



# Internet Safety

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## Tangipahoa Parish School System

### Tips to keep your child safe online

- Keep any computer in a public area; do not let your child keep his/her computer in the bedroom.
- Learn how to read the computer screen including minimized programs and online chat services.
- Use the online chat software to view previous messages/discussions on your child's screen name(s).
- Help your child to create a screen name that is gender neutral and does not mention your child's age or level of education.
- Make sure your child deletes all profiles that he/she may have online that could reveal age, location, school, etc...
- Get your own account for instant messengers, MySpace.com, SecondLife, and any other program your child uses that requires signing on for certain privileges.
- And most important! Learn about your computer! The more you know, the less your child can keep hidden from you. It's OK to look around the web and see what's out there. It's OK to open the files on your computer to see what your child is doing. What is more important? Your child's "right to privacy" or your child's safety?

William Jefferson Clinton Middle School

This newsletter contains internet safety tips for parents to use when working with their children. This issue focuses on the three topics we cover in Tangipahoa Parish when teaching internet safety to students. Those topics are online personal safety, cyber bullying, and social networking.



## Online Personal Safety Tips

- Explain to kids that they are in charge of what people know about them
- Review their privacy settings on the social networks they use -- and make sure the controls are strict
- Explain to kids that everything they post online can be viewed by anyone and last a long time online
- Encourage kids to self-reflect before they self-reveal
- Restrict use of social-mapping programs that let kids post where they are
- Train kids in "netiquette," like not posting or forwarding other people's information without their permission

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## Acceptable Use Policy

One tool that your school uses to keep you safe online is an AUP. An AUP includes a set of rules for computer and Internet usage. It usually tells what will happen if you DON'T follow the rules too. Your school sends home the AUP so you and your parents can read it together and go over it. This is to make sure you really understand the school rules and what is expected of you. You and your parents might also be expected to sign it. What does your school's AUP say? What are some of the rules in it? Is there anything you don't understand in it? Make sure to ask an adult if you don't understand!

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## What is Cyber Bullying

- ☐ Cyber bullying is a mean or threatening e-mail
- ☐ Cyber bullying is forwarding a private IM communication to others
- ☐ Cyber bullying is a humiliating text sent over a cell phone
- ☐ Cyber bullying is a Web site set up to mock others
- ☐ Cyber bullying is posting embarrassing photos or video
- ☐ Cyber bullying is insulting another online gamer
- ☐ Forwarding gossip e-mail to hurt another can be cyber bullying
- ☐ Impersonating someone else to spread rumors can be cyber bullying



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## What to Do to Prevent Being Cyber Bullied

- ☐ Don't give out private information and PINs.
  - ⊗ Be careful about where you post such personal information online, as name, address and cell phone number. This information can be used in a negative way by bullies.
  - ⊗ Use netiquette. Be polite online and others will tend to do the same. Ignore anyone who gets angry or bullies you.
  - ⊗ Consider avoiding sharing buddy lists, because it increases the chances of being bullied.
  - ⊗ Don't send a message when you are angry.
  - ⊗ When something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't. Leave the site or chat.

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## What to do if you are being Cyber Bullied

- ⊗ **Tell a trusted adult** and keep telling until that person takes action.
- ⊗ **Don't open or read messages by cyber bullies.** If you've been bullied by someone and feel it needs to be addressed, don't open the messages yourself. Save them unopened and let a parent or trusted adult handle them.
- ⊗ **Don't react to the bully.** Often a bully will act just to get your reaction. Your reaction could fuel more attacks. If the bully needs to be dealt with, have a trusted adult, such as a parent or a school professional, help you.
- ⊗ **Tell your school if it is school related.** Most schools have a bullying plan in place.
- ⊗ **Don't erase the messages or images.** Save them in a folder unread. They may be needed for taking action.
- ⊗ **Protect yourself by not meeting with the bully** or any one that you've only met online.
- ⊗ **Block a bully.** If the bully is attacking through instant messaging, that person can usually be blocked.
- ⊗ **If you are threatened with harm, inform the local police.** Harassment that causes hurt or embarrassment can be threatening to one's well-being and still may need to be addressed; however, any physical threat or stalking must be handled immediately by informing the police.

