

Connection Protection: Keeping Your Kids Safe on the Internet

MS PTSA Presentation

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1. Positive Aspects of Internet:

- Increase language and communication skills
- As a sounding board, getting feedback and validation from others
- Learning/education tools
- Way of hanging out

2. Negative aspects of the Internet:

- Cyberstalking, cyberbullying, pedophiles use the sites, threats, harassment, malicious gossip, posting a view of inappropriate/sexually suggestive material, sexually explicit chatting, discussions about drinking/drug use, dishonesty (not who and what they say they are), spaces poorly policed, “time waster”, addictive

3. Popular Blogs

- MySpace.com, facebook.com, xanga.com, alldumb.com, livejournal.com, rotten.com

3. Internet safety stats (isafe survey):

- 42% bullied online
- 35% threatened online
- 53% reported they had said something mean or hurtful to someone online
- 35% feel freer to do what they want to do than in real life
- 73% feel teens need lessons on internet safety
- 12% share personal information online
- 12% say anyone can access their site
- 9% have used a cell phone to take another’s picture without their knowledge
- 6% use cell phones to cheat on a test in school.

4. Resources:

www.isafe.org (parent newsletter)

www.safekids.com and www.safeteens.com

www.netsmartz.org (3-D characters with real life situations, has questions to answer)

www.kidshealth.org

www.getnetwise.org (age appropriate safety tips)

www.fbi.gov

www.wiredsafety.org

www.internet-safety.org

www.sbc.com

Bunches more!

5. Safety tips for kids:

- Tell your parents to spend time with you while online. You might want to know some guidelines that your parents are concerned in the use of the computer such as time and the places to go in the World Wide Web. Show them your favorite places in the internet. Tell them about the people you meet on-line, and the things you talk about. Let them know of your keypals and their traditions. Get them involved in your on-line activities!
- Passwords
Keep passwords private, even from your best friend. Online services will never ask for them and neither should anyone else.
- Log-in Name an/or e-mail address
Ask your parents for permission before you log on! Read the internet safety tips together with your parents, teacher, or guardian. Let them know what you are up to on-line. Only use the Internet when your parents have given you permission, and only for the time they allowed you to use it. Use only your log-in name and/or e-mail address when chatting or sending e-mail. Never give out personal information, such as your name, address, school name, or phone number in chats and bulletin boards. If you are entering a contest, or registering to enter new site, discuss it with your parents or guardians first and get their permission. Show them the site, and the reason why you would want to give out your address. If you have a PO Box, use that as your address. If you want to become pen pals with someone, you should talk to your parents about it first, and get their permission to give out your address.
- Photos
Don't share photos of yourself, your family, or your home with people you meet online. If you want to share a photo of yourself, do so only with your parent's approval. If you have a homepage, your parents should also determine the pictures that you should put. You can post blurry pictures, too.
- Attachments
Always delete unknown attachments without opening them. They can contain destructive viruses.
- Privacy
NOTHING you write on the Web is completely private-including e-mail. So, be careful and think about what you type and what you tell.
- Meeting with people offline
People may not be who they seem! Not everyone is as nice, cute, and funny as they may sound online. A 12-year old girl may be a much older man. Never make plans to meet an online "friend" in

person. If you do decide to meet with someone that you have met on-line, talk to your parents first. If they agree to the meeting, have them come with you and meet in a public place (where there is a lot of other people around)!

- If made uncomfortable/scared:

If a person writes something that is mean or makes you feel uncomfortable or scared, don't respond. Just log off and tell your parents, who can report it to your online service provider. Show the message immediately to your parents or teachers or any adult you trust, so they may take the proper action or advise you on what to do. Most of all don't imitate those kids that write rude messages. Tell your parents right away when you read or view something that makes you uncomfortable or scared. Some sites are not meant for children and you might have accidentally reached that site through a hyperlink. Talk to your parents or teacher about it. This is usually the best solution.

- When in doubt

Always ask your parents/teachers for help -- and just LOG OFF if you're not sure! You can always go back online later.

