

## TIPS FOR SAFE ONLINE CHATTING



1. Position the computer in your main living space and make sure the monitor faces OUTWARD into the room so there is no secrecy. This is the single MOST valuable thing you can do for your child's health and safety online.
2. Work as a team to set your boundaries. Discuss with your child exactly what is OK and what is not OK regarding what kind of Websites are appropriate for them to visit, which chat rooms to visit and what kind of things to talk about there. Set logical consequences for when your child disregards your rules (like grounded from the Internet for a week), but do NOT threaten to ban the Internet forever.
3. Stress to your child they need to tell you if they receive any weird or upsetting messages while chatting, and that you will not be angry with them nor will you ban the Internet as a result. Make it clear to the child that you understand that the child cannot control what other people say to him or her and that they are not to blame if this happens.
4. Set strict time limits for Internet chat use and enforce them. Internet addiction is a real thing!
5. Make it clear to your child that people in chat rooms are ALWAYS strangers, no matter how often they chat to them, and no matter how well they think they know them, and that while they may be good or bad people, they are still strangers. Your child should therefore not always believe everything people say in chat rooms.
6. Make sure your child understands that they are never to tell a person online their real name, their school. Their phone number or where they live.
7. Do not permit your child to be left alone in cyberspace for long periods of time – this is when they are the most vulnerable. Make sure that their chat time occurs when YOU are around in the house so that you can check in on them regularly.
8. Be sure to stress to your child that they are to behave politely and respectfully at all times while chatting online with strangers or sending email to friends.
9. Don't panic! No one can harm your child through the Internet as long as your child follows your rules.
10. Take an active interest in your child's activity online. DO NOT use the Internet as a babysitter! Learn to surf the Web and chat online yourself so you understand what it is that your child is doing. If you do not know how to chat online, talk with an ABS Technologies Representative who can assist you in signing up for the next introduction workshop on "Using the Internet."

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## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ONLINE

**Please report incidents** of online child sexual exploitation to the Nation Center For Missing And Exploited Children (NCMEC) cyber tip line:

**Phone:** 800-843-5678

**Web:** [http://www.ncmec.org/missingkids/servlet/PageServlet?LanguageCountry=en\\_US&PageId=169](http://www.ncmec.org/missingkids/servlet/PageServlet?LanguageCountry=en_US&PageId=169)

## ELECTRONIC HARASSMENT AND CYBERSTALKING

**Please report incidents** of electronic harassment and cyberstalking to SafetyEd International:

**E-mail:** [safetyed@safetyed.org](mailto:safetyed@safetyed.org)

**Web:** <http://www.safetyed.org/help/stalking/cyberstalking.html>

## CONSUMER FRAUD

**Please report incidents** of Internet scams and consumer child exploitation to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC):

**Phone:** 877-382-4357

**Web:** <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/>