

YOUTH AND INTERNET SAFETY

Do you have questions about the safety of our youth on the internet? Are you concerned about predators using the computer to create child victims? Are you confused about how to protect your child and your family from online criminals?

You are not alone. The internet is a massive place, with massive amounts of information. Much of this information is good, reliable and extremely helpful. Some of it is not. The internet has been compared to a knife, "It is a good tool, but it can also cut you".

The Minnesota Chapter of the International Crimes Against Children Task Force (ICAC) along with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Boys and Girls Club of America have partnered with Netsmartz.org to help Parents, Guardians, Educators, Law Enforcement, Teens and Kids learn about staying safe on the internet. Log on to www.netsmartz.org and take a look around to learn more about:

- Chatrooms/Web Based Chat
- E-Dating
- Email
- Instant Messaging
- Gaming
- Spam
- Cookies
- Cyber Bullying
- Flaming
- Blocking/Filtering Software
- File Sharing
- Harassment
- Cyber Bullying
- Social Network Sites
- Blogs
- Bulletin Boards/Wikis/News Groups
- Firewalls
- Podcasts

The internet is amazing and there is so much to learn there...please be safe and remember these few rules about the computer in your home.

1. Place ALL COMPUTERS in your home in a central family room location where everyone can keep an eye on each other.
2. Set guidelines for yourself and your family in regards to how often and how long you may use the internet per day (it can become addicting!).
3. Youth, trust your parents and TELL THEM if anyone makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable on the computer...Parent's talk with your youth and let them know it is NOT THEIR FAULT if someone sends them inappropriate information on the computer.
4. BE CAREFUL with social networking sites like MySpace, Face Book and the many others...parents and youth should be looking at these sites together to make certain private information is not available to the wrong persons.
5. REPORT ALL CRIMES on the computer to the [Cyber Tipline](http://www.cybertipline.com). Reports may be made 24-hours per day, 7 days per week online at www.cybertipline.com or by calling 1-800-843-5678.