

Internet Safety Tips for Parents

While the internet is a wonderful resource for children to learn and communicate with peers, it can also be very dangerous. Review the tips below provided by Family Online Safety Institute for ideas on how and what to talk to your children about concerning internet safety.

- Talk with your children about internet safety as soon as he/she begins using the internet. It is never too early to start discussing the importance of being a good digital citizen.
- Use age-appropriate filtering, blocking and monitoring software on all internet-enabled devices used by your child, including laptops, wireless phones, and video games.
- Stay involved in your child's online world by setting limits on his/her "screen time" and monitoring who your child is communicating with online. Get to know the web sites your child is visiting and educate yourself about your child's Online activities.
- Review FOSI's internet Safety Contract with your family members and consider having all family members sign the agreement.
- Explain to your child that he/she should never give out personally identifiable information online. For example, your child should understand that he/she should not post detailed information about his/her whereabouts.
- Make sure your child knows never to meet someone they met online face-to-face without first talking with you about the situation.
- Tell your child to never share their passwords with anyone, including friends.
- Explain the consequences of posting inappropriate material online. For example, a child's reputation can be impacted by a status entry or an image that is shared.
- Monitor your child's mobile phone usage and review text messages sent and received, including images downloaded and uploaded.
- Educate yourself on the latest threats facing kids online (e.g.. Cyberbullying, sexting, etc.) and arm yourself with information that will allow you to talk to your child about being a good digital citizen.

For more information, check out FOSI's website at www.fosi.org.