Safe Surfing Tips for Kids

Choose a Safe and Sensible Screen Name

Choose a screen name and e-mail address that reveals nothing personal and is not suggestive.

Keep Personal Information Private

Do not share your personal information or that of your parents with someone you meet online. Keep your passwords private, except from your parents.

Talk to Your Parents

Be honest with your parents about people you meet online. Do not sign-up for e-mail accounts without your parents' approval or answer any emails or instant messages from strangers without your parents' consent. If you encounter pictures, links to bad sites, e-mails, instant messages or chat rooms with bad or hateful language, log off and tell your parents. Never call or arrange a meeting with someone you have met online.

Teach Your Parents

Show your parents the sites you visit. Teach your parents more about the Internet so you can have fun and learn together.

Understand Your Parents

Understand that your parents will supervise your time online and use software to monitor or limit where you go online. They are doing this because they want to protect you!

Think About Your Personal Safety

Make your personal safety a priority. There may be people you meet online pretending to be someone they are not. Do not do anything someone you meet online asks you to, especially when you know it is something your parents would not approve.

Do you know what your kids are saying online?

Internet predators do. Below is a partial list of acronyms that are used by young people today. Some will surprise you!

121	One-to-one
A/S/L	Age, sex, location
DIKU	Do I know you?
IPN	I'm posting naked
LMIRL	Let's meet in real life
NIFOC	Naked in front of computer
OLL	On-line love
P911	My parents are coming!
PANB	Parents are nearby
PM	Private Message
POS	Parent over shoulder
TAW	Teachers are watching
W/E	Whatever
WIBNI	Wouldn't it be nice if?
WTGP	Want to go private?
WFM	Works for me
WUF	Where are you from?

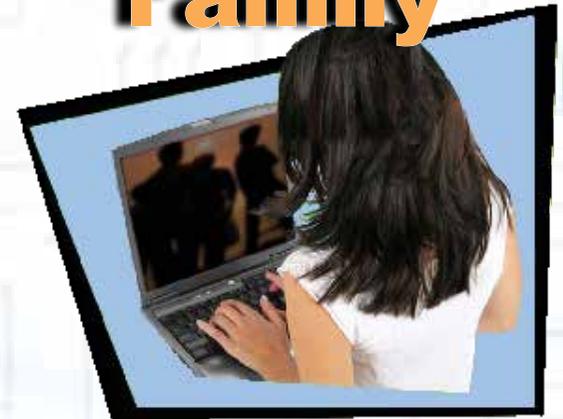To learn more about Internet safety or to arrange for a free Internet safety seminar for your organization contact:

ST. PETERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT
CRIME PREVENTION UNIT
727-893-7128
Visit us on the web at:
www.stpete.org/police

It's Up to You

Internet Safety Tips for the Whole Family

St. Petersburg Police Department
Crime Prevention Unit
www.stpete.org/police

Safety Tips for Parents

Discuss the Dangers of the Internet with Your Children
Talk with your children about the potential hazards of the Internet, including sexual predators, inappropriate content and invasion of privacy.

Become Computer Literate
Resources like software and classes can help you become computer literate. By learning just a few simple techniques, you can see where your child has been online recently.

Learn Internet Lingo
IM (Instant Messaging) has given birth to a slew of acronyms to describe phrases. For example, POS = "Parent Over Shoulder."

Use Parental Controls and Blocking Software
Most software and Internet Service Providers offer safety settings that block inappropriate sites.

Maintain Access to Your Child's E-Mail Account
Given the anonymity of the Internet, e-mail is an easy way for predators to track down victims. Randomly check your child's e-mail and keep track of who is contacting them

Pay Attention to What Your Kids do Online
Know what information your kids are sharing online and with whom, either through instant messaging, social networks, chat rooms or network games. Let your kids be the teacher, ask them to show you what sites they visit and who they meet.

Set Clear Rules for Internet Use

Keep Personal Information Private
Teach your children never to give out personal information online without your permission. Predators know how to use seemingly disconnected information to locate a child.

Help Your Child Choose a Screen Name
Find a screen name and e-mail address that reveals nothing personal and is not suggestive – john1234, not john13 or QTPie. Predators look for expressions of vulnerability, sadness, loneliness and anger.

Never Allow Your Child to Meet an Internet "Friend"
An Internet "friend" may not be who they say they are. Never allow your children to meet with someone they have met online.

Restrict Internet Access
Allow children to use the Internet only when you are home. Young children do not belong in chat rooms; teens should use only moderated chats.

Put Internet Devices in a Central Location
Internet access should be placed in a family room or other central location, **not in a bedroom**.

Do Not Open Attachments or Links from Strangers
Opening attachments, sharing music and clicking on links in messages from strangers could lead to getting a virus or downloading bad software or a disturbing image

Teach Your Children to Report to You When Feeling Threatened
Teach your children to trust their instincts. If your kids ever feel threatened or scared on the Internet, ask them to tell you immediately without fear of getting into trouble or losing computer privileges

Know the Internet Risks for Kids

Exposure to Adult, Racist or Other Disturbing Material
Children are curious and adventurous, and can stumble upon inappropriate content while searching for something else. This can occur by clicking a link in an instant message or blog, and even when sharing files.

Meeting with Predators Online
Predators use the Internet to find and groom vulnerable children. Frequently their goal is to isolate a child and get them to meet in person.

Invasion of Privacy
Some businesses capture personal information in registration or contest forms. Children might unknowingly volunteer personal information (including photos) to predators and other criminals in blogs, personal web pages or network games.

Careless Use of File-Sharing (or Peer-to-Peer) Programs
Exchanging music, videos and other files with strangers is risky. It can lead to accidentally downloading pornography, viruses or spyware. Some file-sharing programs can also let other users access your computer any time it is online.

Cyber Bullying
Bullying comments and embarrassing images can easily be sent via the Internet.