6. Tips for Parents

- ❖ Take interest in your child's e-pals, just as you do with friends they bring home.
- ❖ Protect your personal information.
- ❖ Use anti-virus software, a firewall, filtering, and anti-spyware software to help keep your computer safe and secure. Be sure to set up your operating system and Web browser software properly, and update them regularly. Use strong passwords or strong authentication technology to help protect your personal information.
- ❖ Keep the computer in a common area, not in individual bedrooms, where you can watch and monitor your child. And make sure that other family members walk in the room periodically.
- ❖ Share an email account with your child so you can monitor messages.
- ❖ Talk to your child about the dangers of getting together with someone the "meet" online.
- ❖ Discuss with kids how to deal with anger. Inform kids that it is not their fault if someone is rude, obnoxious, and mean. Teach them how to deal with this appropriately. Teach them not to respond to comments that are mean and provocative.
- ❖ Take your child seriously if he or she reports an uncomfortable online exchange. Forward copies of obscene or threatening messages you or your child receives to your Internet service provider and call law enforcement.
- ❖ Call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at (800) 843-5678 if you are aware of the transmission, use, or viewing of child pornography online. Contact your local law enforcement agency or the FBI if your child has received child pornography via the Internet.
- ❖ Forbid your child from entering private chat rooms; block them with safety features provided by your Internet service provider or with special filtering software. Be aware that posting messages to chat rooms reveals your child's email address to others.

- ❖ Set rules about where kids can go online and what to do if they stumble upon inappropriate sites. Become computer literate and learn how to block objectionable sites. Monitor your credit card and phone bills for unfamiliar account charges.
- ❖ A lot of material posted on the Internet is copyrighted, which means that it might be illegal to reprint or post the material without permission. Kids need to understand that they do not have the right to re-post or distribute copyrighted graphics, music, videos, and text from Web sites without permission. This includes giving copies of the material to friends. There are some conditions where it is OK to use copyrighted material as part of a student paper or other project, but students should always check with their teacher first and cite the source of the information. Plagiarism - claiming that you wrote or drew something created by another person - is illegal, and committing plagiarism at school can be grounds for serious punishment. Spend time online together to teach your child appropriate online behavior.
- ❖ Find out what, if any, online protection is offered by your child's school, after-school center, friends' homes, or any place where he or she could use a computer without your supervision.

7. Where to Report a Problem

Reporting cyber crime can seem confusing because of the global nature of the Internet and the many levels of law enforcement. Please note: If you feel that your or another person's life is being threatened, please contact your local or state police immediately!

The COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act) requires websites to explain their privacy policies on the site and get a parent's consent before collecting or using a child's personal info. A child should never be required to provide more personal information than reasonable to play a game.

CYBERBULLYING/CYBERTHREATS

How: cell phones, text messages, web sites, blogs, chat rooms, IMs, postings on discussion boards

What:

Cyberbullying

Being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material using the internet or a cell phone, by:

- Flames- fights with angry and vulgar language
- Harassment- repeatedly sending offensive and insulting messages
- Cyberstalking- repeatedly sending threatening or intimidating messages and follows you through various media
- Denigration- sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships
- Impersonation- breaking into someone's account posing as that person and sending messages to make the person look bad, get the person in trouble or danger, or damage that person's reputation or friendship
- Outing and trickery- sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information, which is then shared online
- Exclusion-intentionally excluding someone from an online group or buddy list

Cyber threats

Online material that threatens or raises concerns about violence toward another, suicide, or self-harm.

- Direct- actual threats to hurt someone or commit suicide,
- Distressing material, online material that provides clues that the person is emotionally upset and may be considering hurting someone, hurting him or herself or committing suicide

*Cyber bullying and cyber threats sometimes are related to in-school bullying

Risky behaviors include:

Disclosing personal info

Internet addiction

Sexual hook-ups or sexually explicit pics or videos

Depressed individuals interact to share methods of suicide and self-harm, such as cutting, anorexia, fainting

Hate groups and gangs recruit angry disconnected youth into their activities

Pedophiles look for their victims

Why:

- You can't see me- kids feel invisible, enhanced when creating anonymous accounts. This removes concerns of detection, social disapproval and punishment
- I can't see you- there is no tangible consequences of their actions, which interferes with empathy, actions are just a game