

Internet safety and information

By: Melody Hicks, MC, LPC

The internet is a wonderful tool for educators, children, teens and adults. It opens the world to so many opportunities to learn and grow. Sadly it also opens the door to sites and people that are harmful. As a parent there are a few things to decide regarding the internet and your children:



1- Your own use and knowledge of the internet. If you want to be mindful of what your child or teen is doing online you need to know at least as much as he/she knows

2- Deciding what age to introduce your child to the internet. Schools are using the internet in classrooms and you want your son or daughter to know how to use a computer and access the internet so you have to decide when and how introduce him/her to the internet



3- Determining how much is “too much” time spent on the computer – on social media, on email, playing games or cruising the internet. Helping your child to balance time on the computer with other activities is very important

4- Learning the signs/signals that whatever your son/daughter is doing on the computer is now a source of distress and he/she needs your help and support

Fortunately there are many resources available to parents to help with all of the decisions and information you need to assist your son/daughter with being safe on the internet. Please read over what each site offers and explore those that can provide you with the information you need to be involved in your child’s internet connections.

<https://www.common sense media.org/videos/pause-think-online#> (for grades K-5 this video goes over how to be safe on the internet and careful about what your child posts. It also suggests finding balance between being online and doing other activities. There are many other videos on a variety of topics also available on this site)

<http://www.ncpc.org/topics/internet-safety/tips-for-parents> (offers some tips specifically for parents but also tips for parents to share with their children)

<http://www.nationalcac.org/prevention/internet-safety-kids.html> (offers tips for teens and children about internet safety)

<https://www.kidpower.org/library/article/cyber-bullying/?gclid=Cj0KEQIA7rmzBRDezri2r6bz1qYBEiQAg-YEtv5scAvfQNTIdacY-osLifU3ZESe8TKc2ldr1FGiHNgaAgTv8P8HAQ> (information for parents & children about cyberbullying – how to prevent it – starting with children so as to prevent problems for the future with teens)

<http://www.safekids.com/kids-rules-for-online-safety/> (this site offers a list to go over with kids – up to pre-teen—regarding the internet. A good list to give to kids and to go over with them as it is very specific and offers a child some clear information/guidelines about using the internet)



http://www.netsafeutah.org/parents/parent_videos.html (site from the state of Utah that has many different videos for all ages of children and teens about the internet, internet safety, how to use the internet appropriately, steps to deal with cyberbullying, etc.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrln8nyVBLU> (Well Cast – video that probably would appeal to pre-teens – has some great tips and is quick and easy to view and understand)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/stepmonster/201004/teens-and-the-internet-how-much-is-too-much> (article that focuses on when is internet use “too much” – signs that there might be a problem—focus is teens and young adults and steps about what a parent can do)

<http://www.internetsafety101.org/internetsafetytools.htm> (this site offers specific tools for use with your computer to block sites; monitor sites, etc. to keep your child safe - from Enough is Enough organization)