

## EasyTech Online Safety Guide for Parents

### Definitions, Tools, Tips, and Resources

Technology is changing faster than many of us can keep up with and requires vigilance to stay up to date on the definitions, tools, risks, and resources of the online world. This parent guide covers several online safety topics to better equip parents with the information and resources needed to be “Web aware.” Specifically, this resource covers information about [filtering](#), [intellectual property](#), [netiquette](#), [ergonomics](#), [addictive behavior](#), [virus protection](#), [cell phone safety](#), [online privacy](#), and [predators](#). It also includes useful tools to help set guidelines and expectations, such as the [Online Safety contract](#).

After reading through this parent handout, have a discussion with your family and agree on your own “acceptable use policy” in your household. The Online Safety contract helps guide the discussion and confirm a commitment from the family to follow your household’s online rules. Finally, take advantage of the helpful tips and resources to further your investigation of online safety so that you and your family can experience all the benefits of technology and rest assured you have done what you can to be safe in this ever-changing online world.

*Note: To learn more about cyber bullying, see the [EasyTech Cyber Bullying Guide for Parents](#).*

## Filtering

### Definition:

Filters limit where people can go online, and what they can do. They may block access to certain sites, or to methods of communication, such as email, chat, or instant messaging. They can also monitor what kids do online, and control the amount of time they spend there. Many search engines offer filtering options to block any search results parents deem inappropriate.

### Filtering Tools:

- **Filter sexually explicit graphic descriptions or images:** These tools block a person from viewing most sexually explicit material on the Web. But be aware, no filter is perfect.
- **Monitor online activities:** These tools allow parents and caregivers to monitor online activities through a variety of methods.
- **Limit the amount of time spent online:** These tools can limit the amount of time spent online. Some tools allow parents to block out times of the day when a person can or cannot go online.
- **Block information from being posted or e-mailed:** These tools prevent giving strangers personal information (e.g., name, home address, etc.) while online.
- **Browsers for kids:** These are Web browsers that serve as a gateway between your computer and the Internet. Browsers for kids generally filter sexual or otherwise inappropriate words or images. They are often designed to be easier for kids to use.

### Tips for Using Filters:

- Have a family discussion and investigate the best types of filters for your family. Create an agreement with your child, setting up guidelines and rules for acceptable computer use.
- Rate filter categories and features based on how important they are to keep your family safe online while keeping the amount of online freedom your child wants.

## Intellectual Property

### Definition:

Intellectual property (IP) refers to creations of the mind – inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images, and designs used in commerce. Through file sharing and/or peer-to-peer programs children may come across intellectual property, most often in the form of copyright-protected music, movies, videos, or TV shows.

### Risks:

- Users of file sharing programs may be in violation of copyright law when they swap or make multiple copies of copyright-protected music, movies, videos, or TV shows.
- Many file sharing and peer-to-peer programs offer easy access, even accidentally, to illegal images and videos.
- File sharing and peer-to-peer sites can put your computer at risk for allowing others access to your computer.
- When you download file sharing programs onto your computer, you may also download additional software known as “spyware.” Advertisers and pornographers use spyware to generate Web traffic on their sites.

### Tips for Parents:

- Talk with your child about intellectual property and copyright laws. Make sure they know what is legal and illegal.
- Research legal-and-free and/or legal-and-pay options for downloading. Let your child know the options that exist for legally downloading files. Bookmark these sites for easy access.
- Stick to copyright-free MP3s to steer clear of computer viruses and follow the copyright laws. Most file-sharing programs let you choose what kind of files you can search for. Usually, your child should search only for music files (MP3s) and not video or image files.
- Make sure anti-virus software and firewalls are installed and up-to-date on your computer for virus protection.

## Netiquette

### Definition:

Netiquette refers to guidelines for acceptable online behavior and communication. Netiquette establishes guidelines that help people communicate effectively, responsibly, and safely.

