

# INTERNET WORLD

*CyberSafety for Families*



THE WORLD IS OURS

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OPENING UP THE WORLD

The Internet is an electronic communications network of computers worldwide. Through it persons can access the **World Wide Web**, which is a global system of interlinked documents, images, sounds, and other files. E-mail, cell phones, and some video games are also Internet based.

## 10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE

**1. Educate yourself.** You can't do anything until you understand the power and scope of the Internet. Then you can educate your family.



**2. Establish clear expectations.** Do it together. You will not always be able to monitor their use. Teens and children have access at school and in friends' homes. Knowing why the rules are needed will help them keep the rules on their own.



**3. Open communication.** Talk with your children about what they do on the computer. Sit with them and ask them to show you the sites they visit. Encourage them to ask

questions when they have doubts about the truth or trustworthiness

or appropriateness of a site or e-mail. Stress to your children that they can come to you if they encounter anything inappropriate or questionable online.



**4. Monitor activity.** Trust your children while maintaining cautiousness. Periodically check their Web browsing history and phone usage to help them avoid trouble.



PARENTS CAN ACT TO PROTECT AGAINST

## The Risks

### Truth & Trust

**Truth and trust issues** are inherent in the open nature of the Web. *Anyone can post anything!* The user is the one who must evaluate the content. Is it true? Does it come from a trustworthy source?

### Inappropriate Content

**Inappropriate content** comes from websites promoting pornography, drug use, academic cheating, violence, gambling, and so on.



### Inappropriate Contact

**Inappropriate contact** with people can come through e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms, and websites.

### Malicious Software

**Viruses, worms, spam, and spyware** can damage your computer—and also your family. Such software is designed to harm or to use your information or computer for illegal purposes.

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PROVERBS 22:6

**5. Secure passwords.** Stress the importance of keeping passwords private. Passwords should be hard to guess. If someone else knows their password for e-mail or a social networking site, children can easily become cyberbullying victims.

**6. Use parental controls.** They come with the computer operating system or software and allow you to control when children can be on the computer, what games they can play, and which websites they can access.

**7. Install filters.** If your operating system does not have built-in controls, consider purchasing filtering software. Start with your Internet provider. Some of these programs log all Internet activity, including instant messaging. Also, use available pop-up blockers,

firewalls, password protectors, and website blockers.

**8. Don't open.** Teach your family not to open attachments or click on links from unknown sources.

**9. Stay public.** Keep the Internet-connected computer in a family room or other public part of the home. Position the screen so others in the room can see it. Doing so makes it easier to monitor a child's activities on the computer.

**10. Set limits.** Give children limits on the amount of time and time of day they are allowed to use the Internet and videogames. Encourage them to engage in other activities too.

### *Users in Danger! Warning Signs:*

- Spending excessive time online, especially late at night
- Switching programs or turning off computer when adults approach
- Viewing and/or possessing pornography
- Using an online account that belongs to someone else
- Becoming secretive or withdrawn from family

Talk with your children. Remind them that your concern for their safety is because you love them. Build trust. Keep conversations open and ongoing. Enlist them as partners in their protection.



## Resources

For more information, check these listings or use your browser to search on these topics:

### Internet Information

- **CommonCraft** has brief videos about topics, such as blogs, phishing scams, social networking, Twitter, wikis, and the Web. <http://www.commoncraft.com/videos#technology>

### Internet Safety

- **CyberPatrol** has four very brief and helpful videos—<http://www.cyberpatrol.com/safetyseries.asp>

### Parental Controls

Go to **System Preferences** on your own computer, or use your browser and search for these:

- Windows parental controls
- Mac parental controls

Check also with your cell phone provider or videogame makers.

### Filtering Software

- **NetNanny**—<http://www.netnanny.com/>
- **CyberSitter**—<http://www.cybersitter.com/>
- **Safe Eyes**—<http://www.internetsafety.com/safe-eyes-parental-control-software.php>

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