

Internet Safety:

A Parent/Teacher Guide to Understanding Computer Usage by Today's Youth

By

Jamie Newman MA, Manager
Professional Training and Development
Childhelp USA/Virginia

jnewman@childhelpusa.org

703-208-1531

Computer Access Among Youths

Kaiser Foundation, 2005

Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year Olds

- ◆ 98% have used a computer and 96% have gone online
- ◆ 86% have a computer at home
- ◆ 74% have an internet connection at home
- ◆ 31% have a computer in their bedroom
- ◆ 20% have internet access in their bedroom

Computer Usage Among Youths

Kaiser Foundation, 2005

Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year Olds

- ◆ Young people spend about 1 hour each day on the computer doing non-school related activities
- ◆ The most common activity that young people do online is IM and play games
- ◆ 31% of all young people have pretended to be older to gain access to a website

What are youths doing online?

◆ School Work

- Accessing their classes
- Research for Projects

◆ Socializing

- Communicating with friends (known and “unknown”)
 - ◆ Email, Chat, IM, Gaming, Blogs

Socializing-Pros

- ◆ Most youths use the internet to make plans with their friends etc.-it keeps kids "in the loop"
- ◆ Youths are able to "speak" to others their own age from all different backgrounds, countries, cultures, race/ethnicities, religions etc.

Socializing Online-Cons/Risks

- ◆ **Solicited by predators**
 - IM, e-mail, chat, cell or telephone, in person
- ◆ **Exposure to Inappropriate Material**
 - Pornography, hate, violence, misinformation
- ◆ **Harassment, Stalking, Bullying**
- ◆ **Scammed or Defrauded**
 - Online purchases
- ◆ **Access things that may be dangerous**
 - Drugs, Alcohol, Guns, Gambling

Unwanted Online Solicitations

*U.S. Department of Education, 2001
Highlights of the Youth Internet Safety Survey*

- ◆ 19% of young internet users received an unwanted sexual solicitation online in the previous year
- ◆ 5% received a solicitation that made them feel very or extremely upset
- ◆ 3% received an aggressive solicitation (attempt for offline contact)
- ◆ 2/3 were female
- ◆ 75% of the solicitations occurred while the child was at home almost all of the rest occurred at a friend's house.
- ◆ Only 1/2 of the solicitations were reported by the children (to anyone)
- ◆ Of those who reported, 1/4 told their parents.

Two Types of Predators

- ◆ Immediate Solicitors
- ◆ Groomers

Immediate Solicitors

- ◆ This is the predator who engages a youth in conversation and:
 - May or may not misrepresent themselves
 - Quickly begins to sexualize the conversation
 - Immediately sends pornographic photos
 - Tries to lure the youth to a private chat room
 - Tries to get the youth to speak to them on the phone
 - Tries to meet the youth in person

“Groomers”

- ◆ Groomers target vulnerable youths and make them feel special.
- ◆ They usually misrepresent themselves as being the opposite sex and close in age.
- ◆ They may take months getting to know the youth and gaining their trust.
- ◆ As they get further into the relationship they may begin to hint that they are older.
- ◆ They may start sending pornography.
- ◆ They will start to push for contact via phone and then finally in person.

Signs That A Child May Be At Risk


A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety, FBI

- ◆ Spends a lot of time online at night.
- ◆ You find pornography on their computer.
- ◆ Receives phone calls from men you don't know or is making calls to numbers you don't recognize.
- ◆ Receives mail, gifts, packages from someone you don't know (web cams).
- ◆ Turns computer monitor off or quickly changes the screen when you enter the room.
- ◆ Child becomes withdrawn from the family.
- ◆ Child is using an online account belonging to someone else.

How to Prevent Online Predators From Harming Children

“In each and every case when children encounter Internet sexual predators offline, they go willing to the meeting...That means that we can prevent 100% of these crimes”

-Perry Aftab, Esq.
Executive Director WiredSafety



Blogs

- ◆ www.Myspace.com
- ◆ www.XANGA.com
- ◆ www.aol.com-Hometown
- ◆ www.facebook.com

Blogs, IM, & Chatting

What are children saying and doing while they are online?



