



Social Networking and Internet Safety Tips

Best Internet practices for kids:

- Keep all your personal information to yourself.
- Don't give out your picture or post it online.
- Use a neutral and appropriate screen name.
- Don't give out your passwords.
- Don't trust everyone you meet online.
- If you come across anything that makes you uncomfortable, tell your parents.
- Meeting someone in person that you met online can be extremely dangerous. Ask parents before meeting an online buddy in public.

Best Internet practices for parents:

- Create rules for Internet use in the home.
- Know what your kids are doing online.
- Communicate with your kids (ask what they like to do online, watch their favorite online videos).
- Use the Internet with your kids.
- Don't allow solitary surfing.
- Desktop and laptop computers should be set up in an open area within the home so you can personally monitor your child's Internet activity.
- Kids should never be allowed to go online behind a closed bedroom door.
- If your kids refuse to follow your computer rules you set up, take away their computer use privilege.
- If you agree to let your child meet an online buddy in person (which can potentially be dangerous), go with them.
- Don't rely solely on technology as a substitute for you.
- Safeguard your home computers (filtering applications, anti-virus software, and Internet monitoring software).
- Don't discount the fact that your child is not being completely truthful with you about his/her online activities. (For example, it is not at all uncommon for kids to have one "sanitized" Facebook page for their parents to review and a completely different Facebook page for their friends).

Risky online decisions include the following:

- “Friending” unknown people
- Sending or posting provocative and sexual images
- Clicking on pop-ups
- Talking about sex
- Posting personal information
- Sharing passwords with friends
- Embarrassing or harassing people

Engaging in the above types of behavior can ultimately lead to:

- Becoming a “sexting” and cyber bullying/harassment victim or criminal suspect.
- Attracts online predators.

For more information contact community outreach at 952-924-2661 or visit the Federal Trade Commission website at www.ftc.gov