



## INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS (MIDDLE SCHOOL)

*from*

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### **If you have a profile on a social networking site\*:**

- Set up profile to Private or Friends Only – otherwise you are giving cyber predators permission to view it.
- Only add people to your friends list that you already know.
- Protect your personal information as well as personal information about your friends.
- If you are too young to be on a site, don't lie about your age to join.
- Delete mean or embarrassing comments.
- Beware of invitations through comments or bulletins to view videos or click on links ...they may be attempts to capture your password and introduce a virus.

### **Remember that anyone can lie online. A stranger could be a cyber predator if:**

- The stranger asks for your picture.
- The stranger invites you to view his web cam.
- The stranger asks if you are alone.
- The stranger talks about sexual matters.
- The stranger wants to meet you in person.

### **If you are thinking about posting your pictures on a public site, think about this:**

Once you have placed your picture on a public Internet site, it's out there forever and there is no taking it back.

- Software manipulation of photographs makes it possible for that photo to be altered and put back on the Internet or traded among child pornographers.
- Be anonymous: Don't give away personal information in your user name or screen name. Don't use passwords that are easy to guess (i.e., the name of your pet).

\*Social networking sites include: MySpace, FaceBook, Bebo, etc.

## Is Your Computer Protected?

- **What do you do with email from unknown sources?** Opening an email from an unknown source, particularly if there is an attachment, may introduce a virus that could permanently damage your computer.
- **Do you post your email on public sites?** Spammers can find your email on the Internet and use it to send you junk email.
- **Does it have anti-virus software installed?** Protect your files and computer from virus attacks that can prove disastrous.
- **Do you have a firewall?** One of the best ways to protect your computer from the ravages of hackers is to install a firewall.
- **Do you know the dangers of file sharing?** Someone could infect your computer with a virus or access information from your hard drive. This could be particularly devastating if financial information is stored on the computer.
- **Do you forward emails from unknown sources?** You may think you are being helpful but by forwarding the email, you have just provided your friend's email address to an unknown source. And, if there is an attachment, you may have forwarded a virus.
- **Do you disconnect the Internet when it's not in use?** This is the best way to prevent anyone from using the Internet's "two-way street" to get into your computer.

### SOME ONLINE BEHAVIORS ARE AGAINST THE LAW...

- ✓ Many view piracy and plagiarism as stealing. Illegal downloading of movies and music can have serious consequences. If you recognize that stealing a CD or DVD from a store is wrong, don't steal online.
- ✓ There is an area of the law called Intellectual Properties; learn about it. Copying information from the Internet can be illegal and there are risks.
- ✓ Learn more:

[www.cybercrime.gov/rules](http://www.cybercrime.gov/rules)

[www.cybercitizenship.org](http://www.cybercitizenship.org)

[www.copyrightkids.org](http://www.copyrightkids.org)

[www.bsacybersafety.com/index.cfm](http://www.bsacybersafety.com/index.cfm)