### What Your Child Should Know:

- The responsibility of using the Internet and the school’s acceptable use policy.
- When people communicate without seeing the other person’s face or hearing their voice, it can be hard to know if they are angry or happy.
- People use different methods to communicate emotions through technology:
  - Faces with symbols to show how they are feeling. Such as :) to show they are smiling or happy, and :( when they are sad.
  - Typing with all capital letters can communicate shouting.

- Messages intended to make your child feel bad are unacceptable. Your child should not reply and should show the message to you or another trusted adult, such as a teacher.
- Your child should never try to hurt someone by writing something mean, and your child should tell you or a teacher when someone is trying to hurt someone else. Your child should never write anything that he or she would not say to someone in person.
- Online communication should never be used to hurt another person by spreading rumors or saying mean things.
- Your child should only send or post something you would approve of. Anything sent using technology could be made visible to everyone in the world, and could even be used by someone to hurt your child at any time, now or in the future.

**Tips for Parents:**

- Create an acceptable use policy for your household that supports the school's policy.
- Discuss news stories regarding right and wrong uses of the Internet.
- Practice writing emails with your child to reinforce and model proper netiquette.

## Ergonomics

**Definition:**

Ergonomics is the study of work. It aims to develop equipment or tools to facilitate work. For children who are on the computer, texting, or playing video games often, ergonomics can be important to their health and safety.

**Risks:**

- Inappropriate computer ergonomics can cause Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.
- Excessive texting can cause Texting Teen Tendonitis (TTT), which is the beginning stage of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.
- Thumb injury can result from continuous use of PDAs with small keyboards or the repetitive motion while playing video games.
- Improper chairs and/or desk height while using the computer can lead to back and neck pain.

**Tips for Parents:**

- Have your child use a keypad tray and mouse tray. These are designed for better posture and should be set to an angle that keeps the wrists flat.
- Be sure the computer chair and desk your child uses is the correct height and fit to support the back and not strain the neck.
- Tell your child that too much texting can cause Texting Teen Tendonitis (TTT), which is the beginning stage of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.
- Explain the symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome to your child, so he is aware of the warning signs.
- Post proper ergonomics safety tips near the computer to remind your child of correct posture.

## Addictive Behavior

### Definition:

Addictive behavior has been used to define excessive Internet use. Addictive behavior can be associated with losing the ability to stop going online to the point it impacts other areas of your life, including friendships, family relationships, emotional stability, school, and so forth.

### Warning Signs:

- The child's school work is affected.
- Friendships and close relationships are neglected or affected negatively.
- The game or online activity is taking up most or all of their leisure time and is preferred over other activities and/or events.
- The child becomes angry or displays erratic behavior when he cannot play the game or go online.
- When asked about the amount of time he or she spends, hides his or her activity.
- His or her personal space or hygiene is neglected.

### Tips for Parents:

- **Consider all the factors** before labeling your child as displaying addictive behavior.
- **Keep an open dialogue.** Talk to your child often about all activities in his life and schedule regular events to keep consistency and guarantee some time away from technology.
- **Promote healthy phone use.** Have your child take time to disconnect from his phone and computer. Work with him to set limits on how much time he or she spends texting or on the phone and/or computer. Choose a time each day, to be "unplugged" and participate in other activities.
- **Investigate software that monitors Internet use.** These tools can be helpful in reminding your child how long he or she has been on the computer so he can learn to monitor and adjust their own behavior to begin healthier habits. (See the Filtering section for more information.)
- **Keep Internet-connected computers in a shared space.** When children use a computer in a room shared with other members of the family, they are more likely to self-regulate their use and behavior.
- **Monitor your own computer and cell phone use.** Your behavior is a model for your child and can serve as a good guideline for responsible technology use.
- **Seek help if you see addictive behavior.** If your child is displaying addictive behaviors, consider having him or her talk to a counselor. Internet addiction can be symptomatic of other issues, such as depression or anger. Having your child talk to a professional may help to reveal what deeper issues may be spurring the behavior.

