

## **Five Steps You Need to Take for Your Children's Safety to Put Your Mind at Ease**

Protecting your children has been a top priority since the day they were born. Telling your children "Don't talk to strangers" or "Don't accept that lollipop" applies well to the real world but it seems a lot more difficult when that rule is applied to the online world of computers and the Internet. So what do you, as a parent, do and what do you tell your children? How do you protect your child or children from the online predators of today and other dangers such as pornography and other questionable material you do not wish your children to be reading or viewing? The dangers to children using the Internet have only recently come to the forefront of concerns. One of five children has been sexually solicited online; one of four children has been sent pictures of naked people; the first death of a child linked directly to an online predator was May 21, 2002. These numbers can be a shock to some. So is it recommended to stop children from using the Internet and the computer altogether? Well, certainly that is one way but there are many benefits to your child using the computer and the Internet.

Children-Internet-Safety.com

All rights reserved 2006. Victor Kimura.

Reprint rights are given freely and you may distribute the content in an eBook or print format; however, you MUST retain the written content in its entirety including the author and resource box. This material is not for resale.

## Benefits of the Internet:

Thus, I will briefly summarize the benefits of Internet use by your children.

- 1) It allows them to find rich, cultural and educational information readily. Sites like [www.howstuffworks](http://www.howstuffworks.com), [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com), [www.discovery.com](http://www.discovery.com), [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org) are great sites for both up-to-date news and educational content. Other subjects can include sports, weather, shopping, health, information on local schools and governments and what is happening around the world.
- 2) One of the greatest benefits your children will see is they can now communicate with their friends in every possible way and interact with them. Technologically, they will be able to “talk” with their peers in every conceivable way whether it is via email, instant messaging via their cell or computer or share pictures and ideas from social network sites such as [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com). It gives them a feeling of belonging and helps them form who they are. Of course, there can be extremes to these cases and you will, consequently, need to monitor their usage.
- 3) Your children will be able to keep not only in touch with their friends online locally but they can communicate with relatives half-way around the world. They can keep in touch with their grandparents, cousins or friends from overseas and simultaneously talk and view with them live. Things like this were not possible even ten years ago.
- 4) Of course, children love to play their favorite computer game. This doesn't necessarily the extreme, violent games. The benefit to your children could be the educational computer games. Many games are interactive and have great learning elements to them.
- 5) Access to up-to-date news and information, what is happening in the world and what events that are going on locally are important for your children's development and learning. It gets

Children-Internet-Safety.com

All rights reserved 2006. Victor Kimura.

Reprint rights are given freely and you may distribute the content in an eBook or print format; however, you MUST retain the written content in its entirety including the author and resource box. This material is not for resale.

them involved in the world and the Internet may answer many questions they have.

- 6) They will develop essential IT and other job-related skills.
- 7) They can collaborate on school projects, make new friends online as penpals, learn good netiquette rules and so much more.

So what are some of the risks to your children when they are online and you are away at work or in the other room watching television or cooking? If you have a Teenager in your household you may wish to call 1800-843-5678 for a copy of "Teen Safety on the Information Highway" or visit [www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com).

## **The Risks to Your Children:**

Some risks that your children may encounter are:

- 1) They have access to information to violent-oriented websites such as how to construct bombs or websites dedicated to hatred and intolerance. They can browse and by chance come across pornographic sites or adult-oriented chat rooms where pedophiles may be lurking.
- 2) Excessive use of the Internet can lead to social withdrawal, declining grades, missing school classes, lethargy and belligerence and opposition to you as a parent and other authorities.
- 3) They may give away too much information online in the chat rooms or via instant messaging and disclose where they live, what school they go to, what time you are at work and, consequently, endangering their lives and other family members.

- 4) Your children may encounter harassment and bullying online. This could be via email, chat rooms, instant messaging and cell phones. Most often bullying is caused from other youngsters.
- 5) Many children use peer-to-peer software to download free music, games and other files. However, these files are from other unknown users from around the world. Some of these users use this medium to transmit viruses and spyware that could jeopardize the security system of the computer. If this is a shared computer in the household which often times it is then it should be a concern to your privacy as well.
- 6) Sometimes, financial information is given away such as the parent's credit information.

## **Tips to Internet Security for Parents:**

So what are some tips and ideas which you can implement easily to safeguard your children? Here are some ideas:

- 1) Talk to your children on this "tough" topic. The same precautionary rules apply for your children should be instituted as in the offline world. Make a point of finding out who their friends are online. While your children do need some privacy, speak with them and discuss why you are concerned and the issues they may encounter in the online world. Please note how you respond to them and how you approach them will determine whether they will seek for your guidance when they encounter any problems online and, as well, determine how they will deal with any future problems.

