Internet Safety

The Internet provides many useful resources for our students. For example, students may seek information for a school project using online databases, articles, and even blogs. Children may also look for entertainment on the web, visiting sites to download music or play games online. As they get into middle and high school, children may wish to use the Internet for social purposes, using sites like Facebook, video-chatting tools, blogs, instant messaging, and email. When visiting these sites, they may interact with others, share information about themselves, or come across content that is not age-appropriate. This raises many safety concerns. Luckily, there are ways to help children to behave responsibly and safely online.

Talking with children about how to use the Internet responsibly is the best way to ensure that they have a safe online experience. Discuss what they are doing online and help them to find suitable sites that will allow them to do it. Tell them to safeguard their personal information, never giving out their addresses, phone numbers, or passwords to strangers online. Remind them that once they upload something, like a photo or a comment, they have put it out there for others to access. Communicate about respecting the rights of others online as well. Posting photographs or information about others may be bullying and can have serious consequences.

As a parent, you may choose to take steps to monitor your child’s online activity. You can put their computer or device in a common living space or pop into their room now and then and check in. Also, you could check their browser history to see what sites they were using. Lastly, there are privacy settings, safe-search settings, and filtering software that can be used if you wish.

Even if you are monitoring your child online, let them know that they can talk to you about anything suspicious or troubling that they encounter on the web. Keeping the lines of communication open is always one of the best ways to keep kids safe. Below are some resources that contain helpful tips for starting this conversation and other ways to ensure that your child safe online experience.

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Please see the next page for helpful resources.
Helpful Websites for Internet Safety

Yahoo’s family pledge for online safety

This site contains lots of information for parents of kids of all ages.
http://www.commonsensemedia.org/advice-for-parents

Another site with lots of information about all types of technology
http://www.netsmartz.org/Parents

This site is an Internet safety game for younger children

PBS created this online game to teach children about Internet safety
http://pbskids.org/webonauts/

This site has lots of safety tips and links to safe websites for kids
http://www.4kids.org/safesurf/kids/tips.shtml

From video tutorials about Internet safety to keeping your computer safe from viruses, this site has a lot.
http://www.getnetwise.org/