment.
- Cyber Bullying makes it easier for bullies because they are not face to face with their victim(s.)

# Cyber Bullying

Kids And Teens Bully Online In Various Ways:

- Instant Messaging/Text Messaging Harassment
- Sending hateful or threatening messages to other kids
- Kids send death threats using IM, text-messaging, photos and videos
- Kids gang up on their victim in text wars or text attacks. They send hundreds or thousands of text-messages to the victim's cell phone or other mobile device, resulting in a large cell phone bill and angry parents.

# Cyber Bullying

- Texting or Warning Wars kicks someone else offline for an extended period because ISP's offer a way of "telling on" a user who uses the Internet for inappropriate behavior, remarks and language.
- A kid may create a screenname that is very similar to another kid's name but add or remove an extra vowel. Then they use this name to say disparaging things to other users while posing as the other person.

# Cyber Bullying

- Web Sites

Kids can create Web sites that could humiliate or endanger another kid. They post photos, videos and all kinds of personal information (such as phone numbers, address, etc.) which could endanger the kid who is the victim.

# Cyber Bullying

- Sending Pictures through E-mail and Cell Phones

Newer cell phones allow kids to send pictures to each other. Pictures are received directly on the phones and could end up in everyone's address book. Some kids have actually posted pornographic pictures on sites and programs for anyone to download.

Kids often take photos of someone in a locker room, bathroom or dressing room and post it online or send it to others on cell phones. They send these via mass e-mail to others. Some of these photos could include nude or degrading pictures of their victims. E-mails like that get passed around to hundreds of others -- ending up everywhere in cyberspace.

# Cyber Bullying

- Impersonation

Posing as the victim, Cyber Bullies may post erotic or suggestive messages in a hate group's chatroom posing as the victim -- inviting an attack against them. They give the name, address and phone number of the victim to make the hate group's job easier. They might even send a message to someone posing as the victim, saying hateful or threatening things while masquerading as the victim. And they often alter a message actually from the victim, making it seem that they have said something horrible.

# Cyber Bullying

- Sending Malicious Code

Kids can send viruses, spyware and hacking programs to their victims to destroy their computers or spy on their victim. If the Cyber Bully uses a Trojan Horse program they can control their victim's computer remote control, and erase the hard drive.

# Cyber Bullying

- Sending Porn and Other Junk E-Mail and IMs

Cyber Bullies may sign their victims up for numerous e-mailing and IM marketing lists which creates mass emails for the victim. They even sign them up for porn sites.

# Cyber Bullying

- Blogs

These online journals are a way for kids to damage other kids' reputations or invade their privacy. Sometimes kids set up a blog or profile page pretending to be their victim and saying things to humiliate them.

# Cyber Bullying

- Stealing Passwords
  - Kids can steal the password and lock the victim out of their own account.
  - Kids may use another kid's password to change his/her profile and write sexual, racist and disparaging remarks about that person.
  - Kids may steal another kid's password and chat with others pretending to be the other kid. They can say mean things to this person's friends or other people.
  - Kids can give or sell the password to a hacker to hack into the victim's computer

# Cyber Bullying

- Internet Polling

A perfect way for kids to create more rumor! Asking Who's a Slut? Who's Not? And kids poll to answer.

# Cyber Bullying

- Interactive Gaming

Games like Box Live and Sony Play Station 2 Network allow your kids to communicate by chat and live Internet phone with anyone they find themselves matched with in a game online. Sometimes the kids verbally abuse the other kids, using threats and lewd language. Sometimes they take it further, by locking them out of games, passing false rumors about them or hacking into their accounts.

# Cyber Bullying

- **If you think kids couldn't possibly be this cruel -- think again!**
- It happens all the time. Some reports of Cyber Bullies are as young as 7 or 8 yers-old.

# Cyber Bullying

- Parents Should:
  - Be aware ... get involved!
  - While there is no one solution, learn everything about the Internet and what your kids are doing online.
  - Parent and schools must address Cyber Bullying, as much as they must address face to face bullying.

