



# Raising Safe Kids

## CYBER SAVVY

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### Welcome

Over the years technology has become more sophisticated and is apart of our lives and the lives of children around the world. For this reason parenting has become a more difficult task. Not only do we have to watch our children's interactions face to face but we also have to monitor interactions via technology.

Children have become the masters of multi tasking. Texting with one hand without looking, surfing the internet, instant messaging while eating a sandwich. Seems far fetched but take a look at children nowadays. With the vast choices of technological gadgets it is hard to avoid the temptation of buying and using them. So what is a parent to do? With the long laundry list of parenting duties, monitoring children use of



technology can get pushed to the side until trouble arises. For instance, cyber bullying, stolen identity, accessing an adult website, going over texting minutes, etc. It is important to head these and many issues off from the beginning. That

is why the focus of this issue is to help you become more cyber savvy by understanding how to keep children safe on the internet, understanding the basics of the internet, how to block children from visiting various sites, etc. We hope that this issue gives you some ideas to help you and your family become cyber smart and safe. Enjoy!

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#### Special points of interest:

- Becoming involved in internet usage
- Knowing the signs of online predators
- Setting and helping children follow internet usage and safety rules



American Psychological Association

# Parenting Internet Usage



Becoming involved in what children are doing on the internet is just the beginning of helping them be safe, smart internet users. Parenting your child's internet usage is not about hovering and being with them the entire time they are on the internet. It is monitoring, communicating, helping your child use the internet wisely, and becoming cyber savvy. Below are some ideas to help you understand how to parent a child's internet usage.

Explain the consequences of posting inappropriate material online. For example offensive pictures, hurtful emails, etc.

Have you and your child(ren) make a list of age appropriate, acceptable websites. Place them on your favorites link so they can have easy access.

Let children show you what they can do online and visit their favorite sites.

Use safeguarding programs or options provided by your online service provider, monitoring software etc. to block various websites and content

Take your child seriously if they report uncomfortable online exchanges

Internet accounts should be in the parent's name with parents having control of screen names, passwords, etc.

Save and forward copies of obscene or threatening messages to your internet service provider.

If you suspect online stalking or sexual exploitation of a child:

- Report it to local law officials
- Access CyberTipline provided by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Establish a password for your computer to prevent children from being about to use it without your permission.

Choose children's online names carefully. Don't use first names, gender, age, location, etc. For example JoJo2002 or Cutie-pgh-12.

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

Talk to children about what to do if they accidentally access something offensive.

Don't pull the plug by taking away internet use because your child(ren) has done something wrong. Talk to them about the dangers and what to do.

Create an internet usage agreement for children and a parent's pledge for you.

- Remind them it is not their fault
- Show them how to turn off the monitor or close out the internet
- Remind them to tell a trusted adult

Keep the computer in a common area.

Don't forget to monitor your child's mobile phone usage too.

Be aware of slang and codes. For ex. F2f=face to face or cd9=parent in room



NetSafekids

[http://www.napedu/netsafekids/pro\\_set\\_guidelines.html](http://www.napedu/netsafekids/pro_set_guidelines.html)

[www.fmtm.org/pdf/city\\_government/police.../internet\\_safety.pdf](http://www.fmtm.org/pdf/city_government/police.../internet_safety.pdf)

Oklahoma State University Extension

<http://src.k12.ok.us/files/Download/Cyber%20Savvy%20Parents%20Series%20Issue%201%20The%20Basics%5B1%5D.pdf>

NetSmartz

<http://www.netsmartz.org>

Family Online Safety Institute

[www.fosi.org](http://www.fosi.org)

# Internet Safety Tips for Children

Never share user IDs or passwords with anyone.



If you receive mean or threatening comments online, don't respond. Log off and report it to a trusted adult.

Don't believe everything you see or hear on the internet.



Never send pictures of yourself or reveal personal information (age, birthday, school, hometown, etc.) to anyone online without parent's permission

Don't open emails from unknown people or sources. DELETE them!

When in doubt, always ask your parents for help and if you are unsure, log off.