## Virus Protection

### Definition:

Virus protection helps protect a computer against intrusive applications. These intrusive applications include viruses, worms, spyware, and pop-up advertisements. If not protected, a computer becomes

subject to attacks by harmful intrusive applications and data can be destroyed and lost and personal information and passwords stolen. These intrusive applications can affect the health of your whole computer.

#### **Types and Examples of Intrusive Applications:**

- **Virus** – A virus is a small piece of software that piggybacks on real programs.

*For example:* A virus attaches itself to a program on your computer, such as a spreadsheet program. Each time you run the spreadsheet program the virus runs too and has the chance to reproduce (by attaching to other programs).

- **Worm** – A worm is a small piece of software that uses computer networks and security holes to copy itself. A copy of the worm scans the network for another machine that has a specific security hole. It copies itself to the new machine using the security hole, and then starts replicating from there, as well.

*For example:* You are using one of your school computers and a security screen opens telling you that you need to run an update. The screen looks authentic, but when you look closely it does not match your computer theme exactly. Thinking it is authentic, you click it and infect the computer with a worm. The worm finds another computer on the network and runs the same fake security screen.

- **Pop-Up Advertisements** – Also known as pop-up ads, are applications that open a new browser window containing new content. The new window appears on top of your current view, covering up the Web page you actually want to see. Clicking on the pop-up can sometimes prompt more pop-ups or even worse, contain intrusive applications like spyware or viruses.

*For example:* You are looking for directions on the Web and a pop-up ad opens up. Your computer is infected with a virus. The virus generates endless pop-up ads that make your Web browser so slow it becomes unusable.

- **Spyware** – These computer programs truly “spy” on you. Spyware applications sit silently on your computer and intercept personal information like usernames and passwords.

*For example:* You are researching animals on your favorite Web site and an ad for a movie rental pops up on your screen. It looks interesting, so you click it and infect your computer with spyware.

#### **Risks:**

- Install a reliable form of virus protection to help defend against intrusive applications. Without virus protection software, you open yourself and your computer to attacks, identity theft, and computer malware.

#### **Tips for Parents:**

- Use the resources for Virus Protection (at the end of this document) to help research the best virus protection software for your computer.
- As a family, research and review applications, and choose one to protect your computer.
- Have a family meeting to go over the examples of intrusive applications, what they look like, and what NOT to do when these types of applications pop-up, or what to do when a virus protection program detects an intrusive application.

## Cell Phone Safety

### Definition:

Cell phone safety focuses on how to prevent and protect a person from potentially harmful situations when it comes to using cell phones and texting. Children should know what appropriate and safe cell phone use looks like.

### General Texting Information and Risks:

- Tell your child to not post phone numbers online, or he or she may become vulnerable to cyber bullying, criminals who want to meet offline, and scams.
- Discuss with your child that he or she can never be 100 percent certain that the person texting is the person who owns the phone.
  - Tell your child to not text personal information (about himself ,herself or others); the phone he or she is texting to could have been stolen.
  - Tell your child to never text a password or pin to a friend; the person requesting could have stolen the phone.
  - Explain to your child that if someone texts to meet, even if the person is a known friend,call to confirm; the phone could have been stolen.
- Tell your child to never let someone he or she doesn't know use his cell phone because the person could make prank calls or text messages.
- Explain to your child that if someone he or she knows needs to use the phone for an emergency or important reason (such as calling a parent), your child should carefully watch what the other person does, to make sure he or she does not impersonate your child.
- Tell your child to ignore unexpected links, files, pictures, and phone numbers, and to only click when it is sent by a known person and your child knows why it was sent.
- Explain to your child to only text or reply to people he or she knows. If the number is unfamiliar, ignore the text and possibly try to find out who sent it. Tell your child to think before texting, and never text anything he or she would not say in person.
- Tell your child to always think about how someone will feel before sending a text.
- If your child is angry, tell him or her to stop and wait before texting to avoid sending hurtful or mean messages.
- Tell your child that if someone sends a mean or hurtful message to not reply and show it to you or a teacher before deleting it.
- Tell your child to never try to hurt someone or help someone else hurt someone by texting or sending photos.
- Explain to your child that anything sent electronically can be forwarded, put online, and used to hurt your child, now or in the future. Online information can remain public for the entire world to see, permanently.
- Inform your child to never send anything by texting that could be used to cause hurt or

embarrassment.

