

ChildrenOnline

Devoted to the safety of children and teens online

Phone: 413-214-1225

A Division of Web Safe Consulting

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The Daily Scam:

We're pleased to announce a new periodic newsletter called "The Daily Scam." The Daily Scam is a brief email that describes email scams and tricks that flood our inboxes. It teaches us how to recognize scams and avoid the risks. Recently reported scams include fake AOL email notifications, Bank of America phishing scams, fake HP tech support websites, fake Facebook notifications, and much more. [A sample of The Daily Scam can be seen here.](#)

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54th Edition of the Children Online Newsletter.

Speaking to thousands of students across the country has taught us many things. Most notably, and perhaps most surprising, is that students across the country of the same grade are remarkably similar in



their Internet experiences and understanding of technology. Many students share the same lack of Internet safety skills, in part because schools and families don't often teach these skills, and in part because many children are involved in online behavior that is beyond their developmental level. So what are the "top ten" Internet safety skills that all students should learn? That is the topic of this month's newsletter.

As always we welcome your comments and suggestions.
Best wishes,
Marje Monroe and Doug Fodeman

If you are interested in having us conduct student, parent or faculty workshops, please contact us via email or phone (413-214-1225).

What are the most important Internet safety skills our children need?

1. Nothing is private online; especially in Facebook

Many students struggle to understand the value of privacy and why online privacy is important to protect. For children, breaches of privacy often leads to embarrassment or humiliation. For adults they can also lead to great financial loss and other significant risks. However, parents may be surprised to learn that children have been the largest growing demographic for identity theft during the last few years. [More information can be found at AllClearID.com

Related Resources:

1. [Facebook stores up to 800 pages of data per user account](#)

- reported on Geek.com. (By Matthew Humphries. Sept., 2011.) Privacy online is an oxymoron.

It is important to note that the "Privacy" settings on Facebook do not actually change the data Facebook collects, but only what it displays.

2. [Socialbot experiment collects 250GB of data from clueless Facebook users](#)

- reported on Geek.com. (By Lee Mathews. Nov., 2011.) Teens and younger users often don't realize how easily they give away tremendous amounts of personal information or the value of that information.

3. [Parting with Privacy with a Quick Click](#)

- reported on the Washington Post. (By Cecilia Kang. May, 2011.)

4. There is a new report out from the PEW Internet and American Life Project (Nov. 9, 2011) on [Teens, Kindness, and Cruelty on Social Network Sites](#). In the report is [positive news](#) stating that more than half of online teens surveyed decided not to post something online out of concerns that it would reflect badly on them in the future.

and [IdentityTheft.info](#).] Children and teens should learn how to protect their privacy online and understand the principle ways in which they lose it.

2. Students are creating an online reputation

As one teen stated so well "my online reputation is easier to destroy than build." Their online reputations last for many years and are very easy to research. Children and adolescents don't realize that online reputations are available to others in unexpected and unforeseen ways. Nor do they realize that they will be judged by their online reputation.

3. Your personal information and online activities are valuable to others for various reasons

Information is money on the Internet, plain and simple. Personal information is scrubbed off of web sites and sold over and over, used by marketers (legitimate and unscrupulous) and scammers. In today's hyper-connected world it is easy to track online activities and target individuals. If you wonder what kind of information even legitimate websites may have about us, read the article at Geek.com "[Facebook stores up to 800 pages of personal data per user account](#)" by Matthew Humphries (Sept. 28, 2011).

4. It is easier to be mean online

ALL children know this to be true and can easily explain why. The foremost reason they will tell you is that you don't have to look at someone's face when you are communicating online. Finally, there is a growing body of research to explain this increasing lack of civility online and it often relates to the "screen effect" (disinhibition). [\[Definition\]](#) [\[Description\]](#) We have to teach our kids the value of working harder to be kind and nice online, and not to tolerate meanness in others.

5. How to respond to harassment and bullying

A bully WANTS a response. We need to teach our children never to give a bully the satisfaction of a response. Research shows that bullying behavior decreases if reported to adults and if by-standers speak out. We must teach our children what cyber-bullying looks like and to report it. In many states like Massachusetts, Florida and Virginia, it is

5. [What is Your Teens Online Reputation?](#) - reported on Psychology Today (By Rachelle Cassada Lohmann, Aug. 2011.) This is a great articles containing excellent "do's" and "don'ts."