Xanga.com

Middle School, VA

Children use the computer even when they are not supposed to!

"HEYY PPL man i have been grounded for like week i hAVENT been able to use the computer for like a week and some daYS mannn im boredddddoredddddoreddddd our dance is comin up in like 4 dAYS YAY LOL o well gtg b4 i get caught using the computer pccccccccc"

From a 13 year old (USA)

Children discuss personal and
sexually explicit topics...
They also talk to strangers

*Would you ever....Kill someone, have sex, Get drunk,
Star in a porn video.....*

IM A Stranger

Answer: Who hasn't

Middle School, VA posted 2000

Children give out personal/identifying information online

my life!!

well, i am (age) but about to be (age)! (Actual Date) is my birthday!! i live in (city, VA)! i go to _____middle school and i am in the (gives grade) grade there! i play (sport) year round on the (gives league/team)! we better rock this year! i also (sport) in the (seasons) !!the thing i like to do the most is jsut be with all my friends!! hangin out anywhere. even at the tot loT!!! my tot lot gang!! hehehe! online i only have like 3 major sn that i go on and they are (provides two screen names) and (email)@aol.com~ this is my email address! thats about it about me!!!

Online Safety Rules for Parents

- ◆ Keep the computer in a common area
- ◆ Make sure your child does not spend all of his/her free time online
- ◆ Learn about computers so you can enjoy them with your child
- ◆ Watch your children when they are online, see where they go and who they talk to
 - Get to know their online friends
- ◆ Communicate with your child
 - Tell them they cannot meet someone off line unless you are with them
 - Make sure your children feel comfortable coming to you
 - Let them know that people are not always who they say they are online

Online Safety Rules for Children

www.safekids.com

- ◆ Never Give out Personal Information
- ◆ Tell parents immediately if information makes them uncomfortable
- ◆ Never agree to meet someone in person that you met online-unless your parents agree and will come with you
- ◆ Never send a picture or post a picture of yourself online
- ◆ Never respond to messages that make you feel uncomfortable
- ◆ Never give out your password

Some Help for Parents

www.software4parents.com

◆ Monitoring Software

- Allows parents to see what kids are doing online. You can monitor with or without a child knowing.
- Records email, IM, chat sessions, websites, passwords, some record every keystroke.
- Can set limits as to how much time a child spends online.

◆ Blocking and Filtering Software

- Blocks kids from inappropriate websites based upon the actual site or filters using keywords. Some filter outgoing information so children cannot give out personal information.

Help from your ISP

(Internet Service Provider)

- ◆ Many ISP's have their own parental controls already available.
 - Unfortunately they come turned off
 - Or parents are not computer savvy and therefore have their children install software.
- ◆ If you cannot find the parental controls: Contact your ISP-you pay for this service!
- ◆ AOL, Comcast and Verizon all have parental controls

See handout for specifics

Once you have the information, how can you decipher it?

- ◆ www.transl8it.com

- Provides an actual translator
- Deciphers emoticons (smiley faces)

- ◆ www.familyinternet.com

Acronyms and Abbreviation Used in IM

- ◆ BBL-Be Back Later
- ◆ CID-Consider It Done
- ◆ LOL-Laugh Out Loud
- ◆ POS-Parent Over Shoulder

Note About Chat Rooms

- ◆ There are two main differentiations between chat rooms
 - Monitored versus Unmonitored
 - Under 18 versus Over 18

Cautions

Predators are sneaky and smart, they can lurk in monitored chat rooms and use your child's screen name or profile to find them outside of the chat room

(either through IM or e-mail)

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It is very easy for your child to pretend to be over 18!!!!

Cell Phone Caution

- ◆ Children use cell phones to:
 - Talk
 - Access the internet (e-mail, chat, IM)
 - Text Message
 - Send and receive pictures
 - -Download music
- ◆ Currently cell phone companies (sprint/nextel, verizon, cingular) offer NO parental controls, tracking or blocking features.
 - A law set to go into effect On January 1st in Utah states that all cellular companies that offer internet must have parental controls such as blocking, monitoring or filtering.

Closing Thoughts

The best way to prevent internet crimes is to monitor your child's internet use!

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