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Guide to Keeping Kids Safe Online

There is no doubt the internet is a great source of knowledge and entertainment. It also provides other services such as chat rooms, email and other forms of communication.

Unfortunately, the internet also poses many dangers, especially to children who are unaware of them. Bravehearts have created this information sheet to help parents protect their children and minimize the risks of being affected by the hazards of the internet.



Simple Tips Before Allowing Your Children Online

- ♥ If you don't already, get to know the Internet. Its important to familiarise yourself with what is available to your child online.
- ♥ Talk to your children about the importance of safety online & show them how to implement this.
- ♥ Connect to a family-friendly internet service provider & use a family-friendly search engine.
- ♥ Set up the computer in a public area in the home - making supervision easier.
- ♥ Install safety software (anti-virus, filter and spyware software).
- ♥ Reassure your children that you are there if they need help.
- ♥ Create a contract or online rules with your children.
- ♥ Take your child seriously if they report anything unsafe on the Internet and forward your concerns on. These can be sent to your Internet Service Provider as well as to the relevant authority listed on the back of this Information sheet.

Kids Online

Pre-School Aged Children

This age group are just beginning to learn how the computer works and the joy it can have. This includes visiting children's websites and joining them with friendly emails to family & friends. Be sure to sit with your child during this learning stage on the computer and chose websites which are suitable for your child's age group.

Primary School Aged Children

Children of this age feel more confident using other services provided by the internet such as chat rooms, with some deciding to search for prohibited material. Your children will also notice marketing material. It is extremely important for your children to know not to give out personal information or details. Spend some time researching the Internet and how to keep your child safe (see Bravehearts' website for more information). By making their time on the internet a family activity, you

will be able to maintain very close supervision, while teaching them safe online behavior.

High School aged Children

This is the age group where the internet is a necessity to assist your children with research for projects and homework. Your child will want more independence and freedom while using the internet, while their email and instant messaging contacts will grow. This age group may also feel they want to explore prohibited material. While it is more difficult to keep tight supervision on what your teenager is doing online, it is vital that you stay in touch with them and discuss any issues that may occur. Keeping the computer in a public area in your home can assist with this. Get to know the services your teenager uses, and develop reasonable computer usage rules. with them.

What are the risks?

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|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Exposure to inappropriate material, such as pornography or violence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Physical danger, such as meeting up with strangers met online ♥ Unwanted advertising & marketing towards children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Financial risks ♥ Harassment & bullying ♥ Exploitation ♥ Exposure of personal information & privacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Unreliable information ♥ Spam ♥ Viruses |
|---|--|--|---|

Chat

Chat rooms are becoming more popular with children & teenagers as there is an element of anonymity. This means they can talk with more confidence than they normally might have in a face-to-face situation. They can also pretend to be someone else. This can make your child susceptible to cyber stalkers who can skillfully pretend to be someone they are not. Children also need to know they should never give out personal information such as name, address, phone number or bank details.

Phones with Internet

Children with mobile phones give their parents piece of mind knowing they can contact them at any time, but there are some dangers with certain phones on the market. Many mobile phones have access to the internet, just like a computer. This creates the same internet safety issues, except this situation makes it near impossible to supervise your child at all times. If you decide that your child needs a mobile phone, make sure the device you purchase for them is appropriate for their age and experience. There are certain blocks you can put on the phone to stop the user accessing the internet and Bluetooth. This in turn will protect your child against hackers who can track your child's location as the phone is 'always on.'

INTERNET SAFETY CONTACTS

When a child is in immediate danger of abuse:

Web: www.crimestoppers.com.au

Phone: 000 or Crimestoppers on 1800 005 555

Report suspected cases of child abuse or contact with paedophiles to:

Online Child Sex Exploitation Team - a unit of the Australian Federal Police.

Web: www.afp.gov.au

Phone: (07) 5553 8717

Report online criminal activity:

Australian High Tech Crime Centre - a unit of the Australian Federal Police.

Web: www.afp.gov.au or www.ahtcc.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6256 7777

Report inappropriate or illegal online content to:

Australian Broadcasting Authority

Web: www.aba.gov.au

Phone: 1800 22 6667 (free call Aus only)

Online complaint form: www.aba.gov.au/what/online/www.asp

For help and advice about online privacy issues:

Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner Australia

Web: www.privacy.gov.au

Phone: 1300 363 992 (local call anywhere in Aus)

Make Your Computer Safe By...

- ♥ Installing safety & security software. Be sure to keep it updated
- ♥ Use internet & spam filters
- ♥ Install parental monitoring software
- ♥ Use pop-up stoppers
- ♥ Enable internet browser security
- ♥ Monitor programs that are downloaded onto your computer
- ♥ Check the internet usage history
- ♥ Use a family-friendly internet service provider

Additional information for your child:

You should NEVER:

- ♥ Never tell anyone your name, address, phone number or school
- ♥ Never send a photo of yourself to anyone
- ♥ Never tell anyone your credit card or bank details
- ♥ Never make plans to meet anyone you find online - people you meet online aren't always who they claim they are
- ♥ Never talk to anyone who is nasty or makes you feel uncomfortable

You should ALWAYS:

- ♥ Be careful who you talk to in chat rooms or on instant messenger
- ♥ Ask permission to use chat rooms
- ♥ Tell your parents or carer if someone says something to you in an email or chat room that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- ♥ Stay away from websites that are not meant for children
- ♥ Remember that people are not always as they seem online

For information about psychological issues such as internet addiction disorder:

Australian Psychological Society

Web: www.psychology.org.au

Phone: 1800 333 497

For help on child sexual assault issues :

Bravehearts Inc.

Phone: (07) 32904474

Web: www.bravehearts.org.au
www.ditto.com.au