### General Phone Usage Safety

- Explain to your child to not text while walking.
- Never text or talk on a cell phone while driving.
- Tell your child that excessive texting can cause Texting Teen Tendonitis (TTT), which is the beginning stages of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.
  - Explain the symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and that he or she should tell you if they have these symptoms.

### Tips for Parents:

- Use a contract like the [Texting Contract](#) at the end of this document to come up with expectations and rules for your child to follow. Come up with some reasonable consequences that will be enforced if the contract expectations are not upheld.
- Involve your child in the process of selecting a cell phone and phone plan so he or she understands the costs associated with having a cell phone as well as the features and limitations of the chosen plan.
- Review monthly bills together to stop excessive cell phone use and additional costs for accessing the Internet or buying applications (or “apps”) and ringtones.
- Keep an open dialogue with your child about potential harmful situations so he or she has a place to go if he or she feels he or she might be in trouble, or is worried about a situation. Make sure he or she knows you are there for him or her regardless of the offense or situation.
- If you are not a texting expert, ask your kids to teach you how. You may find it is an efficient and easy way of communication.
- Be watchful and observant of cell phone use. Make sure to talk with your child about negative patterns you see happening before they become worse or potentially harmful.

## Online Privacy

### Definition:

Online privacy refers to the way in which we protect ourselves as individuals from identity theft as well as keeping personal information safe and secure. Identity theft is when a person takes personal information from one person and makes it his own. Identity theft and identity fraud are terms used to refer to all types of crime in which someone wrongfully obtains and uses another person’s personal data in some way that involves fraud or deception, typically for economic gain.

### Online Identity Theft Examples:

- **Credit card identity theft** – Criminals who gain access to credit card numbers can make purchases and ruin people’s credit for years. Discuss with your child how protecting the identities of family members is a shared responsibility of all family members.
- **Social Security Number theft** – Online criminals who access Social Security numbers can use the numbers to create a new identity or apply for credit. This could damage credit for

years. Discuss with your child to not share his or her Social Security number online.

- **Character theft** – Discuss with your child the forms and consequences of character theft. Explain that someone could use an e-mail address to impersonate and harm others. This type of theft could be damaging to a person’s integrity and reputation. Quite commonly, children with weak passwords have had their avatars stolen or robbed in online gaming sites.

#### **Prevention of Identity Theft:**

- Explain to your child that he or she should never use personal information like a birth date, Social Security number, or their mother’s maiden name as a password or username for any online accounts.
- Educate your child about not giving out personal information in chat rooms or on social networking sites that allow members to make their addresses and phone numbers public to anyone who views their profile.
- Discuss rules for cell phone use that will prevent identity theft (see the Cell Phone Safety section for more information). Remind your child to not loan his or her phone to others and to never email or text with unknown people.
- Explain that some sites are secure, but others are not. Your child should always check whether a site’s security is authentic before entering any personal information.
  - Use a search engine such as Google to get to the site to make sure you typed the Web address correctly.
  - Always look for “https:” on any site that asks you to enter sensitive information.
  - Look at the URL in the browser, is it the correct site?
  - Never send your username and password or other sensitive information in an email.