# Cyber Bullying

- Schools can be effective in partnering with parents to stop and solve Cyber Bullying problems.
- Students should be taught in school about cyberethics and the law.
- To avoid law suits, schools should make an addendum to their acceptable use policy, and reserve the right to discipline students for actions taken off-campus if they are intended to have an effect on a student or they adversely affect the safety and well-being of student while in school. Then it is no longer a constitutional issue.

# Cyber Bullying

- Most kids won't even tell their parents about a Cyber Bullying incident because they're afraid it will make everything worse.
- Victim's parents should be supportive of their child. Parents may be tempted to tell their kids to toughen up, that names never hurt anybody, yet -- cyberattacks can harm a child easily and have a long lasting effect. Millions of cyber accomplices can help target or humiliate your child.
- **That emotional pain is very serious and very real! Do not ignore it!**

# Cyber Bullying

- Alert the school and guidance counselor to watch out for in-school bullying and see how your child is handling things. It is important that you give your child love, support, nurturing and security.
- **Children have committed suicide after having been Cyber Bullied. Take it seriously!**
- You should immediately contact your local law enforcement agency if you have any knowledge that personal contact information has been posted online, or any threats have been made to your child.

# Cyber Bullying

- Although print-outs are not sufficient evidence of proof of Cyber Bullying, you should bring a print-out of all instances to show them. You will need electronic evidence and live data for proof.
- Educating kids about the consequences helps -- especially if they know they could lose their ISP and IM accounts.
- Cyber Bullying is a crime. It's also a crime to publish something that is “libelous” – meaning writing something insulting or something that could harm someone's reputation.

# Cyber Bullying

- Most Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) that define privileges and guidelines for users and the actions that can be taken for violated guidelines.
- ISPs and cell phone service providers can help clients track down the appropriate service provider in response to Cyber Bullying.

## If Your Child is a Cyber Bully

According to the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, law enforcement can get your information. The parents of Cyberbullies may be liable for the mental health and emotional damages caused by their child to another child. If the cyberbullies' parents is aware of the situation or has received a letter of complaint, then they have “knowledge and notice” of harmful activity. By paying for the telephone bill and internet charges in their home – they are legally responsible for the acts of their children while on the computer and in their care. Parents can be sued for damages.

## If Your Child is a Cyber Bully

- School administrators should be informed about the cyberbullying which your child is a victim of. If cyberbullying takes place during school time or on school computers, the schools come under the “knowledge and notice” rule.
- If a victim of cyberbullying is being threatened with assault or being beaten up or beaten down while they are in school, the schools must take responsibility for activities that follow a child from their home to their school.

# Cyber Bullying

- **We must insist on NO TOLERANCE of any bullying** -- whether it's face to face or through technology.
- By teaching kids kindness, compassion and respect and why it's important, we can stop all forms of bullying.
- Teach kids to speak out against bullies. Teach them that by keeping silent about their knowledge of Cyber Bullying against other kids is not acceptable.

# Cyber Bullying

Encourage your child to be part of the solution against all forms of bullying!

**Kids who report cyber bullying may be saving someone's life!**

# Cyber Bullying

Signs of your child being Cyber Bullied:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger or Fear
- Not wanting to go to school
- Changes in their grades
- Avoiding friends
- Hesitation to use their computer

# Cyber Bullying

- If the Cyber Bullying becomes serious and won't stop:
  - Contact the police
  - Contact an attorney or file a small claims action - Civil law provides for victims to sue a bully or the bully's parents to recover damages.

# Cyber Bullying

- Kids Who Are Being Cyber Bullied Should:
  - Don't do anything. Take a deep breath and calm down.
  - Block the cyberbully or limit all communications to those on your buddy list.
  - Save the harassing messages and forward them to your ISP.
  - Tell a trusted adult!

# Cyber Bullying

**There is help, there is hope ---**

**all you need to do is**

- be brave,**
- be smart**
- and be proactive!**

# CYBER DICTIONARY

- Many parents are unaware of their kids' online activities. Do you really know what your kids are doing online?
- According to a new survey commissioned by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Cox Communications, only about half of the parents surveyed were monitoring their kids' online activity daily or weekly. The other half of the parents said that they don't have or don't know if they have software on their computer(s) capable of monitoring where their teens go online or with whom they interact.

