



## What Parents, Grandparents, and Caregivers Need to Know

*The Internet is a valuable learning, communication, and entertainment provider. A child's Internet use should be based on age and the family's needs and values.*

- The Internet can help with research and homework.
- The Internet can facilitate easy communications with family members and friends.
- Although the Internet can be educational and entertaining, children should spend time offline.
- Appropriate Internet activities for children should be age related. Teenage activities may not be appropriate for a young child.

**Online Safety Guide (click on age-level tips on left side of screen) (GetNetWise)**  
<http://kids.getnetwise.org/safetyguide/>

**Parenting Online (WiredKids)**  
<http://wiredkids.org/resources/documents/pdf/parentingonline.pdf>

**See Appendix D for additional resources.**



*Parents must understand potential Internet dangers and prepare their children, just as they prepare them for going to the playground or crossing the street.*

**Internet Safety: Information for Parents (WiredSafety)**

<http://www.wiredsafety.org/parent.html>

**Online Predators: Help Minimize the Risk (Microsoft)**

<http://www.microsoft.com/protect/family/guidelines/predators.msp>

**See Appendix D for additional resources.**



- The Internet contains inappropriate information for children, such as pornography, hate literature, aggressive advertising, and violent images.
- Internet communication often is anonymous, especially in *chat rooms* or *blogs*. A sexual predator may pose as a friend to lure a child away from his or her family's protection. *Cyberbullies* may target a child for harassment.

- Using e-mail or downloading files can lead to *viruses* or hidden *spyware*, which endanger a family's privacy and computer.
- Information provided over the Internet—by children and adults—can be used for *identity theft*.

**Parents can provide the best protection for their children and help reinforce the principles learned in the classroom. Families should reach agreements about acceptable Internet activity and content.**

- Parents should read about and know how to respond to Internet risks. They can stay informed by signing up for a family Internet safety newsletter (see “Newsletters” in Appendix D) and working directly with their school divisions.
- Parents should talk with their children about safe and appropriate Web sites and activities.
- Children should be encouraged to report anything they feel uneasy about. If parents overreact, children will be less likely to confide in them the next time.
- The family should create rules about what children can and cannot do while online. Posting the agreements near the computer will ensure children see them often.

**The Children’s Partnership: The Parents’ Guide to the Information SuperHighway**  
[http://www.childrenspartnership.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Speeches\\_and\\_Presentations&CONTENTID=4687&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm](http://www.childrenspartnership.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Speeches_and_Presentations&CONTENTID=4687&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm)

**staysafe.org for Parents**  
<http://www.msn.staysafeonline.com/parents/default.html>



**See Appendix D for additional resources.**

**Monitoring is crucial. Parents should know where their children go online, how long they stay there, and the warning signs that something is wrong.**

- Parents should place computers in family areas as opposed to bedrooms; however, they need to realize that *instant messaging* devices, cell phones, and *wireless computers* may allow children to get online anywhere.
- When young children first begin going online, parents should work closely with them and talk about Internet safety at an early age.
- Parents should *bookmark* suitable sites and check back regularly to ensure that the content of those sites has not changed and that harmful sites have not been bookmarked.
- *Filters* are helpful but not fail proof. Parents need to know about *circumventor sites*, which allow users to get around *filtering* software controls.
- Parents should seek training to learn different methods of *monitoring* their children’s Internet use. They continually need to employ up-to-date techniques and software to track where their children go online.
- Parents should be aware that some sites have age restrictions that children may ignore or not realize.

- Parents should follow where their children go on the Internet just as they would watch them in a large public area. They need to check regularly the *history* and *bookmarks* or *favorites* on all computers in the house.
- Parents should recognize the warning signs of when a child might be in trouble, doing something they should not be doing, or spending too much time on the Internet. They should know how to report a problem to their Internet Service Provider and local law enforcement officials.
- Some Internet activities are not only dangerous but illegal. Parents should be aware of relevant laws.

**Filter Review (National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families)**

<http://www.filterreview.com/index.htm>

**CyberTipline (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children)**

<http://www.cyberTipline.com/>

**See Appendix D for additional resources.**

