

Family Internet Safety

According to findings reported by the National Security Institute, Inc., among the 36% of children that have made new friends online, 46% would agree to meet up with them over the summer, while 4% do so without their parent's knowledge.

A federal law has been created to help protect your kids while they are using the Internet. It is designed to keep anyone from obtaining your kids' personal information without you knowing about it and agreeing to it first.

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) requires websites to explain their privacy policies on the site and get parents' consent before collecting or using a child's personal information, such as a name, address, phone number, or social security number. The law also prohibits a site from requiring a child to provide more personal information than necessary to play a game or contest. But even with this law, your child's best online protection is you. By talking to your child about potential online dangers and monitoring his or her computer use, you'll be helping your child to surf the Internet safely.

- Become computer literate and learn how to block objectionable material.
- Be familiar with the internet and how it is used.
- Always keep your computer in a well viewed place.
- Share an email account with your child so you can monitor messages.
- Spend time online together to teach your child appropriate online behavior.
- Forbid your child from entering private chat rooms; block them with safety features provided by your Internet service provider or with special filtering software. Be aware that posting messages to chat rooms reveals your child's email address to others.
- Check up on the internet whereabouts of your children.
- Find out what, if any, online protection is offered by your child's school, after-school center, friends' homes, or any place where he or she could use a computer without your supervision.
- Forward copies of obscene or threatening messages you or your child receives to your Internet service provider.
- Call the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at (800) 843-5678 if you are aware of the transmission, use, or viewing of child pornography online. Contact your local law enforcement agency or the FBI if your child has received child pornography via the Internet.
- Set clear rules regarding internet use that are understood and reinforced, such as:
 - √ Never trade personal photographs in the mail or scanned photographs over the Internet.
 - √ Never reveal personal information, such as address, phone number, or school name or location. Use only a screen name. Never agree to meet anyone from a chat room in person.
 - √ Never respond to a threatening email or message.
 - √ Always tell a parent about any communication or conversation that was scary.
 - √ If your child has a new "friend," insist on being "introduced" online to that friend.
- Follow the rules you set, as well as those set by your Internet service provider.

Parent resources:

SafeKids.com

getnetwise.org

http://disney.go.com/corporate/legal/safety_tips.html