Tips on Cell Phone Use

1. Take precautions with your child's cell phone.
2. Be specific about cell phone use and set up specific rules about how and when the phone will be used. Set a limit on how much time children can use each month and how many text messages they can send and receive.
3. Emphasize and enforce the rule that teens must follow all laws when driving and using a cell phone.
4. Review school policies and agreements regarding cell phone usage on school grounds during the school day and after school.
5. Explain potential legal consequences of sexting.
6. Make the child aware texting reveals your phone number to whomever you send a message.
7. Children should:
   -**know** that predators can also send messages and call to arrange meetings.
   -**know** that if they receive a bullying or threatening text message, they should report it immediately to a parent or trusted adult
   -not answer a call from a number that they are not familiar with or not expecting.
8. Review your service plan to learn which features can be blocked to protect children.

Resources for Parents

General Internet Safety Guides

www.onguardonline.org

www.NetSafeKids.org

www. pollyklaas.org

www. willcountysao.com

www.cyberangels.org

Internet Filtering Software

http://kids.getnetwise.org

Internet and Cell Phone Safety

www.NetSmartz.org

www.microsoft.com/protect

www.safeteens.com
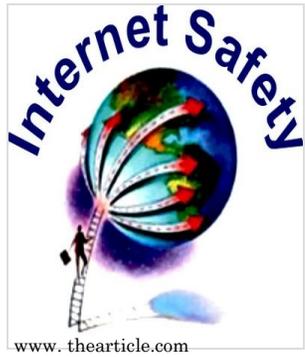
www.safekids.com

www.netparents.org

PARENT GUIDE

Internet Safety
for
Children & Teens

Diocese of Joliet
16555 Weber Road Crest Hill, IL 60403
www.dioceseofjoliet.org

The amount of information available on the Internet continues to grow at an astounding rate. Opportunities abound for social networking, building online profiles, sending video and photos, sharing ideas and thoughts through blogs, tweets. These ways of socializing and communicating can be fulfilling and worthwhile, yet they do come with certain risks of inappropriate content, contact and conduct. This brief guide attempts to provide general information and where to go for additional information.

General Parent Guidelines

1. **Talk to Your Children**—children of all ages (including toddlers) see parents using multiple electronic devices. Children as young as 2 are now using computers for learning. As soon as your child is using an electronic device, it is time to talk to them about online behavior, safety, and security.

    How to begin

    -Start Early
    -Create an Honest and Open Environment
    -Initiate conversations
    -Communicate your values
    -Be Patient

2. **Learn How to Monitor What Your Children Do Online**
    There are many good sites that help parents learn how monitor, control, and block electronic use such as getnetwise.com. The site has many video tutorials, extensive tools that parents can use and a wealth of information.

For Parents of Children (Aged 5-12)

1. Keep the computer in a public place with the screen facing outward.

2. Establish family rules and guidelines to include:
    a. setting limits on how much time they spend online
    b. no personal information given
    c. no school information disclosed
    d. review of pictures posted.

3. Reinforce the dangers of and penalties for sharing personal or school information. Many schools have policies against students posting information about the school, including the school name, teacher names, etc. Carefully review your school's policies and agreements with your child.

4. Prohibit any meeting in person with someone he/she knows only online, unless you are present.

5. Inform your children that you will monitor Internet use, messaging, and social networking in order to keep them safe.

For Parents of Teenagers (Aged 13-17)

1. Teens have more Internet access through cell phones, mobile devices, or friend's computers, as well as more time to themselves. Consequently, it is not realistic to always be in the same room as your teens whey they are online. Reinforce the concept that you and other family members can walk in at anytime, and ask them what they are doing online.

2. Emphasize the concept of credibility and not everything the see on the Internet is true.

3. Let them know that everything on the Interent is public and that it is close to impossible to "take something back once it is posted"

4. Share stories using real examples of teens who have been harmed or hurt because of unsafe online practices .

5. Remind your teen that behind screen names, avatars, profiles are real people with values and feelings. They need to be mindful of what they say and exercise good judgment..

6. Inform your teen that many institutions and companies routinely comb social networking sites to determine if potential job applicants fit their expectations.

7. Remind students that photos can be as damaging to one's reputation as words. Review pictures that are posted.

8. Meeting someone contacted online carries considerable risk and is not advised. If a meeting is arranged adhere to the following:
    a. do not meet alone.
    b. go with a trusted adult..
    c. meet in a public place.
    d. if not what you expected, walk away and tell a parent or trusted adult.

9. Do not overreact if and when you find out that your teen has done something online of which you do not approve.

10. Reinforce the expectation that parents monitor Internet use and that safety rules must be followed.

11. If teens confide in you about something scary or inappropriate that they encountered online, your first response should not be to take away Internet privileges. Try to be supportive and work with them to help prevent this from happening in the future.