Remember that people on-line may not be who they seem.

Nothing on the internet is completely private. Be aware of what you write and to whom.

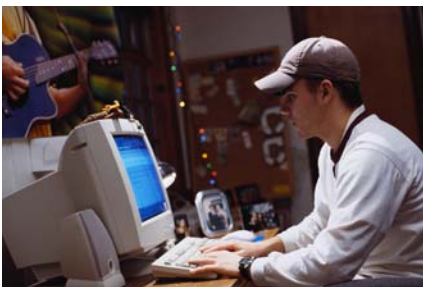


Only instant message people you know in real life and have been approved by your parents.

Never get together with anyone you've met online without parent's permission.

Don't download things on the internet without permission. These things could cause viruses, steal personal information, etc.

## Warning Signs of Online Predators



Having a child that falls victim of online predators can be an extremely difficult thing to deal with. No parent wants this to happen to their child. Knowing the signs of when a child is a target of online predators is just one step that can help minimize the possibility that they will become a victim. Below are some of the warning signs of a child that is the target of online predators.

[www.fmtn.org/pdf/city\\_government/police.../internet\\_safety.pdf](http://www.fmtn.org/pdf/city_government/police.../internet_safety.pdf)

**Your child or teen spends a great deal of time online** and may do so behind close doors in a secretive way.

**Your child or teen receives phone calls from people you don't know** or is making long distance calls to numbers you don't recognize.

**Your child or teen withdraws from family and friends,** Predators can drive wedges between kids and their families

**You find pornography on the family computer.** Predators often use pornography to sexually victimize children making it seem normal for children to engage.

**Your child quickly turns the computer monitor off or changes the screen** when you enter the room.

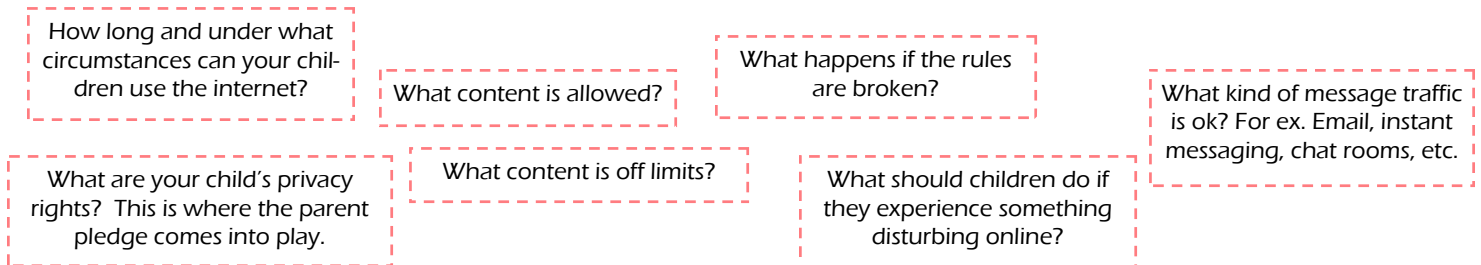
**Your child or teen receives mail, gifts, or packages from someone you don't know.** Predators have even been known to send airline tickets to entice children.

**Your child is using someone else's online account.** Predators sometimes provide victims with a computer account so they can communicate.



# Creating an Internet Use Agreement

When it comes to making rules for internet use, it can sometimes be quite difficult for children to follow and for you to consistently reinforce. A lot of times it is much easier for children to follow rules that are written down for them to see. This also allows you to remember what rules you have established for them as well as yourself. Also, let your child(ren) help think of rules for use as well. This will help them gain ownership of the rules and help them to be more likely to follow them. Below are some ideas on some topics to cover when drafting a policy. There are two examples of a child pledge and a parent pledge for online safety and internet use provided by Safekids.com.



## Family Contract for Online Safety

### Kids' Pledge

1. I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission.
2. I will tell my parents right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
3. I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
4. I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
5. I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do I will tell my parents right away so that they can contact the service provider.
6. I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online, and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.
7. I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even my best friends) other than my parents.
8. I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy.
9. I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.
10. I will help my parents understand how to have fun and learn things online and teach them things about the Internet, computers and other technology.

