



Monitoring Your Child's Internet Use

Why do we use the Internet?

What are youth doing on-line?

On-line Gaming

Games are played on-line against players users may or may not know.

Social Networking

Websites that allow users to create personal, interactive web pages that connect to a web of other uses.

Chat Rooms

Discussion forum that is usually based on a specific theme that allows users to chat in "real time."

Instant Messenger

Users chat one-on-one in "real time."

Blogs

A place on-line for users to ask questions or voice their personal thoughts and options.

YouTube

Popular video sharing site in which anyone can upload and share video content.

Access to information

- News
- Blogs
- Podcasts

Access to entertainment

- Music
- Movies
- Videos

Access to communication

- Email
- Chat rooms
- Instant messenger
- Social networking

The internet is not inherently good or bad. It is all in how we use it.

Dangers in Cyberspace

Physical Harm—can occur if children or teens decide to meet someone they have met on the Internet in person.

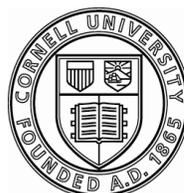
Cyber Bullying—trend in which children and teens use the Internet to spread rumors, post damaging information about someone, or harass others. It often occurs without adults knowing.

Illicit Materials—there is a great deal of inappropriate material for children on the web. In fact, there are more than half a million pornography sites, and that number continues to grow.

Viruses—these can cause your computer to work slowly, work incorrectly, or not work at all. When you look at certain sites or open e-mail from people you don't know, you can unknowingly download viruses and other programs onto your computer.

Identity Theft—is when someone steals your personal information, such as your social security number, to commit fraud. This is the fastest growing crime in the U.S.

Illegal Downloading—there are multiple Internet sites where people can download movies and music without paying. There are stiff penalties if you get caught! You can also be sued by the recording company.



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Tips for Parents and Guardians

- Learn the technology. It will be much easier to monitor what your child is doing if you speak the language.
- Have the computer in a common area of the house, not a bedroom.
- Keep a list of all passwords and log-in names for Internet accounts used in the household.
- Engage in “respectful monitoring.”
 - ⇒ Public online activities are public and always open to review.
 - ⇒ Private communications should be reviewed if there are reasons for concern.
 - ⇒ Use monitoring software as a consequence for misuse or if you feel your child is at risk and is refusing to talk to you.
- Try to respond appropriately and not overreact if your child reports an online concern. Fear of overreaction is the main reason teens do not report online concerns to adults. *(Nancy Willard– Director of the Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use)*

One of the most important things you can do in regard to Internet safety is to start a family conversation.

Tips by Age

- Young children need direct supervision when they are on-line.
- As your children grow, gradually allow greater freedom on-line.
- As your child begins doing more activities on-line, be sure that they understand your family’s rules and expectations.
- Children and teens need to know the rules and parents need to follow through with the consequences.

Internet Safety Rules Your Family May Want to Consider

- Never meet anyone in person that you meet on line without talking to a parent or guardian first.
- Do not open email attachments from people you don’t know.
- Visit only approved chat rooms.
- Do not share your password or personal information that identifies full address, phone number, etc.
- Do not post anything that you would not want the public to see.

Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC)
Families and Communities Together with Schools

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Jefferson County
203 North Hamilton Street
Watertown, New York 13601

Phone: 315-788-8450
Fax: 315-788-8461
Web: www.nyspirc.org
Email: info@nyspirc.org

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