



SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

How to Help your Child be Safer Online

BECOME A ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR CHILD

- Set good examples for responsible Internet use.
- Demonstrate proper safeguards, like good screen names and protecting personal information.
- Don't be gullible – use discernment in judging reliable information online.
ID Theft Info: <http://money.howstuffworks.com/identity-theft.htm>

SET THE RULES

- Establish rules that convey the family values regarding cyberspace, just as is done for other aspects of the family life. Examples:
 - If your child is required to be polite, require that the child use netiquette online as well.
 - If your child is not allowed to go alone to a mall or a party at a home belonging to someone that you don't know, then your child should be prohibited from going to chat rooms or other sites that provide opportunities for strangers to interact with your child.
 - If you normally get to know your child's friends, then you should know the friends on your child's buddy list or friends list.
- Just as there are rules for the natural world in place, you must guide your children in their virtual lives.
- Only allow internet access (browsing, chat rooms, IM, email, online profiles) in a common room of the house, whether using a computer or other device.
- Consider monitoring/filtering/blocking solutions to assist in establishing a cybersafe environment in the home. Visit <http://kids.getnetwise.org/tools>, <http://www.netalert.gov.au/filters.html>, <http://www.1.k9webprotection.com/>, or www.filterreview.com for help and information.
- Find ten common questions answered here:
http://www.ikeepsafe.org/iksc_partners/symantec/10_questions/Assets/TenCommonQuestions.pdf

STAY AHEAD OF THE TRENDS

- The easiest way is to learn what activities or devices attract you child's attention and become familiar with them. Research the newest devices prior to buying them for your child's use.
- Read the weekly newsletter from www.NetFamilyNews.org for information on the newest topics.

RESPOND, DON'T REACT

- You must decide how you will deal with problems. It is best to review it with the child, discuss why the content was inappropriate, how to avoid it in the future, and, if necessary, how to report it to the Internet service provider (ISP) or law-enforcement agency.
- Give your child the benefit of the doubt. If your child is lured by sites or persons online, or stumbles onto distasteful sites, your child should feel free to tell you knowing you won't overreact.
- Help develop strategies that will keep your child safer. Consider creating an Internet use agreement that can formalize your talks with kids and prevent misunderstandings. Examples can be found at
 - http://wiredkids.org/resources/documents/interactive_contract.html
 - <http://www.netfamilynews.org/contract.html>
 - <http://netsmartz.org/resources/pledge.htm>