

Internet Safety

With internet access being such a huge part in children's lives, it is important that parents and children work together to make sure that everyone has a safe experience.

The internet is now an important tool for both learning and social interaction. With the proper guidance and supervision, there is no reason that your child cannot learn and practice safe internet habits.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is simply a form of bullying that take place with the assistance of technology. This can include anything over instant messenger, social media, texting, or email that was sent with malicious intent. Cyberbullying can happen at any time during the day or night, any time of the week. Sometimes it can be difficult to find the source of the bullying.

Children that are being cyberbullied will display the same effects as a child who is being bullied in person. They might be reluctant to go to school, their performance might drop, they might have health problems related to stress, and they might start using drugs or alcohol.

Children and teens who do cyberbully often do not fully understand the consequences of their actions. Cyberbullying can lead to punishment both at school, and with the law. They also might not understand that once you put something out on the internet or through text, it can be extremely difficult to get back.

To learn more about Cyberbullying, please visit [StopBullying.Gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov)

Social Media

Almost everyone has a social media account now. These networking sites can be very positive places that encourage children and teens to interactive with friends and family. Social networking sites however, can be very appealing to predators. Kids put lots of personal information on these sites, so getting private information is often easy. Kids also will put up pictures of themselves, and these can sometimes be seen as suggestive to child sexual predators. Children don't realize that if they put inappropriate pictures or information on their profile, a lot of times it can be exploited and they won't be able to get it back.

You can learn more about social networking safety through the [National Crime Prevention Council](#)

General Internet Safety

- Keep your kids involved. Talk with them about why it is important to practice proper internet safety, and keep an open line of communication so your children feel comfortable coming to you with internet safety issues.
- Monitor your children's internet use. Make sure your computer is in a common area of the house.
- Encourage your children not to post personal or identifying information online.
- Check on your kid's internet profiles to make sure they are being safe and appropriate and not disclosing too much information.
- Ask your kids about who they are talking to when they go online.
- Tell your kids to only interact with people that they know in real life.
- Make sure your children create strong and safe passwords that can't be easily guessed or hacked.
- Encourage your children to not gossip or spread any rumors online. Remind them that once something is out there, it can be very hard to get back.
- Teach your kids about setting high privacy settings.
- Don't forget that most modern cell share the same functions as computers.

You can read more about internet safety by visiting the FBI's [Scams and Safety webpage](#).

You can get your kids involved in Internet Safety by having them visit the [Safe Online Surfing Site](#). This site uses games and activities to teach 3rd through 8th Graders about using good judgment when surfing online.