



## Internet Safety









At the end of November, the PTSA hosted an Internet Safety assembly. We welcomed Sgt. Daryl Bernard of the Cook County Sheriff's Jail Diversion and Crime Prevention Division who put on a very entertaining and informative program for the students. Please ask them some of the things they have learned to help protect themselves from Cyberbullying, Safety, and Identity and Security on the Internet.

Please read the following documents that were provided to us. For more information on internet safety, please call the Cook County Sheriff's Jail Diversion and Crime Prevention Division at: (773) 869-7159.

## Endangering Your Identity and Security

The safety of you or your family may be endangered by the things that you post online. Posting your personal information on a social networking site like MySpace or Facebook or posting a resume to a career site makes it even easier for criminals to find and threaten your safety and security. Here are some ways that you can protect you and your family from intrusions into your personal life:














-  Search your own name on Google.com or Zabasearch.com (ego surfing) to make sure your personal information is not made available to the public. Contact the providers and ask them to remove the information if you find it.
-  Internet profiles are public spaces. Anyone can view, gather and use the information made available on these kinds of web sites.
-  Every picture tells a story. Examine pictures that you or your family posts on the internet. Ensure that identifying information is not made available to the public, i.e. address numbers or street names, recognizable landmarks, identifiable churches, schools or businesses, other personal identifying information located in the background of the photo.
-  Enter only the minimum information required for registering to any web site, forum or network. Avoid entering addresses, phone numbers, birthdates, etc. unless they are absolutely required.
-  Ensure that web sites do not share your information with third parties or other companies and organizations. You can usually opt out from sharing by simply unchecking a checkbox on a registration form.
-  Posted internet information is permanent. Much of the information on the internet is archived and is still accessible after you delete profiles, cancel memberships, or remove photo albums.
-  Never use your social security number or driver's license number when registering online. Never use your full name to identify yourself on a profile or the internet. Use an ambiguous nickname instead.
-  Use a shredder to destroy documents, expired credit cards or pre-approved credit applications to keep them from "dumpster divers" that are seeking information in order to compromise your personal security.



## Internet Safety for Kids










Kids can easily become the targeted victim of an internet predator. Children find it difficult to believe that a place that could be as fun, entertaining, exciting and adventurous as the internet can also be a place of danger. Parents spend time with their children during sports activities and other special events at school. Parents do not have the same involvement with their children's activities on the internet. Here are some tips to help protect your children against internet predators.

-  Place the computer in a common area where their activities can be viewed and supervised by other adults at all times. Never let a kid have a computer alone in their room.
-  Kids should never meet in person with anyone that they met online.
-  Get to know your computer. Parents should use the computer to become more at ease and better prepared to understand what their children are doing online.
-  Have your children show you what they do on the computer. Have them show you their profile pages, if you allow them to have one.
-  Set internet usage rules for your children. Make a schedule for appropriate times and time periods that they would be allowed to use the internet.
-  Get your own MySpace or Facebook account. Have your children add you as one of their friends so that you can monitor their social networking profiles.
-  Children should never give their passwords to anyone, not even a friend. Companies will never ask for a password in an e-mail, chat session or instant message. It would be a good idea for kids to share a password with a parent or guardian.
-  Children should never give out personal information like: addresses, phone numbers, instant messaging nicknames, school names, ages, birthdates or whether they are a boy or a girl. Instant messaging nicknames should not reveal personal information.
-  Kids should never post photographs of themselves, their families or friends on the internet.
-  Ensure that all profile settings are set to private. Some instant messaging programs even have small profiles associated with the service.
-  Children should know that they can always talk to a parent, guardian or other adult when they encounter harmful or upsetting events on the computer. Kids need a safety zone that they can rely on when mistakes are made. Family members, teachers, counselors, and social workers can protect children better than any software, hardware, filter, blocker, or firewall installed onto a computer.



## Cyberbullying on the Internet

Your children may be the target of bullying and harassment through the use of modern technology. The bullying or harassment could occur through chat sessions, instant messaging, social networking profiles or posted comments on the internet. The harassment could be delivered through text messages over a cell phone. Children can easily be the offender in the bullying and harassment of other kids. Here are some ways that electronic bullying or harassment can be controlled.

-  Children should be encouraged to talk to parents, teachers, and other adults about being the target of bullying or harassment.
-  Parents should talk to their children if they suspect that they are victims of bullying and harassment. Sometimes kids are too embarrassed to talk about being a victim.
-  Kids should be guided to realize that it is not their fault nor do they deserve to be bullied or harassed. School counselors or social workers can be a good source for help with these matters.
-  Doing something would be more effective in stopping the bullying or harassing behavior, rather than doing nothing at all. Keeping bullying and harassing behaviors a secret is a bully's best weapon.
-  Kids and parents should preserve any evidence like chat sessions, e-mails, or text messages that the police or school officials can use to stop the bullying and harassment.
-  Do not respond to e-mails, chats, postings, or text messages. Never try to retaliate against offenders. Responding to attacks by bullies can provoke or escalate the situation. Your actions might even violate laws that are supposed to protect you.
-  Respect and help others. There is safety in numbers. A bully will often quit their bullying when a group lets the bully know that their behavior is not accepted nor enjoyed by others. Kids could send a strong message to others when they make it more popular to stand up to bullies and not tolerate harassment.
-  Users that bully or harass over the internet or other electronic devices can often be blocked from accessing your accounts, profiles, chat sessions, instant messages, or cell phone.
-  Never give your password to anyone, not even a friend. Companies will never ask you for a password in an e-mail, chat session, or instant message. It would be a good idea for kids to share a password with a parent or guardian.