

# Kids Safety FAQ's

## **1. Why is it important to have Internet access?**

The Internet is like a giant library, one with thousands of encyclopedias. At any one time there are over a billion pages on the Internet. It offers everything from current news and weather reports to information on almost any topic you can imagine. While some of these topics are tasteless, inappropriate or even dangerous for children, several exist that can help your children with homework, musical and artistic studies, and exploration of other countries and cultures.

## **2. I trust my children. Why do I need to talk to them about Internet safety?**

Trusting your children is great, but it's not them you need to worry about trusting-it's everyone else on the Internet. Just as there are some bad drivers out there, there are some "bad" Internet users-those who will pretend to be someone they are not online in order to get closer to children. Your children will listen to you and take your advice about safety with strangers wherever they go, online and off-line.

## **3. How can I teach my children about Internet safety when I do not understand the Internet?**

Safety on the Internet isn't about technology-it's about common sense. Just as you wouldn't want your child to meet and share private matters with a stranger in the real world, you wouldn't want them to do so online. So, talking with your children about safety on the Internet just means talking to them about common sense. The bottom line is that your children shouldn't do anything online that they wouldn't do in the real world.

## **4. Are there any laws in cyberspace?**

Generally, anything that is illegal off-line is illegal online, too. There are laws that govern cyberspace, and both Federal and State law enforcement agencies devote units to enforce those laws, although we need more law enforcement officials for that purpose.

## **5. My child often receives e-mails with links to adult sites. Does this mean he's been visiting pornography sites?**

No. Even if your child does not visit adult sites, sometimes the adult sites come looking for visitors. They do this by sending out bulk, unsolicited e-mail, called "spam." So, before you punish your child, know that the unwanted emails are probably not a result of your child's online surfing. There are no federal laws governing spam yet, but surfing online anonymously will help reduce the spam your child receives.

## **6. What can I tell my child about chatting online?**

Chatting online, like other aspects of Internet use, should be governed by common sense. Remind your child that people in chat rooms are strangers and are not always who they say they are. Your child should never give out any personal information, including his or her real name, address, school, or other "clues" which might allow someone to locate them. Again, the bottom line is that your children will take what you teach them wherever they go. Teach them to use the filter between their ears.