#### **Tips for Parents:**

- Research in the field of online safety has shown that the three behaviors that put youth most at risk online are:
  - Talking about sex
  - Agreeing to meet someone they met online
  - Harassing others online
- Alarmingly, in most predator incidents, the predators knew the child in the real world.
- You are the first line of defense in protecting your child’s online privacy.
- Discuss with your child the importance of personal information.
- Make sure your child leaves only the absolute minimum in personal information on any Web site.
- Bookmark high-quality noncommercial sites for your child that are enjoyable and educational, and use those as choices for when your child is on the computer.
- While visiting and using social networking sites, make sure privacy settings are set so that only friends can see your child’s profile. Double-check the settings for your child, as they can be confusing and misleading. Periodically check your child’s settings since sites may change



their privacy settings over time.

- Shop with your child online. Make sure that any site you use has requirements in place to ensure that transactions are safe and secure. Show your child how encrypted sites use **https** in the URL address bar instead of **http**.
- Register with your child for different Web sites.

## Predators

### Definition:

Online predators find children through social networking sites, blogs, chat rooms, instant messaging, email, discussion boards, gaming sites, and other Web sites. They seduce their targets through attention, friendliness, gentleness, and sometimes gifts. They know the latest cool music and interesting hobbies that interest children. They are good at “lending an ear” and sympathizing with children’s problems. These predators gradually introduce sexual content into their conversations and may eventually show them sexually explicit material. The biggest threat is that these predators try to find a way to meet the child face-to-face at some point.

According to the Berkman Center Report on Internet Safety, based upon the research done by Wolak, Finkelhor, and Mitchell and M. Ybarra, the children that are at the greatest risk by predators are youth ages 12-17. They are more likely to be female, gay, or questioning their sexual identity. Children who have been previously sexually abused are also at greater risk.

Youth who are targeted inappropriately by adults are often seeking out sexual material or talking about sex online. They have often visited adult-oriented chat rooms where conversations quickly become sexual. Teaching youth to avoid such sites and to present themselves in a non-sexualized manner online is important.

### Tips for Parents:

- Talk with your child about online predators and what they set out to do. Explain that most of the people we meet online are friendly but that some individuals may be mean or want to hurt others.
- Talk with your child about healthy relationships.
- Be alert to signs that your child is engaging in inappropriate communications with adults online. Some signs that may occur if your child is a target are:
  - He or she spends a great deal of time online alone.
  - You find pornography or sexual photos on the family computer.
  - He or she gets phone calls from people you do not know, or make calls (sometimes long distance) to numbers you do not recognize.
  - He or she receives mail, gifts, or packages from someone you do not know.
  - He or she withdraws from family and friends, or quickly turns the computer monitor off or changes the screen when an adult enters the room.(Adapted from the Web site [www.bewebaware.ca/english/sexual\\_risks\\_harm.html](http://www.bewebaware.ca/english/sexual_risks_harm.html).)
- Talk with your child about who in his or her circle is considered to be responsible and trusted adults. Discuss other adults he or she can turn to for help, such as teachers, principals, counselors, coaches, and so forth.

- Use parental controls software.
- Keep the computer in a common area of the house so it can be seen by others. Sit with your child often while he or she is using the Internet.
- Discuss the importance of open communication and what can happen when your child keeps a secret or withholds information. Explain that no one can tell your child to keep secrets from you, and when they are told to keep secrets from their parents, your child should tell you immediately!
- Give your child tips and ideas for communicating about topics that may be difficult. Use resources such as <http://kidshealth.org/> for tips for kids to start a difficult conversation with parents or another adult.
- Make sure your child keeps his or her number private. Given that so many IM clients now make it possible to send text messages directly to cell phones, never post a cell phone number on a social networking site or any site for that matter.
- Make sure your child limits where personal information is posted. Be careful who can access contact information or details about his or her interests, habits, volunteering, or employment to reduce exposure to people he or she does not know. This will protect his or her privacy and reduce unwanted contact from weirdos, bullies, or potential predators.

### Our Family's Online Safety Contract

After reading through the parent guide, have a discussion with your family to come to consensus about your own "acceptable use policy" within your household. This contract will help to guide the discussion and confirm a commitment to follow your household's online rules.

