

Topics to Address with Kids for Internet Safety

My top three most important (not necessarily in order of importance):

#1- Never give out any personal info.

#2 - Always follow promptings.

#3 – Only chat, email, IM, etc. with people you have already met in person or have parental approval for.

Outline of things to discuss:

1. Emailing others

- Who is it okay to email?
- Should I forward?
 - Whatever blessing or penalty the email says will happen—WON'T
 - If you forward, delete all the email addresses of others that appear in the body of the email to protect their privacy.
 - Check snopes.com to see if an email is based on truth or not
- BCC
 - Use bcc when forwarding or sending items to many people so that you protect others privacy.
- Viruses
 - Can get viruses from emails, be careful of what you open.
- Spam
 - Ways to tell if it is spam
 - If it looks a little “fishy” it probably is.
 - If it sounds too good to be true, it is spam
 - Hover over links with your cursor, then look down in the left hand corner where it will give you further information as to where that link would take you should you click on it.
 - If you know it is spam, just delete it right away
 - Never click on links within the email. If you need to unsubscribe to something, you can always copy and paste the link into your browser.

4. Giving out personal information

- What does personal information include?
- When is it okay to give it out?

5. Random surfing

- Don't do it
- Have a goal in mind—know where you are going and what you want to find.
 - This makes it easier to steer clear of inappropriate sites.
- Cookies - people gather your info from sites visited

6. Chat rooms & games

- As a general rule--don't unless you have parental approval.
- Don't give out IM information to anyone
- Myspace, Facebook, Xanga etc.
 - What do you truly need these for when you have IM, email, texting, phones, yahoo groups, etc. that you can use to communicate with your friends in a safe environment?
 - Those social networking sites tend to make you far too vulnerable to predators because your information becomes too readily available.
 - People can pretend to be someone or some age that they are not.
 - If you use them, be aware!
- Communicate only with people you know in approved settings
- Playing games with others on the internet can be fun, but all the same rules apply as they would in a chat room situation. Don't give out your information, don't try getting to know people in this situation!

9. When in doubt, don't

- Always follow promptings from the Spirit/your conscience
 - God gives you this protection for a reason. Use it. Don't let things cloud your ability to hear these promptings.
- If you aren't sure a site will be good, don't go to it
- If an offer seems too good to be true, assume it is not a good offer
- Always feel free to ask your parents questions or tell them your concerns.

10. Exit immediately!

- If you happen on a site that shows bad images, words, messages, etc. Leave at once. Don't hesitate! Make haste! Make haste!
- Think of the story of Joseph in the Bible. He "got him out"! Genesis 39:7-12

Go over these and other internet safety related items frequently with your children. Once is not enough, and more in depth conversations should take place the older they get..

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