

Internet Safety: A Practical Guide 4 Parents

Cyberbullying: Could Your Child be a Victim? by Newman Lanier

As you open the front door, you hear your daughter run to the bathroom and slam the door. Typically, she is at the computer doing homework or chatting with friends, but now you see the words "I hate you. You are the ugliest person I know and you should die". Cyberbullying is when one child teases, threatens, or insults another child via messaging or internet communications. It just happened to your family, but why?

It seems inevitable that young people will be aggressive or violent with each other. Children bully each other. But online, the bullying can be vicious, and unfortunately, easily perpetrated. According to the CDC, there was a 50% rise in cyberbullying, between 2000 and 2005. Students feel emboldened by the power of mass communications. They have the ability to create messages, yet don't have

the experience, judgment, or responsibility to use this new power properly. A bullying attack from one person to another can now be transmitted to the entire school. The nature of our modern communication tools amplifies the severity of the attack and the hurt caused. The internet is seen as a private and secure world with friends happily sharing personal thoughts and stories. This happens away from teachers and parents, and perhaps that is the allure. However, if one of the friends is slighted or turns aggressive, it's likely to provoke a cyberbullying attack and there are no adults to intervene or to provide authority.

Out of the bathroom, your daughter brushes past you to close the message. Her red eyes



and flushed face tell you she has been crying. Lucky for you, she wants to talk. Often children won't reveal how hurt they are and will refuse to talk, however this only leads to the cycle of attack and retaliation.

Counselors advise victims to calm down, tell an adult, and to "Put down the mouse and step away from the computer". For more information on what to do about cyberbullying visit www.stopcyberbullying.org.

Top Ten Tips 4 Parents

1. Talk to your child about his or her online life.
2. Get savvy! Learn about Internet culture and lingo. Surf the Net!
3. Protect your passwords and other login info!
4. Install filtering software.
5. Search smart! Limit inappropriate results by using logic.
6. Get a Facebook or MySpace account if your child has one!
7. Talk to your child about the Internet as a public forum.
8. Computers, like TV, should have a time limit.
9. Your child should assume no privacy when it comes to Internet
10. Place the computer in a central location.

Learning About Internet Safety On-the-Go by Ian Jones

The best technique that you can use to keep your family safe on the Internet is to learn. With work and a family, who has time or the drive to learn? Podcasting is a great way to "learn on the go."

What is a "podcast?" A **podcast** is an Internet radio show that can be downloaded as an mp3 file. You only need a player to listen (not necessarily an iPod - you can use your computer or any mp3 player).

Two great podcasts that offer

excellent information regarding Internet Safety are **Jumping Monkeys** www.twit.tv/jm and the **Internet Safety Podcast** www.internetsafetypodcast.com.

Jumping Monkeys was created by Internet guru Leo Laporte, who produces a number of other podcasts. Jumping Monkeys is aimed at parents who are trying to keep up with the digital age. He and his co-host, Megan Morrone, discuss the Internet, safety and parenting in general.

The Internet Safety Podcast is

hosted by Dr. Charles Knutson and Joe Brockbank, who are "just two nerds who want to help parents embrace technology and help keep families safe." They offer information and strategies for even the most basic users.

Both are weekly podcasts that can be downloaded using iTunes (www.itunes.com) software or directly from the website. Once downloaded, you can copy to your mp3 player, pop in your headphones and learn on-the-go!

Enjoy!

All I Want for Christmas is Safer Searches by Kara Lee

It's the Christmas season once again! This morning I woke up and decided that I would pull out my daughter's Christmas list. I decided that I would look on the internet to see if I could find any of the things she wanted and order them instead of making a trip to stores that are sure to be overcrowded this time of year. I sat down at my computer and typed in "Girls Toys."

The first site that came up was www.girl-toys.net. Girls toys. net is a site that can be accessed by anyone "21 and up" and features very graphic content which include adult toys. I began to think, suppose this had been my daughter conducting this search and given this response. What if she, not-knowing and/or curious, had decided to enter into the site. There are warnings for entering the site but she would have been ultimately just one click away from being exposed to some very graphic content. After all, Malory is a faceless user, how would the site developers know if she were 21 or not? I thought, what can I do to prevent my daughter from having this happen to her? I began to search the net for searching tips. I came across the term "Boolean Logic." Boolean



Be Careful! Even the most innocent searches can yield inappropriate results!

logic, a form of searching, consists of three logical operators: and, or & not which can be used in searches to cut down results. The original web results showed 140,000,000. I entered a second search of "girls and toys not sex toys" and the web results showed 21,600,000. The search did not completely filter out adult content but it decreased the chances of them showing up in the top ten results which are ideally what people will look at first. Parents really need to become understand how easily these things can be put into a child's view. Learning how to search the internet has become an important aspect for parenting school age children. Students spend lots of time in computer labs searching for information to use for their school work. They need to know how to cut down on the amount of time they spend researching. The internet is "the new main source." So it is important to learn more sufficient ways to search as more

and more websites are developed daily.

<http://www.internettutorials.net/boolean.html>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/internet/search/general.htm>

Some Helpful Resources 4 Parents

Free Antivirus and Spyware

- AVG Antivirus (<http://free.grisoft.com/>)
- Spybot Search & Destroy (<http://www.safer-networking.org/en/index.html>)
- AdAware (<http://www.lavasoftusa.com/>)

Internet Safety Sites

- iSafe (www.isafe.org)
- NetSmartz (www.netsmartz.org)
- North Carolina Attorney General (www.ncdoj.gov)

Kid-friendly Search Engines

- Kidsclick (www.kidsclick.com)
- Ask Jeeves For Kids (www.askforkids.com)
- Yahoooligans (www.yahoooligans.com)
- Cyber Sleuth (<http://cybersleuth-kids.com/>)

Podcasts

- The Internet Safety Podcast (www.internetsafetypodcast.com)
- Jumping Monkeys (www.twit.tv/jm)
- TWiT (This Week in Tech) (www.twit.tv)

Safe Searching

- Internet Tutorials (<http://www.internettutorials.net/boolean.html>)

Are You Protected? by Martin Howes



Imagine arriving home from a busy day at work, walking into your office and turning on your computer to enter in the day's invoices and new quotes only to find that your accounting software wont open. You get a heavy feeling in the pit of your stomach as you try to recall when it was that you last backed up your data. Could it be that you've just lost your entire business data because of a computer virus? Not only that, you've also lost your digital music collection, your photo collection, emails, book marked web sites, and your children's homework assignments!

Scary thought isn't it? Get peace of mind, and purchase antivirus software for your computer today. Some things you need to look for in good antivirus programs are: How easy is it to set up and use? How effective is it at finding, isolating and cleaning infected files? Does it report on virus activity? Does it offer help online, via email or through help documentation?

There are many reputable antivirus programs available, and they all offer similar features. In a recent antivirus software review the top ten antivirus programs range from \$24 to \$60 and \$19 to \$50 for yearly subscriptions to make sure you always have the most current protection.

Read the reviews at: <http://anti-virus-software-review.toptenreviews.com>