**Name of Parties:** This contract is between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Statement of Agreement** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Terms of Agreement

**Ergonomics:** How will we modify our surroundings to work safely with electronics?

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**Filtering:** What filters are necessary for our family to allow for safe and responsible computer use?

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**Virus Protection:** What kind of virus protection will our family use to protect our computer from intrusive applications? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cell Phones:** What guidelines will we follow while texting and talking on our cell phones?

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**Online Privacy:** What steps will we take to protect our family from identity theft and to keep our personal information protected?

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**Predators:** How will we keep open communication and be proactive about potential dangerous situations and/or predator encounters?

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**Intellectual Property:** What rules and guidelines will we follow to stay within the law when we are using file sharing or peer-to-peer programs?

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**Netiquette:** What kind of acceptable online behavior will our family use to be safe, respectful, and responsible online?

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**Addictive Behavior:** What rules will we all follow to promote healthy technology use? How will we make sure we all follow these rules?

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**By signing this we agree to abide by and follow the above terms.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Texting Contract

**Name of Parties:** This contract is between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Statement of Agreement** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Terms of Agreement

**Ergonomics:** How will you modify your texting to keep yourself safe?

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**Prevention:** How will you avoid potentially harmful situations?

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**Safety Actions:** Explain what actions you will take to protect yourself.

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**Social Manners:** List the guidelines you will follow while texting.

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**By signing this I agree to abide by and follow the above terms.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Resources

### Filtering

#### GetNetWise

[http://kids.getnetwise.org/tools/tool\\_result.php3](http://kids.getnetwise.org/tools/tool_result.php3)

For Parents

This Web page offers a portal to search for several different kinds of Internet tools and resources, including: browsers for kids, filters, peer-to-peer networks and many others.

#### Common Sense Media

<http://www.common sense media.org/tech-tip-using-google-safe-search>

For Parents

This Web page provides a video on how to set up Google's Safe Search option.

### Intellectual Property

#### Media Awareness Network

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/parents/index.cfm>

For Parents

This Web page includes resources and support for parents and teachers interested in media and information literacy for children. It includes research, lesson plans, blogs and products to support media awareness.

#### World Intellectual Property Organization

[www.wipo.int/about-ip/en/](http://www.wipo.int/about-ip/en/)

For Parents

This Web page gives a clear and thorough explanation to answer the question, "What is Intellectual Property?" You will find links to download an Intellectual Property Handbook as well as a document on Understanding Copyright and Related Rights.

#### U.S. Copyright Office

[www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)

For Parents

This is the United States Copyright's Web site, outlining all information about copyright licensing, laws, and policy, including a section on Copyright Basics and Frequently Asked Questions.

### Netiquette

#### CyberSmart!

<http://cybersmartcurriculum.org/mannersbullyingethics>

For Parents

CyberSmart's Web site focuses on 21st Century Skills for educations. This Web page focuses on manners and cybercitizenship. There are several resources to explore, including lesson plans and at home take-aways.

## Ergonomics

### Safe Computing Tips

[www.safecomputingtips.com/articles/ergonomic-technology.html](http://www.safecomputingtips.com/articles/ergonomic-technology.html)

For Parents

This article from SafeComputingTips.com focuses on staying healthy and avoiding injury while working long hours on the computer.

### Ergoweb

[www.ergoweb.com/resources/faq/concepts.cfm](http://www.ergoweb.com/resources/faq/concepts.cfm)

For Parents

This article describes ergonomics in detail, highlighting the purpose and goals of ergonomics and all the physical and environmental risk factors.

### Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Symptoms – [www.MayoClinic.com](http://www.MayoClinic.com)

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/carpal-tunnel-syndrome/DS00326>

For Parents, 6–8, 9–12

This Web page outlines the definition and symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. It also provides links to further investigation with links to: causes, risk factors, diagnosis, treatments, home remedies, alternative medicines, coping and support and prevention.

