

Connecticut State Police

TIPS

Topics in Public Safety

INTERNET SAFETY FOR PARENTS

As a parent, you should always monitor your children's activity on the computer, especially when they are surfing the Internet. Keeping your children safe from online predators should be your top priority. The Connecticut State Police Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force recommend that you follow these tips for keeping your children safe online.

Be aware of what is happening in your own house:

- Put your child's online computer in a common area in the home.
- Ask your children frequently about what they do online and with whom they are communicating.
- Establish and enforce rules for Internet use.
- Supervise Internet use, especially "chat rooms."
- Review screen names and buddy lists with your children.
- No one aged 12 and under is allowed to post a personal profile. If your child is 13 or older, he or she may use an appropriate profile, if absolutely necessary.
- Do not allow your children to establish homepages or to set up web cams. These invite trouble.
- Supervise any picture swapping.
- Teach your children about online "stranger danger."
- Use a filtering program and/or parental controls available through your Internet service provider.



Signs your child may be at risk of online exploitation:

- Mail, gifts or packages arrive for your child from someone you do not know.
- Your child receives phone calls from adults (mostly men) you do not know.
- You find pornography on your child's computer.
- Your child spends a great deal of time online, especially at night or unsupervised.
- Your child becomes withdrawn or secretive about his or her online activities.



Internet resources for parents:

www.getnetwise.org

This site offers advice on filtering software or monitoring software for computers in your home.

www.safekids.com

A family guide to Internet and technology safety.

www.netparents.org

This Internet resource links to websites for families, for safety tips and for child protection.

www.ct.gov/despp

The Connecticut Sex Offender Registry on the State Police website can be searched by name or by location.

www.missingkids.com

The website of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is an excellent resource for child safety and Internet safety.



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