

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Internet Safety Guidelines for Parents

By taking responsibility for your child's online computer use, you can greatly minimize any potential risks of being online.

- Get to know the Internet and any services your child uses. If you don't know how to log on, get your child to show you. Have your child show you what he or she does online, and become familiar with all the things that you can do online.
- Never give out identifying information—home address, school name, or telephone number—in a public message such as chat rooms, bulletin boards, or newsgroups, and be sure you're dealing with someone that both you and your child know and trust before giving out this information via e-mail. Think carefully before revealing any personal information such as age, marital status, or financial information. Do not post photographs of your children on websites or newsgroups that are available to the public. Consider using a pseudonym, and avoid listing your child's name and e-mail addresses in any public directories and profiles. Find out about your ISP's privacy policies and exercise your options for how your personal information may be used.
- Never allow your child to arrange a face-to-face meeting with another computer user without parental permission. If a meeting is arranged make the first one in a public place, and accompany your child.
- Never respond to messages or bulletin board items that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent, threatening, or make you feel uncomfortable. Encourage your child to tell you if he or she encounters such messages. If you or your child receives a message that is harassing, of a sexual nature, or threatening, forward a copy of the message to your ISP, and ask for their assistance. Instruct your child not to click on any links that are contained in an e-mail from persons they don't know. Such links could lead to sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate websites.
- If someone sends you or your child messages or images that are obscene, lewd, filthy, or indecent with the intent to harass, abuse, annoy, or threaten, or if you become aware of the transmission, use or viewing of child pornography while online, immediately report this to the appropriate authorities.
- Remember that people online may not be who they seem. Because you can't see or even hear the person, it would be easy for someone to misrepresent him- or herself. Thus, someone indicating that "she" is a "12-year-old girl" could in reality be a 40-year-old man.
- Remember that everything you read online may not be true. Any offer that's "too good to be true" probably is. Be very careful about any offers that involve you coming to a meeting, having someone visit your house, or sending money or credit card information.
- Set reasonable rules and guidelines for computer use by your child. Discuss these rules and post them near the computer as a reminder. Remember to monitor your child's compliance with these rules, especially when it comes to the amount of time your child spends on the computer. A child's excessive use of online services or the Internet, especially late at night, may be a clue that there is a potential problem. Remember that personal computers and online services should not be used as electronic babysitters.
- Check out blocking, filtering, and ratings.
- Be sure to make this a family activity. Consider keeping the computer in a family room rather than the child's bedroom. Get to know their "online friends" just as you get to know all of their other friends.

Source: [http://www.safekids.com/child\\_safety.htm](http://www.safekids.com/child_safety.htm)