

Internet Safety Tips for Parents

One positive, emerging aspect of education is the readiness of Internet-based learning. Many of your children have grown up with technology- that is all they know. It is their norm, affecting them in daily interactions and for many, will shape their futures. What is critical in parenting children of the Internet generation is 'early intervention and awareness'. Just as we teach our children how to cross a street, tie their shoes, and say 'please/thank you', we need to extend these life tools to our children, via their first Internet-based devices (iPods, game consoles, PCs'). Ultimately, your Internet role modeling loudly mirrors how your children will cope, adapt and learn about the technology. Please take the time and 'LISTEN' to your children- they will teach you a lot about their virtual worlds.

Here are some tips that will help you build safe and caring Internet experiences for your family (please discuss *as a family and tape it to the fridge at home for easy reflection*):

1. Set clear rules (3 to 5) about the Internet for your child's safety and best interest. Work together to create realistic options that work for the entire family. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT HAVE 24/7 ACCESS TO THE INTERNET, e.g., Smart Phones texting messages from 1 to 6 AM.
 2. Keep the computer, laptop, and devices in a common area of the house (kitchen). Make yourself available when your children are online, until they are old enough to use the Internet unsupervised.
 3. Do not threaten to take away the use of the Internet completely. Set reasonable consequences when/if your child breaks the rules. Kids can easily find ways to get online (a friend's house).
 4. 'LISTEN don't LECTURE.' Promote open communication about your child's online activities. Show your children you are willing to listen, even if you do not have all the answers.
 5. Encourage and welcome your child to come to you if they surf to an inappropriate site (pornographic, violent). DO NOT overreact with anger: teach him/her to find a solution.
 6. Be 'tech-savvy' and stay informed with the changing technology your children use. Make use of Internet safety resources like: a) [Media Smarts Canada](#) b) [Netsmartz Parents](#) c) [Common Sense Media for Parents](#)
 7. Be a leader and aware of what 'you' are posting online. Model the behaviour that you want your child to do online.
 8. Know your children's online friends. It is important to know who your children are speaking to online and ensure that they never meet anyone in-person without you going with them.
 9. Teach what you know. The Internet is only a new medium for traditional parenting lessons. Bullies, strangers and harsh content online exist just like in the real world.
 10. Children should only post personal information with a parent/guardian's permission: THINK CAREFULLY before posting any pictures, names, addresses, etc. because once you push 'SEND', it's in cyberspace forever!
- PS. Post your family rules on your fridge, too! Everyone always hangs out there!

~ Our thanks to SD68 for sharing this list.

Internet Safety Tips for Parents cont...

Some helpful websites for parents on Cyber Safety, Cyber Ethics and Cyber Bullying:

- 🌐 [Media Smarts](#) - Canadian stats and info on cyber bullying for parents
- 🌐 [Be Web Aware](#) - Multi-age safety tips
- 🌐 [Cyberbullying](#) – Up to date articles on Sexting, Facebook, Smart Phone Use
- 🌐 [Connect Safely](#) - A Parents' Guide to Facebook (2012)
- 🌐 [Netsmartz](#) – An Extensive Resource for Parents
- 🌐 [Connect ED](#) – Questions Elementary Parents Should Ask
- 🌐 [Parents Want 2 Learn](#) - Resources Guide for all age groups