6. [10 Mistakes Teens Make on Facebook \(and What to Do About It\)](#) - from SafetyWeb.com (By Tammy Blythe Goodman. Dec. 2010.) NOTE: A Facebook game that has been increasing in popularity amongst teens and carries significant risks for them to post inappropriate photos is called "[Smash or Pass.](#)" It's popularity has spawned similar games such as "[You Pick.](#)"

7. There are many wonderful resources for teaching media literacy. Many links can be found at our website on our [Media Literacy resource page](#). Here are three other resources that are well worth consideration:

- a) [Don't Buy It](#) from PBSKids.org
- b) [How to Teach Media Literacy](#) from MediaLit.org
- c) [Resources on Media and Media Literacy](#) from the University of Michigan.

INTERNET SAFETY CURRICULUM

illegal.

6. Social Networking sites such as Facebook are very risky places to hangout. It is easy to make costly mistakes in these sites.

- a. Don't accept friend requests from people you don't know in person
- b. Don't write things online that you wouldn't feel comfortable having a teacher or parent see
- c. Don't trust Facebook to guard your privacy or protect you from scams. They can't and don't.
- d. Set your privacy settings so that only your friends have access to your information
- e. Check your privacy and security settings in Facebook every month; especially concerning apps. Facebook changes the rules and settings a few times each year.

7. Students need to understand how to recognize scams and online threats

e.g. phishing and extortion-ware (fake anti-virus popups)

A great site for Facebook users to visit regularly is [Facecrooks.com](#).

8. Students need to know how to reduce their risks for being targeted and victimized

This includes a wide variety of skills such as

- * Teach students to get offline (and off texting) if they are upset or angry; use person-to-person contact or the phone to resolve conflict
- * Teach students NEVER to share passwords with anyone other than a parent and create strong passwords of at least 8 characters
- * Teach students to consult the collective "wisdom" of Google to evaluate "free" software, urban legends and web trends
- * Mouse-over and check links BEFORE clicking!
- * The comment area below videos on YouTube is often filled with "comment spam" containing links that cause malware infections

9. Students need an education in media literacy

Media consumes our children's lives, online and off. Not only is their behavior being influenced and manipulated but so are their attitudes and beliefs. An eye-opening video to

Safe Practices for Life Online

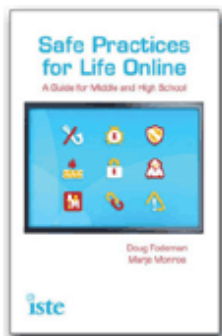
Children Online has a curriculum on Internet

Safety that includes nearly 100 student exercises and lots of information on many topics including social networks, instant messaging, cyberbullying, online marketing, scams directed at kids, protecting privacy online, avoiding identity theft and impersonation, creating strong passwords and more.

There is also a student edition which includes cartoons and "Did you know" sections of interesting facts for students.

To learn more or place an order visit our [publications page at ChildrenOnline.org](#) or go directly to our publisher's pages:

[Teacher's Edition at ISTE](#)
[Student Edition at Lulu.com](#)



explore with students in sixth grade and up is "[Consuming Kids: The Commercialization of Childhood](#)" by the Media Education Foundation. NOTE: Schools who wish to use this with students under age 13 would be wise to preview the film in its entirety.

Media literacy education should include such adages as:

- * Never give out personal information online, especially through online surveys and quizzes
- * Be skeptical online
- * If it seems too good to be true, it is

10. Students need to know how to create and remember a set of strong passwords

Password skills are one of the most important life-long skills that can be taught to students as young as fourth grade. Also, we must teach students NEVER to share passwords with anyone other than a parent. Our research shows that students are 2.5 times more likely to have their accounts hacked if they share their passwords. Passwords should be at least 8 characters long and should no one should be using the same password for all their personal accounts.

About Children Online

Children Online offers innovative and comprehensive workshops on Internet safety and online education to students, parents, faculty and administrators. Our approach, unique in the field of Internet safety, combines a thorough understanding of Internet technologies, child development and counseling, to focus on the impact of the internet on the social, emotional and language development of young people.

Doug Fodeman and Marje Monroe, experts in technology, counseling and education, work together to provide invaluable research and tools for parents and schools with practical real-life solutions to the issues faced by young people online. Since 1997, Marje and Doug have spoken to thousands of students, teachers and parents. They have several publications in the area of Internet safety and offer a free online newsletter. More detailed information can be found at ChildrenOnline.org.

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