



Internet Safety for Students & Parents

Available Resources:

- <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Social-Media-and-Young-Adults.aspx>
 - A recent study that examines social media and our young adults & teens.
- www.ilookbothways.com
 - Provides information on internet safety, security, privacy and ethics available.
- www.netsmartz.org
 - Provides interactive materials for parents in helping to deal with internet safety and technology.

• USE YOUR NETSMARTZ as a parent....

Use your NetSmartz when someone wants to meet your child offline.

As your children interact on the Internet, you need to be aware that they may be exposed to people who don't have their best interests in mind. If your children ever tell you that someone has asked them to meet offline, find out as much as you can about the situation. Save any communication to your computer; if there is illegal activity, a record of the conversation can be powerful evidence in court. Report any of these types of incidents to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline at www.cybertipline.com. Contact your local police department if you suspect your child is in immediate danger.

Your child will not always be contacted to meet offline by someone dangerous. If you are comfortable with the idea of your child meeting in person with another child he or she first met online, arrange it by contacting that child's parents, and accompany your child to the meeting in a public place.

Always encourage your children to talk to you about their online experiences.

Use your NetSmartz when someone wants to know stuff about your child.

If your children give out personal information over the Internet, not only is it easy to track, it's tough to completely remove. Emphasize to them how important it is that they keep personal information private. Make sure that they have a strong username and password that doesn't reveal anything personal. Encourage them not to give out their e-mail address, if they have one. If your children tell you that they have given out personal information online, contact your Internet Service Provider or the site where the information is posted to see what you can do to have it removed.

To learn more, watch "[Tracking Teresa](#)."

Use your NetSmartz if something makes your child feel uncomfortable.

There is a lot of material on the Internet that is inappropriate. You can use filtering software to protect your child from that material, but remember that filters do not guarantee that your child will not be exposed; a filter will never be a substitute for your presence.

- Monitor your child's online behavior. Keep your family computer in a highly visible, common area, like the family room or the kitchen.
- Ask your children to show you what sites they go to, and be open and willing to discuss the inappropriate material they might come across. One of the main reasons that children do not report the inappropriate content they find online is fear of punishment from parents. If you let them know that it is not their fault if they come across an inappropriate site, they will be more willing to come to you when it happens.
- If your children ever show you a site that contains illegal behavior, such as pornographic images of children, contact your Internet Service Provider and the CyberTipline (www.cybertipline.com).

Use your NetSmartz when someone is bullying your child over the Internet.

This generation of Internet users is remarkably savvy as to how to use the technology for their own gain. The anonymity of the web makes it a perfect place to feed embarrassing and hurtful rumors and gossip. Online polling booths allow children to vote on the physical traits of other students; children can also take humiliating pictures or video of other children and post it to the web. As a parent, it can be overwhelming to wonder what you can do if your child ever becomes the target of cyberbullying.

- Emphasize to your children that they should never type back when someone is being aggressive or hurtful online. This can only make it worse.
- If someone is posting anything about your child online, especially personal information, it is important to contact your Internet Service Provider. Most likely your provider can have the information removed.
- Harassment is harassment, online or off. If someone is engaging in illegal activity involving your children, such as threatening their safety or exposing them to unnecessary danger, they may be in violation of the law. Keep any record you can find of this type of behavior and report it to local law enforcement.

Use your NetSmartz if your child gets an e-mail from someone he or she doesn't know.

If you are allowing your children to communicate with others online, be aware that they will be exposed to spam. The easiest way to avoid spam is to make sure that your children do not give out their personal information or e-mail address to anyone they do not know. Adjust the security settings on their e-mail account to filter or block unwanted messages. Encourage your children to delete any messages they get from anyone they don't know.

Even when your children get e-mail or Instant Messages from people they know, make sure that they scan everything they are downloading onto the computer for viruses first. You can do this by making sure that you have your antivirus software up to date.

Use your NetSmartz if your child gives out his or her password by accident.

NetSmartz heavily emphasizes that children should ONLY share their password with a parent or guardian. If a child tells you that he or she has given out a password to someone other than you, ask the child which web sites he or she used the password for; if you go to the web sites, there should be a feature provided to allow you to change passwords. If you do not find such a feature, contact the web site directly to have the password changed. If you have trouble contacting the web site, contact your Internet Service Provider to assure that any personal information recorded on that web site is removed.

Use your NetSmartz if your child sees his or her personal information online.

Protecting your child's personal information is paramount to protecting your child from the dangers that exist online. Make sure your children understand how important it is to keep their personal information private. Review with them what personal information is (name, age, address, name of school, photographs). If you or your child find personal information online, immediately contact your Internet Service Provider and ask that they have the information removed.

Use your NetSmartz when your child is online all day long.

The Internet can be a great place and no doubt your children are excited to be using it. Take the opportunity to set reasonable guidelines for Internet use and post them clearly near your computer; the NetSmartz Internet safety pledges are a good place to start. One way to help safeguard your children against many of the dangers of the Internet is to make sure they have other activities to participate in and other social outlets to turn to.

Use your NetSmartz when your child doesn't know what to do.

You are the greatest tool at your child's disposal for staying safer online. When your children have questions or concerns about something that they find on the Internet, be open to listening and helping to find an answer. If you show them early on that you are a resource and support, they will be that much more likely to communicate with you when a real concern arises. If you don't have the answer to something, take that as an opportunity to find a solution together.

MAKE A REPORT



Please contact us if you have information to help in the fight against child sexual exploitation. Your information will be forwarded to law enforcement for investigation and review and, when possible, to the appropriate Electronic Service Provider(s).

➡ Watch the CyberTipline Video

The CyberTipline



Questions or Concerns:

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