



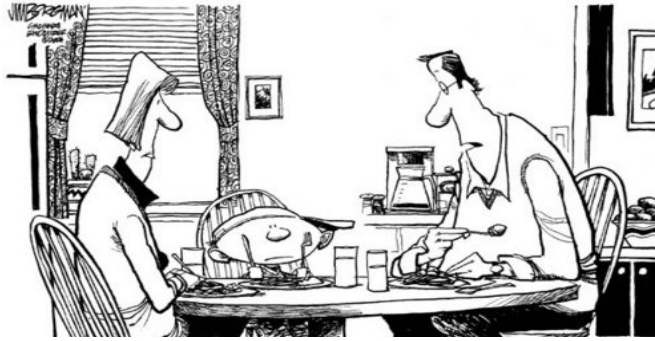
Jericho High School's Psychology Corner

Danielle Largotta-Smith, Psy.D.

Keeping Our Youth Safe in the New Age of Technology: A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety

The overarching goal of the Jericho High School's Psychology Corner's publications is intended to help promote healthy minds and lives for the community as a whole. We live in a technologically savvy world, where approximately 93% of children ages 12-17 are more well versed in Internet surfing, blogging, twittering, instant messaging, texting, and video chatting than adults (Feinberg & Robey, 2008). Therefore, it is essential for parents to know how to protect their children from the potential dangers that lurk on these electronic devices. Although these tools can be very useful in providing easily accessible knowledge to our youth, we should also be mindful of the harmful effects that they may unforeseeably create. In this three part series about keeping our youth safe in the age of technology, parents will be provided with a basic guide to create an Internet/Cell Phone safety plan and to prevent Cyberbullying with our adolescents (http://www.jerichoschools.org/hs/docs/2011.01.01-Internet_Safety.pdf).

For this second publication regarding *Keeping Our Youth Safe in the New Age of Technology*, Dombrowski and Gischlar (n.d.) suggested the following strategies for parents to use in order to help prevent their children from falling prey to some of the potential dangers in Internet use:



“Well yes, we could read your blog...or you could just tell us about your school day.”

Establish boundaries with your child...

- ➔ Establish a parent-child Internet use contract.
- ➔ Place computer in a public location, such as a den, instead of in a child’s bedroom.
- ➔ Supervise/monitor Internet friends in a fashion similar to how neighborhood and school friends are monitored.
- ➔ Monitor the amount of time your child spends online and frequently check the Web browser’s history, which provides information on the websites that have been accessed.
- ➔ Understand and approve children’s screen names—predators target sexually suggestive screen names.

Discuss with your children how they can protect themselves...

- ➔ Explain to older children and adolescents the potential hazards of online sexual solicitation and the risks associated with Internet communication with strangers. Younger children may not need as detailed a discussion, but should be cautioned about the dangers of talking to people they do not know.
- ➔ Discuss the dangers of face-to-face contact with someone met online.
- ➔ Teach your child to avoid sending personally identifying information (e.g., real name, address, school, telephone number, photos, and family member names) via the Internet.

- ➔ Discourage your child from downloading games and other media which could contain Trojan and worm programs that enable remote access to computers by unauthorized users.

Protect your family...

- ➔ Install a firewall (e.g., Norton Personal Firewall), privacy filtration software (e.g., Net Nanny5), anti-adware/spyware (e.g., Ad-Aware), and an antivirus program (e.g., Norton antivirus).
- ➔ Encrypt your wireless home network.
- ➔ Set the Internet browser (e.g., Internet Explorer) security feature to “high.”

Since there is tremendous risk in allowing children unlimited access to “surf” the Internet without adult supervision/monitoring, it is imperative that we take action in protecting our children. In utilizing the aforementioned recommendations regarding monitoring children’s online activities, we can ultimately decrease that potential risk. Please take the time to review some of the references and recommended websites to obtain more information regarding this serious topic.

References

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