Moreover, find support by discussing these issues with trusted teachers, school counselors and other counselors, perhaps, in your church. There are some resources in your local library that you may use or websites such as [www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com) or [www.cybertiponline.com](http://www.cybertiponline.com), a site developed by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The NCMEC allows you to submit a report to notify them of any indecent, obscene or lewd

Children-Internet-Safety.com

All rights reserved 2006. Victor Kimura.

Reprint rights are given freely and you may distribute the content in an eBook or print format; however, you MUST retain the written content in its entirety including the author and resource box. This material is not for resale.

material sent to your children or anyone's children or if you become aware of any sites that are exploiting children. The NCMEC's CyberTipline can be contacted at 1800-843-5678.

- 2) Move the computer out of the children's bedroom to a more public area of the home. The same goes with the television since we are on the topic of your children's safety and regulating what is exposed to them.
- 3) Use spam filters to filter unsolicited email which are most often sex-related or drug-related material. You may use spam filters by filtering out bad words or to allow only emails from trusted people in your list. The other option is to sign up an email account for your children and monitor what is received before they read it. Of course, if your children are older in their teenage years this may not be feasible and you may find much resistance to this idea. In this case, use spam filters. Many good programs such as Norton Internet Security 2006, Zone Alarm Internet Security and McAfee Internet Security include the spam filter. If you do not have a good Internet Security program then you definitely need one immediately. The second option to the Internet Security package is to download AVG Antivirus, a good free option; however, you will still need a good anti-spyware program such as WebSpysweeper, SpyDoctor or Ad-Aware SE Professional. Ad-Aware has a free version but I always recommend purchasing the professional version. The second option as well does not include a spam filter.
- 4) Do not use the computer and Internet as a substitute of a good babysitter. The Internet as you well know by now are full of dangers, hazards and a place where your children can possibly harm themselves. Thus, it's important to disallow your children from using the Internet and computer without any supervision just as you wouldn't allow your children to go out with anyone and anywhere in the real world.
- 5) Use good parental control software. There are many parental control software programs out there such as CyberPatrol,

Children-Internet-Safety.com

All rights reserved 2006. Victor Kimura.

Reprint rights are given freely and you may distribute the content in an eBook or print format; however, you MUST retain the written content in its entirety including the author and resource box. This material is not for resale.

CyberSitter, SafeEyes and IamBigBrother. Some features to look for in a good Parental Control Software:

- i. Time limits of using computer. This feature will limit the times your children will be able to use the Internet.
- ii. Filter category selection will filter certain sites which will be categorized such as pornography, violence, etc.
- iii. Restrict chat usage via instant messengers which could be a potential portal for viruses and spyware.
- iv. Filter chat conversations disallowing certain words and numbers from being sent. This safeguards your children from sending inappropriate information such as addresses, phone numbers, credit card numbers while chatting.
- v. Restrict file-sharing by peer-to-peer software which again is a potential portal for viruses and spyware.
- vi. Restrict access to internet-based applications or other applications such as online games when they are supposed to be doing their homework.
- vii. Activity logging on computer. Records activity of the computer to know precisely what your children are doing.
- viii. Remote access to review logs from another internet-connected computer.
- ix. Block search results from search engines like Google which contain objectionable words.

Remember these are programs to aid in the protection of your children. They are not a panacea. You should still monitor and discuss issues with your children. You will define the rules depending on their age as well. Spending time with your children online and be engaged in their online activity will help you understand their behaviors. You will be learn much from this and it will help you keep in touch with your children as well. If they are to meet with someone they met online make a point of attending this meeting in a public place.

## Setting the Guidelines:

Setting good, reasonable guidelines with your children will go a long way to keeping your children safe. Here are some points to remember:

- 1) Browse the Internet with your children. Get to know what they do online, where they visit, who their online friends are. Perhaps, have a list of friends they may be allowed to speak with regularly; all others they must have your approval before they can speak with them on a regular basis. Perhaps, know their email passwords and account information to Yahoo, Hotmail and others.
- 2) Make a hard rule they may never be allowed face-to-face meetings with anyone they meet online. Many predators pose as children or as “good” people and then slowly gain the trust of children. If they insist then make a point that you are to accompany these meetings and the meeting will be in a public place.
- 3) Get to know their “online” friends much like you would wish to meet their real world friends. Your friends have a significant impact on your lives and how much more so this holds true with your children’s friendships.
- 4) Inform them never give out personals, pertinent information such as home address, phone numbers, what school they attend, what team they play on, when the parents are at work, when they are alone, credit card information, etc. This includes giving out any personal information with online promotions and contests, “free” offers and popular social network websites such as [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com) or [www.friendster.com](http://www.friendster.com).
- 5) If they receive any email or encounter any harassing or bullying messages tell them to never respond to them and encourage your children to speak with you. Get them to talk to you when they encounter anything that makes them feel uncomfortable. If

Children-Internet-Safety.com

All rights reserved 2006. Victor Kimura.