## File Sharing

### FBI

[www.fbi.gov/cyberinvest/cyberedletter.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/cyberinvest/cyberedletter.htm)

For Parents, 6–8, 9–12

This open letter from the FBI outlines risks and dangers of using peer-to-peer systems. It explains the three most common crimes associated with peer-to-peer systems—copyright infringement, child exploitation, and computer hacking.

### Media Awareness Network

[http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special\\_initiatives/wa\\_resources/wa\\_teachers/are\\_you\\_web\\_aware/web\\_aware\\_filesharing.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/special_initiatives/wa_resources/wa_teachers/are_you_web_aware/web_aware_filesharing.cfm)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12

This Web site titled, “Are You Web Aware? File-sharing,” is written in language targeted at children. It explains the positive and negative uses of file-sharing. It gives statistics, definitions, and strategies for making file-sharing a positive experience. This is a Canadian organization, so some of the statistics and laws focus on the Canadian perspective.

### SoftForYou

[www.softforyou.com/articles\\_tutorials/peer\\_to\\_peer\\_networks.html](http://www.softforyou.com/articles_tutorials/peer_to_peer_networks.html)

For Parents

This Web site features an article called, “Peer-to Peer-Networks: Vital information for Parents” by Jonathan Stromberg. This article explains what peer-to-peer networks are, why they are popular, the dangers associated with them, and the most common peer-to-peer sites.

**TopTenREVIEWS**

[www.internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/peer-to-peer-file-sharing.html](http://www.internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/peer-to-peer-file-sharing.html)

For Parents

This Web site explains peer-to-peer networks and how they are used. It explains why these systems should be a concern. It also lists the most common file sharing Web sites. Screenshots are shown of actual file sharing content that includes controversial content.

**Wikipedia**

[www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File\\_hosting\\_service](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File_hosting_service)

For Parents, 6–8, 9-12

This is the Wikipedia entry for “file hosting service.” It focuses on explaining the technical side of file hosting services. A chart is provided that compares the most common file hosting services.

**Texting**

**Connect Safely**

[www.connectsafely.org](http://www.connectsafely.org)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web site provides numerous technology safety tips. Texting-related issues such as sexting and cell phone safety are well covered, but safety tips related to other issues, such as video-sharing and chat rooms, are also available.

**Education.com**

[www.education.com/magazine/article/child-sexting-parents](http://www.education.com/magazine/article/child-sexting-parents)

For Parents, 6–8, 9-12

This article includes information for parents about sexting. It explains what it is, consequences for sexting, and tips for parents about how to keep their children safe from sexting.

**Examiner.com**

[www.examiner.com/x-931-NY-Parenting-Teens-Examiner-y2009m1d17-Teen-Texting-Safety-Tips](http://www.examiner.com/x-931-NY-Parenting-Teens-Examiner-y2009m1d17-Teen-Texting-Safety-Tips)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web sites includes five teen texting safety tips. These tips help children understand how to be safe with their cell phones. There is also a link to more information about the “lingo” of texting.

**KidsHealth**

[www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/texting.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/texting.html)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This article explains the hazards of texting while “on the move,” like walking or driving. The Web site gives examples of how dangerous texting on the move can be, such as causing car accidents. It includes tips for texting and when not to text.

**KidsHealth**

[www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/driving/no\\_texting.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/driving/no_texting.html)

For Parents, K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web site gives children language they can say to encourage others to not text and drive. This article relates to students too young to drive, because it tells them what they can do as passengers in a car to help people to stop texting and driving even though they themselves are still too young to drive.



**NetLingo**

<http://www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php>

For Parents

This Web site offers a large list of definitions for Internet acronyms and text message jargon.

**Scholastic.com**

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3751903>

For Parents, K–2, 3–5

This article called, “Cell Phone Safety: Helpful Tips for Kid Communications,” is targeted to children. The language is kid-friendly. It includes definitions for common cell phone-related words, such as “cyber bully” and “spammers.” It includes risks of cell phone use and ways to use cell phones safely.

