



Internet Safety Tips

FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

In the digital age, it is vital for students to be skilled in technology and have access to the Internet. But for them, and for all of us, digital devices and computer networks pose digital and social risks. Digital risks involve software that can jeopardize the security of devices and the information stored on them. Social risks—often called “social engineering”—occur when people are tricked into sharing their private information or putting their personal security at risk.

While no one is 100% safe when working online, there are a number of ways that parents and caregivers can protect your children and greatly minimize the risks. Below are Internet safety tips to ensure a productive and secure online experience for your child and the entire family.

Talk to your kids about Internet use. Talk to your kids regularly about how they use the Internet. If they're in the habit of talking to you about the Internet, they'll be more willing to come to you if there's a problem.

Set boundaries for what they can and cannot do online.

It's important to make rules for your children so they know what is expected of them. Don't wait until something bad happens to start creating guidelines.

Explain the danger of any stranger, at any age, who may contact them online. Children, adolescents and teens should think of an online stranger as no different than a stranger asking to be let in the door of their home.

Remind children to never disclose their full name, address, phone number or other personal information or provide information about others:

- Never meet in person with someone who contacts you online or that you have met in a chat room.
- Don't reveal your actual location or where you plan to go.
- If someone says or does anything online to make you feel uncomfortable, inform your parent or teacher, block the person and do not respond.

Tell children to keep their personal information private.

It's usually a bad idea to post personal information online such as phone numbers, addresses and credit cards. If criminals gain access to this information, it can subject them or their family to theft or harm.



Know the risks of disclosing personal information on social networking sites. Sites like Facebook allow children and adults to share photos and videos of themselves, as well as have conversations with friends and strangers. If your children share something with friends, it's still possible for adults to see it and use the information to pose as a student or friend of a student. It is important to emphasize and reinforce the need to avoid any online contact with strangers.

Let your child know it's okay to talk with to you if they encounter a problem. If your child gets into trouble online, or puts themselves in a position that makes them suspicious or uncomfortable online, let them know you are there to help and support them.

Take time to talk with your child about Internet safety

Chat Room "Friends" (Social Media)

People of all ages can enter chat rooms or contact others on social media, and it is important to use the same precautions you do in the general public to protect your child from harm. Talk with your child about the risk of someone 1) posting a fake online profile or sending a photo pretending to be their age to gain their trust, and 2) asking to meet them in private.

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices such as cell phones, computers and tablets. It can occur through text messaging or online in social media sites, or gaming where people can view, participate in or share content. Cyber bullying includes sending, posting or sharing negative, harmful, false or mean content about someone else and should be reported to your parent and teacher just as you would report bullying at school.

Online Scams

Never click on any link or attachment in an email unless you know whom it is coming from and/or you were expecting it. These common scams specifically target students with:

- ads and auctions, promising luxury goods for amazingly cheap prices—goods that never arrive.
- contests, scholarships or employment offers that require the child to pay some sort of fee or deposit.
- offers of free services for cell phones that actually incur a monthly charge.

Reporting Internet Safety Issues & Concerns

Access or Exposure to Inappropriate Content

While the Internet is a vital tool in the digital age, it can open the door to vast amounts of content. Children can intentionally or unintentionally come into contact with inappropriate or obscene content. There are a number of steps parents and caregivers can take to warn your child of the consequences of accessing inappropriate content on the Internet:

- Ask your child to exit the Internet and report any inappropriate content that pops up on their device to their teacher.
- Inform your child that the District-issued devices they are using for remote learning store all of the sites they have accessed.
- Remind your child that those who find their way around content filtering risk getting into the same trouble as if they accessed inappropriate content in school.

If your child feels he/she may be a victim of an online threat, take the following steps:

- Call the CMSD Service Desk at 216.838.0440 to report the incident, threat or problem to your child's teacher and principal.
- The Cyber Security and IT Risk Management Department and Safety and Security will be notified immediately.
- Cyber Security and/or Safety and Security will contact parents to resolve the issue. Parents can also call the local police department.