

RULES FOR ONLINE SAFETY

1. Never allow children (including teenagers) to have unsupervised access to the Internet. Keep the computer in a public area of the home, never in a child's bedroom. Make it a habit to periodically, and without warning, observe what they are doing on the Internet.
2. Make use of the Internet as a group or family activity in which all members of the household can participate.
3. Learn the services provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or Online Service, so that you know how it works. Determine whether the system allows you to block your child from accessing certain areas, such as chat rooms, and take advantage of those types of services.
4. Instruct children that whenever they communicate online they should never give out identifying information, such as phone numbers, addresses, last names, social security numbers, or names of schools that they attend.
5. Remind children that whatever they are told online may or may not be true. A person who states that she is a twelve (12) year old girl may, in fact, be a fifty (50) year old man.
6. Never respond to messages or bulletin board postings that are suggestive, obscene, belligerent, or harassing.
7. Children should never upload pictures of themselves to people that they do not personally know. They could be uploading it to a pedophile.
8. Instruct your children to never arrange a face to face meeting with someone they have met on the Internet.
9. Children should never download pictures from an unknown source as there is a good chance it is pornography.
10. Monitor the times of day that a child accesses the Internet or online service, and the duration of his or her online session. Excessive time online, especially during the evening or late night hours, may be indicative of a problem.
11. If you become suspicious that your child is misusing the computer, discuss your concerns with the child and, if warranted, consider examining the hard drive for inappropriate material.
12. **DO NOT** make the mistake of using the computer as a babysitter.