## Identity Protection

**The Huffington Post**

[www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/01/21/worst-internet-passwords\\_n\\_431055.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/01/21/worst-internet-passwords_n_431055.html)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This article contains information about creating strong passwords. It lists the top 20 most common, and therefore worst, passwords. It is a good Web site to discuss how to create good, strong passwords with students.

**KidsHealth**

[www.kidshealth.org/kid/watch/house/online\\_id.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/watch/house/online_id.html)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web article discusses “online identity.” It helps children consider who they are online and what to post on social networking sites. It uses kid-friendly language and presents rules to follow when considering their online identity.

**KidsHealth**

[www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/online\\_id.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/online_id.html)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web article is about protecting your online identity and reputation. It gives examples of ways an online identity can affect a child’s life, such as getting kicked off a sports team for posting inappropriate information on a social networking site. It gives children things to consider to safeguard their online identity and reputation.

**U.S. Department of Justice**

[www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/websites/idtheft.html#whatis](http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/websites/idtheft.html#whatis)

For Parents, 6–8, 9-12

This is a Web site created by the U.S. Department of Justice to explain identity theft. It includes the most common ways identity theft is committed and how to protect against identity theft.

## Online Safety

**American Association of School Librarians**

[www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aboutaasl/aaslcommunity/quicklinks/el/elinternet.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aboutaasl/aaslcommunity/quicklinks/el/elinternet.cfm)

For Parents

This Web site provides a list of resources teachers and parents can use to help students stay safe online. It also includes a discussion on the pros and cons of using parental control software to filter Web sites.

**KidsHealth**

[www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/internet\\_safety.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/safety/safebasics/internet_safety.html)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web page article gives information to children about using the Internet safely. It tells children to keep their information private, how to avoid cyber bullying, and how to minimize online annoyances.

**KidsHealth**

[www.kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/Parents/talk\\_to\\_parents.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/Parents/talk_to_parents.html)

For Parents, 3–5, 6–8, 9-12

This Web article helps children understand how to best talk with adults. It includes information about how to bring up a difficult topic with an adult, the language to use so parents will listen, and what to do if talking with parents doesn't help.

**KidSites**

[www.kidsites.com](http://www.kidsites.com)

For Parents, K–2, 3–5

This Web site connects children with kid-friendly Web sites. The directory includes different categories children can click to find links about that topic. There are educational sites and fun sites, and all the Web sites are appropriate for children.

**Media Awareness Network**

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/parents/index.cfm>

For Parents

This Web site has tips for helping adults keep children safe by age, so this is a place where parents could find age-appropriate information for their children. There is also information about online searching and links to kid-friendly search engines and directories.

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security, US-CERT Cyber Security**

[www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST05-002.html](http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST05-002.html)

For Parents

This Web page presents a list of what adults can do to help children stay safe online. The page also includes links to other relevant online safety resources.

## Addictive Behavior

**Be Web Aware**

[www.bewebaware.ca/english/compulsive\\_use.html](http://www.bewebaware.ca/english/compulsive_use.html)

For Parents

This site offers information and statistics regarding excessive Internet use, including addictive behaviors associated with online gaming and gambling.

**Norton from Symantec**

[www.symantec.com/norton/library/familyresource/article.jsp?aid=fr\\_onlinegaming\\_addiction](http://www.symantec.com/norton/library/familyresource/article.jsp?aid=fr_onlinegaming_addiction)

For Parents

This article, entitled, Online Games, Games vs. Addiction, offers descriptions of what gaming addiction looks like and ways to prevent it.

**Healthy Place**

[www.healthyplace.com/addictions/center-for-internet-addiction-recovery/addicted-to-online-gaming/menu-id-1111/](http://www.healthyplace.com/addictions/center-for-internet-addiction-recovery/addicted-to-online-gaming/menu-id-1111/)

For Parents

This Web page offers an article, a test, and online help to dealing with addiction to computer or Internet gaming.