I agree to the above terms

I will help my child follow this agreement and will allow reasonable use of the Internet as long as these rules and other family rules are followed.

Child Sign Here

Parent Sign Here



## Family Contract for Online Safety

### Parents' Pledge

1. I will get to know the services and web sites my child uses. If I don't know how to use them, I'll get my child to show me how.
2. I will set reasonable rules and guidelines for computer use by my children and will discuss these rules and post them near the computer as a reminder. I'll remember to monitor their compliance with these rules, especially when it comes to the amount of time they spend on the computer.
3. I will not overreact if my child tells me about a problem he or she is having on the Internet. Instead, we'll work together to try to solve the problem and prevent it from happening again.
4. I promise not to use a computer or the Internet as an electronic babysitter.
5. I will help make the Internet a family activity and ask my child to help plan family events using the Internet.
6. I will try to get to know my child's "online friends" just as I try get to know his or her other friends.

I agree to the above

Parent(s)

I understand that my parent(s) agreed to these rules and I will help my parent(s) explore the Internet with me.

Child sign here

# Parental Control Software and Filtering Search Engines

## OnlineFamily.Norton (currently free)

Best web-based parental controls

Pros

- Encourages parent-child negotiation
- Web control good for PCs and Macs
- Easy remote configuration and reporting

## Net Nanny est. (\$40 per year)

Best parental control software

Pros

- Can set controls for multiple users
- Good for social networking and games
- Also has a mobile version for smartphones.

## CyberPatrol Parental Controls (\$40 per year)

Most Versatile parental controls

Pros

- Very customizable for multiple users
- Controls internet access and programs on hard drives
- Can be used outside of the home on laptops

Making Social Networking more Private

### MySpace

1. After logging into Myspace, click **Account Settings**
2. In the **Account Settings** section, click **Privacy**
3. Restrict your profile to "friends only."
4. Restrict your photos to "friends only."



Making Social Networking more Private

### Facebook

1. After logging in, click **privacy** on top right
2. Restrict who can view your **Profile**
3. Restrict information that can be viewed through "search"
4. Restrict who can view your **Photos**

## Search With Filtered Results at AOL.com

1. First, go to search.aol.com.
2. Click on the **Settings** link.
3. Scroll down to the **Safe Search** heading.
- 4 Click the **SafeSearch ON** radio button.
5. Click the **OK** button

## Filter Search Results in Yahoo! Search

1. First, go to **search.yahoo.com**.
2. Click on **Search Preferences** link.
3. Find **Safe Search** heading.
- 4 Click the **Edit** link at the right.
5. Select radio button with the level of filtering you want.
6. Choose between two levels of filtering.
7. Click the **Save** button.

## Change Settings to Filter Search at Google

1. First, go to **www.google.com**.
2. Click on **Preferences** link.
3. Find the **Safe Search Filtering** heading.
- 4 Select the level of filtering you want by choosing a radio button.
5. Choose between **Moderate filtering** and **Strict filtering**.
6. Click the **Save Preferences** button.



## **ACT RAISING SAFE KIDS PROGRAM**

1 Smithfield St.

Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Phone: 412-350-2770

E-mail: [safestart@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:safestart@alleghenycounty.us)

Office of Community Services

**Safe Start Program**



American Psychological  
Association

### **ACT**

ACT Raising Safe Kids Programs, is an anti-violence program that educates communities and families on how to raise children without violence. The focus is to help parents learn ways to create safe, healthy environments that protect children and youth from violence.

### **The Allegheny County Safe Start Program**

Safe Start is an outreach program which supports and assists families to provide safe, nurturing care for children. Through the use of a family and neighborhood based approach, Safe Start seeks to reduce exposure to and the negative impact of violence by identifying and supporting parents and young children within communities affected by violence.

Find more about Safe Start on the web at:

<http://alleghenycountypa.gov/dhs/safestart.aspx>

Find more about ACT on the web at:

<http://actagainstviolence.apa.org/>