Reprint rights are given freely and you may distribute the content in an eBook or print format; however, you MUST retain the written content in its entirety including the author and resource box. This material is not for resale.

you receive any harassing or sexual messages forward them to your ISP. Never click on the links in the email messages that are unsolicited. The links which state “click this link to unsubscribe” from unsolicited emails are simply a way to notify the spammer that you have read the email and, thus, will be sending you more spam. If the spam contains any child pornography report this to NCMEC CyberTipline at 1800-843-5678 or visit [www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com).

- 6) Use good Internet Security and parental control software. Do not rely on these as a 100% safeguard measure. Use them as tools to assist you in keeping your children safer.

The Internet can be a scary unknown world with many hazards but it doesn't have to be this way. I'm not here to scare you into thinking the Internet is a big, bad world. I'm here to give you a dose of reality. Take control and guide your children to practical and safe online activities. Be involved with their online activities as you would in their schoolwork and in their outdoor, extracurricular activities. Use the computer as one more way to develop and strengthen your relationship with your children. Gain their trust and make them understand that you are doing these things because you love and care about them. Happy Internet surfing!

Regards,  
Victor Kimura  
Helping keep your kids safe online.

---

**Learn how to Keep Your Children Safer on the Internet**  
from *online predators*...and you **Save Time**  
because you don't need to be "*watching*" your children 24/7 –  
**All for less than 10 cents a day!**

Visit <http://www.children-internet-safety.com> for more  
information.



### Other Resources:

<http://www.childnet-int.org/> - **Childnet International, a non-profit organisation working with others to “help make the Internet a great and safe place for children”.**

<http://www.wiredwithwisdom.org/> - prepares children, teens, and adults to make wise choices when using the Internet.

<http://www.safetyed.org/> - a non-profit organization founded in 1998 and dedicated to internet safety education, child advocacy and child protection.

<http://www.getnetwise.org/> - learn to stay ahead of pornographers, hackers, child-predators and others who abuse the information from your children.

<http://www.fkbko.co.uk> – For Kids By Kids Online is a site teaching kids the do’s and don’ts of Internet child safety.

<http://www.safekids.com/> - Useful links to other sites about children’s safety online, game playing, music online, social networks like MySpace.com.

<http://www.cyberpatrol.com/Default.aspx?id=97&mnuid=6.2> - download the “SurfWatch Safety Program Digital Toolkit” which includes a presentation to teach your kids about Internet hazards and what they can do about it. Download a sample “Internet contract” for you and your children to abide by to keep your family safer.

<http://livewwwires.com/> - view this short flash presentation on the dangers of online predators.

<http://www.wiredwithwisdom.org> - helping kids, teens and adults make wise choices when it comes to using the Internet.

### Report Abuse Resources:

<http://www.childquest.org/cqsafetytips.php> - though this site is dedicated to the protection and recovery of missing, abused and exploited children, and at-risk adults in the San Francisco Bay Area, this site also contains documents for your children’s safety.

<http://www.iwf.org.uk/> - this is a hotline site for reporting obscene and hateful messages by sites hosted in the UK.

Children-Internet-Safety.com

All rights reserved 2006. Victor Kimura.

Reprint rights are given freely and you may distribute the content in an eBook or print format; however, you MUST retain the written content in its entirety including the author and resource box. This material is not for resale.

<http://www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com> - made up of police forces from around the world working together to fight online child abuse. Reports are shared with international law enforcement agencies.

<http://www.missingkids.com/> - National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. You can report sightings of missing children.

<http://www.ic3.gov/> - the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) is collaboration between the FBI and the National White Collar Crime Center (<http://www.nw3c.org/>) where you may report cyber-crimes if you are a victim. This action will notify criminal and civil violations to the appropriate authorities.

### Some Safe Websites for Kids:

<http://www.nasa.gov> - the National Aeronautic and Space Administration website.

<http://www.ala.org> - lots of links to kids sites.

<http://disney.go.com> - Disney's website for your kids.

<http://www.yahooligans.com> - web guide for kids.

<http://www.zeeks.ca> - cool games for kids.

<http://www.si.edu> - explore and learn from the Smithsonian Institute

<http://family.go.com> - in beta release, but a portal for family exploration.

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

