

## INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR FAMILIES

### Tips for youth to stop cyber-bullying:

- Don't initiate, respond or forward harmful messages
- Think first! If something mean is posted or texted about you, don't respond immediately. Take a break and give yourself time to think through your next step.
- Think about your reputation--would you want your grandma, teacher, future employer, or someone you don't know, to see your post?
- Trust your gut. If you feel uncomfortable- save the message and tell an adult.

### Tips for parents regarding cyber-bullying:

- Ask your children questions. Maintain an open dialogue.
- Keep the computer in a common room.
- Talk about your expectations regarding acceptable online/phone behavior before they receive the privilege. Behavior online should be the same as what you would do in person or in front of someone you respect.
- Make agreements and set boundaries about accepted use and behavior for online/phone communication. Often youth don't tell parents because they fear losing their technology privileges.
- Help your child think through how the information they put online reflects on them.
- Inform youth about legal and future consequences of harmful posing online or by phone.
- Ask your child to teach you about programs or technologies you don't understand or of which you don't have familiarity.
- Model the behaviors you want to see around phone and internet use.

### Tempted to meet someone face-to-face that you know only from online chats?

Remember anyone can pretend to be anyone online. A skilled predator will pretend to be exactly the type of person you are looking for; otherwise, you wouldn't be interested in getting together, would you? If you think you can't meet a predator, think again. Predators go anywhere you go on the Internet.

### Sharing too much information about yourself?

Would you walk around with private information taped on your back, so anyone could read it? Probably not, however, this is what you are doing when you post private information on social networking sites and don't have your privacy settings set to PRIVATE or FRIENDS ONLY. You, your friends, and your athletic teams are putting information about you onto the web. If the world can see that information, so can a predator or a stalker. Guard your personal information and ask others to be careful with it as well.

There is another potential problem that you might not consider – *identity theft*. This is a crime in which someone establishes credit in your name. Unfortunately for you, the credit history that is established will not be a good one, and it will take a lot of time and effort to clean up the mess. Giving out personal information should be *your* decision. Just because an interesting website asks for your personal information does not mean you should give it out.

Be careful posting photos of yourself on the web. Photos placed on public sites can be manipulated and placed back on public sites. Such photos of you might prove to be embarrassing or worse – not the kind of photo you would want a college admissions committee or potential employer to see.

### Key Messages

- Spend time with your child on the Internet to demonstrate to his/her proper use.
- Monitor your child's computer use and Internet "History."
- Establish rules for your child's Internet use.
- Never give personal information to someone you do not know.
- Report any suspected cyber child sexual exploitation to the NCMEC CyberTipline.
- Be careful of any information you post online, including photos, which will be available for anyone to view, forever.
- Beware of cyber predators!

## What do you know about intellectual properties?

Do you know that intellectual properties are protected by copyright law? And using another's intellectual properties without their permission is illegal.

Many owners of intellectual properties view piracy and plagiarism as stealing. Illegal downloading of movies and music can have serious legal and monetary consequences. The music industry has taken legal action against some offenders, typically costing the person thousands of dollars to resolve.

### EXAMPLES OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES

- Music Recordings
- Videos
- Photographs
- Drawings
- Magazine Articles
- Computer Games
- Computer Software
- Books

*Plagiarizing can seriously damage your academic record which could adversely affect college admission or getting a job.*

### SOME ONLINE BEHAVIORS ARE AGAINST THE LAW...

Many view piracy and plagiarism as stealing. Illegal downloading of movies and music can have serious consequences. Just as stealing a CD or DVD from a store is wrong, so is stealing online.

There is an area of the law called Intellectual Properties. Learn about it.

Copying information from the Internet can be illegal and there are risks.

## PROTECTING YOUR COMPUTER

**Emails from unknown sources** may contain attachments that introduce viruses that permanently damage your computer. Forwarding emails from unknown sources can reveal your friend's email address to the sender and possibly infect your friend's computer with a virus.

**File sharing** can lead to a virus or provide access to information contained on your hard drive.

**Installing a firewall** can help protect your computer from the problems created by hackers.

**Anti-Virus software** can help protect your files.

**Disconnecting your Internet** when not in use is the best way to prevent anyone from using the Internet's "two-way street" to get into your computer.

**Posting your email address on public sites** allows spammers to find it and send you junk mail.

## REMEMBER: YOUR FIRST AND BEST LINE OF DEFENSE IS SELF-DEFENSE IN CYBERSPACE.

**Note to Parents:** There are many organizations and activities in which your child may be involved that post information online in public locations. It is extremely important for you to pre-approve any information about your child that will be posted for the world to see. Remember, cyber predators are looking, too.

## IF YOU SUSPECT THAT YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN CONTACTED BY A PREDATOR

**Notify law enforcement**

*OR*

**File a complaint online at [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)**

**Reporting Child Sexual Exploitation:** If an incident occurs in which you feel your child is a victim of online solicitation for sexual acts, sextortion, or child pornography, PLEASE report the incident to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® (NCMEC). Their website is [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org).

The NCMEC's CyberTipline is operated in partnership with the FBI, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, U.S. Secret Service, military criminal investigative organizations, U.S. Department of Justice, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force program, as well as other state and local law enforcement agencies. Reports to the CyberTipline are made by the public and Electronic Service Providers (ESP). ESPs are required by law to report apparent child pornography to law enforcement via the CyberTipline (18 U.S.C. § 2258A)

Reports are continuously triaged to help ensure that children in imminent danger get priority. Analysts review reports and:

- Examine and evaluate the content.
- Add related information that may be useful to law enforcement.
- Use publicly available search tools to determine the geographic location of the apparent criminal act.
- Provide all information to the appropriate law enforcement agency for potential investigation.

The CyberTipline reporting mechanism assists law enforcement and prosecutors in their detection, investigation, and prosecution of child sexual exploitation crimes. The CyberTipline helps make law enforcement's efforts more efficient and maximizes the limited resources available in the fight against child sexual exploitation. The value of the CyberTipline as a source of leads for law enforcement has been greatly enhanced by collaboration with ESPs.

In addition to referring CyberTipline reports to law enforcement for potential investigation, the NCMEC engages with the Internet industry on voluntary initiatives to reduce child sexual exploitation online.