# CYBER DICTIONARY

Additional findings include:

- 42% of parents don't review the content that their teen(s) are reading and/or writing in chat rooms or instant messages;
- Parents are not familiar with the most common IM shorthand/lingo, i.e:
  - \*57% of parents don't know LOL (laughing out loud)
  - \*68% don't know BRB (be right back)
  - \*92% were unaware that A/S/L means age/sex/location
  - \*95% of parents weren't familiar with POS (parents over shoulder) and P911 (parent alert);
  - \*28% of parents don't know if their teens are speaking with strangers online;
  - \*30% of parents let their teens use computers in private areas of the home (e.g. bedroom, office).

# CYBER DICTIONARY

- If you're not a kid or you are a kid new to web surfing, you probably don't understand cyberspace lingo.
- Our handout of a cyberspace dictionary gives you a clearer understanding of how to protect children.

# INTERNET SAFETY ALERT

If your child, you or anyone you know uses MySpace, please **beware of an offer of a toolbar and programs to "protect kids from predators."**

**There is no toolbar that offers this kind of protection.**

The best way to protect children is still working with them to help them understand and avoid all of the Internet dangers.

# DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW THE DANGER SIGNS OF A PREDATOR?

- Someone older (often much older) who spends hours chatting with them online
- Requests for personal information
- Someone who lies ... especially about being younger
- Someone trying to drive a wedge between a child and their family
- Offers of jobs, money, and gifts that are too good to be true
- Offers of pornography, or requests for suggestive pictures
- Anyone who threatens them

**Surf Serious ...**

**Surf Smart ...**

**Surf Safe Rules**

## Surf Serious ... Surf Smart ... Surf Safe Rules

It is crucial that every parent and every childcare giver know everything there is to know about the Internet and the possible hazards it creates for children. Learn how to deal with them ... learn the Internet Safety Facts.

Before allowing your children on the internet, make sure they're Surf Serious ... Surf Smart and Surf Safe! You wouldn't let them cross the street without showing them how to look both ways ... don't let them on the Internet unless they know the rules.

# Surf Serious ... Surf Smart ... Surf Safe Rules

- Sign a Child/Parent Internet Safety Agreement between you and your kids.
- Make sure the computer your kids use is in an open area in your home.
- Kids should always let their parents know when entering a chatroom
- When visiting a chatroom kids should always use a nickname and NEVER give out their real name, address, age, phone number, mobile phone, school, whether they are a girl or boy, and NEVER send or publish their photos.

## Surf Serious ... Surf Smart ... Surf Safe Rules

- Some chatrooms will want to publish all or some personal information each time your kids sign on in the chatroom. Others will allow them to create a profile just for publication on the web. Kids should remain PRIVATE!
- Make sure your kids know that not everyone in the chatroom is their age or even there for the same reason your kids are. Some adults like to trick kids.
- If something worries or scares your kids when in a chatroom they should report it to the chatroom provider immediately. They should save conversations if they are being bullied or harrassed.

## Surf Serious ... Surf Smart ... Surf Safe Rules

- Kids should report bad taste and nasty attitude messages in chatrooms to their parents and to the chatroom providers.
- Kids should never arrange to meet anyone they meet online ... no matter what!!!
- All passwords should be kept private and NEVER given out.
- Kids should not enter chatrooms for adults or for anyone over 18. By doing so, it is very dangerous. You could also end up with a huge phone bill.

## Surf Serious ... Surf Smart ... Surf Safe Rules

- Kids send attachments. Attachments can spread viruses on your computer and do serious damage. When opening attachments, make sure you know the person who is sending you the attachment. Even when you know the sender, you can save it on your desktop and scan them with anti-virus software before you open them.
- Make sure you discuss cyberbullying with your child. Let them know that if it happens to them, they should come to you and tell you. Let them know that even if all the other kids are cyberbullying others, it is not appropriate behavior.