INTERNET SAFETY

INTERNET INFORMATION

Talk to your kids about internet safety. Set rules about their internet use and make sure they know safety guidelines such as:

- Never give information, including their name or where they live or go to school to anyone that they meet on the internet.

- Never give out their e-mail address or join any sort of mailing list without permission.

- Never arrange to meet anyone that they first meet on the internet.

- Be careful of pictures that they post on the internet; get parent's permission before they post any pictures.

- Be aware of what your children look at. If you are not already, become computer savvy enough to check the history of what your kids look at online.

- Use bookmarks to help your kids find the sites that they use regularly without needing to search for them, this can prevent them from stumbling onto content that they had not intended to find.

- Use parental controls to restrict the content that your children can look at on the internet.

- Teach your children that not everything that is posted online is true, also not everyone on the internet is who they say they are.

- Tell you kids to let you know if they come across anything on the internet that makes them uncomfortable.

- Have your children show you what they do online, their favorite websites, etc.

- Make sure that your child is using a screen name that is not descriptive; it should not indicate that it is the real name of a child, where you live, or even the gender of your child.

ALTHOUGH THERE CAN BE DANGERS ONLINE, DO NOT DENY YOUR CHILDREN ACCESS TO THE INTERNET.

It is a tool that they will need as they progress in their education and eventually in their professional career. They need to learn to use the internet, teach them how to use it responsibly.

- Keep the computer in a central area of your home, do not put it in a child's bedroom or an isolated area.

- Be aware of what your children download. Make sure that they know that not everything on the internet is free, but to never give out your credit card number.

- Teach your children what content is appropriate and how to avoid any content that may be inappropriate.

- Spend time with your children on the internet. This can teach them appropriate internet topics that you need to discuss with your children.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social media websites (such as MySpace, Facebook and Twitter) allow a high level of interaction from participants which may lead to a high amount of personal information to be divulged. Consider whether or not you would like to allow your children to use social media. There are a lot of uses for the internet and social media is just one.

- Be aware of the social networks that your child uses. Each network has settings that you can use to protect your child's privacy; help your child set these appropriately.

- Limit time spent using social media and set clear rules about the information your child gives out.

EMAIL

- Monitor content of your child's e-mail.

- Teach kids about spam, how to identify it, and how to delete it before opening.

- Remind kids that they do not need to respond to everyone that sends them information on the internet.

- Teach your child to never open an attachment on an e-mail if they are not sure who the e-mail came from.