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## Social Networking Safety Tips

- **Set rules concerning social-networking sites.**

Never reveal personal information online. Educate your child on the dangers of revealing personal information online. Ensure that your child knows not to post any personal information in his or her profile or in the content of his or her Web space. Other than the obvious, this includes e-mail address, instant-message (IM) contact information, sports teams, places frequented, or any other information that could allow a stranger to identify or contact them.

- **Follow Web site age restrictions.**

Most sites require users to be 13 and older. If your child is younger than the age limit, do not allow them to use the site.

- **Activate security settings on the Web site.**

Have your children password-protect their web pages and set permissions to allow only persons they know to view and post to their bulletins.

- **Discuss the dangers of communicating with strangers online.**

Online friends are strangers, not "real" friends. Remind your child that he or she is never to meet an online friend in person, and if asked to do so, to notify you immediately.

- **Evaluate the Web site.**

Read the Web site's privacy policy and code of conduct. Find out if the site monitors and removes inappropriate content posted on user pages.

- **Spend time online with your child.**

Ask your child to show you his or her social-networking page. Unfamiliar friends and inappropriate content can factor into a dangerous equation.

- **Establish rules for posting pictures online.**

Posting photographs openly online is dangerous. Details in photos could provide predators with identifiable information, such as street signs, license plates, and school or city locations. Photos can also be inappropriately altered. When sharing photos online, use password-protected online photo sites, and only reveal the password to persons you actually know.

- **Talk with your children about the power of words.**

Remind your child that anything posted online has the potential of being read by anyone, including parents, principals, bosses, school officials, or friends. The things they say could be copied and passed around, or discovered by someone using a search engine. Cyber bullying often starts and continues on social-networking sites. Businesses and universities often perform Web searches on potential employees and students.

- **Restrict children from joining public groups.**

Public groups require identifiable information, such as specific interests like groups of students that go to a specific school or live in a specific city.

- **Report cyber bullying, or inappropriate or dangerous content.**

Notify the Web site by clicking on the "Report Abuse" link. If there is no link, look for a "Contact Us" link to obtain contact information. If you suspect someone is a criminal or predator, print out a copy of the communication and Web site address, and report it to your local law-enforcement agency.

## Internet Safety

### For more information...

<http://www.netsmartz.org/>  
[http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net\\_safety.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net_safety.html)  
<http://www.safekids.com/>  
[http://www.cyberbee.com/safety\\_sites.html](http://www.cyberbee.com/safety_sites.html)  
<http://www.common sense media.org/search/internet%20safety>  
<http://www.connectsafely.org/>  
[https://secure.missingkids.com/missingkids/servlet/CybertipServlet?LanguageCountry=en\\_US](https://secure.missingkids.com/missingkids/servlet/CybertipServlet?LanguageCountry=en_US)  
<http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/parent-guide>

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## Cell Phone Tips

### Protect your privacy

- Only give your mobile number out to people you know and can trust.
- Never reply to text messages from people you don't know.
- Make sure you know how to block others from calling your phone

### Respect others

Think about how a text message might be read, before you send it. Just like e-mail, text messages can be taken the wrong way. Think about the message you are sending and use emoticons to convey the meaning of your text, like lol (laughing out loud) and. Sending someone a text that could be taken the wrong way might upset them.

You should never give anyone else's number out without asking them if it is OK first because you never know what they are going to use it for once they have it. If the person asking is genuine, they will not mind you saying "No" until you have checked it is OK.

You should never take pictures of anyone, with your phone, without their permission. Some people simply do not like having their photograph taken and it is a question of manners to ask permission first. Additionally, once you have an image on your phone you can distribute it and/or upload it to the Internet. Once you do that, it is anybody's guess where that image might end up!!

### Register your phone

To prevent nuisance calls and annoying text messages (SMS spam and cold calling) register your phone.

The National Do Not Call Registry makes it easier and more efficient for consumers to stop getting telemarketing sales calls they don't want. You can register online or you can call toll-free: **1-888-382-1222** (TTY 1-866-290-4236), from the number you wish to register.

[http://www.wiredsafety.org/safety/chat\\_safety/phone\\_safety/index.html](http://www.wiredsafety.org/safety/chat_safety/phone_safety/index.html)

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