

Texas Center for the Missing

INTERNET SAFETY

Caring adults can help ensure the online safety of children and teens by reviewing and enforcing the following guidelines

ESTABLISH RULES

- Determine safe sites that children can visit and discuss the potential risks of popular websites or social media platforms.
- Set time limits on computers and digital devices (e.g. smartphones, smart TVs, tablets, laptops, digital readers, gaming devices, etc.).
- Clearly define when and where all digital devices can be used.
- Talk about what is "personal information" and why it should not be shared online without a guardian's permission.
- Keep online safety rules posted near computers.



SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

- Stay informed on the latest digital and social media trends.
- Know how to set privacy settings on your favorite sites.
- Be aware of spamming techniques and report unwanted emails or ads.
- Don't share or post email addresses or screen names in a public directory.
- Turn off auto-locate or geo-tagging features on photo sharing sites.



COMMUNICATE

- Be open and interested when talking with children about their online lives.
- Discuss the importance of telling you or another trusted adult if anything or anyone ever makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused while online.
- Know the signs of cyberbullying and openly talk to children about the devastating effects of bullying online or via other digital devices (e.g. texts, gaming devices, etc.). Discuss with them the importance of speaking up when they witness any form of bullying.



REPORT SUSPICIOUS OR UNWANTED BEHAVIOR

- If a child does open up to you about a negative online experience, stay calm. Make sure the child knows it is not their fault – they are still learning how to navigate the online world.
- Report suspicious persons or websites on the CyberTipline, administered by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, at cybertipline.com or 1.800.843.5678.
- Notify local law enforcement and school officials if a child has been threatened, exploited, or cyberbullied. Protect other children by reporting as soon as possible.



TEXAS CENTER
FOR THE MISSING



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