

Children & Internet Safety: What the Research Shows

Source: Myspace, Internet Safety Center
Website: www.myspace.com/InternetSafetyCenter
Website Address: <http://www.myspace.com/InternetSafetyCenter>
Website Content: This site provides information on how to protect children from online predators, identity theft, and other internet risks. It includes a section on how to create a safe online environment for children.

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Age Group	Percentage of Children Who Engage in Risky Behavior
12-17	68%
18-24	52%
25-34	45%
35-44	38%
45-54	32%
55-64	28%
65+	22%

US study of more than 400 children averaging 12 years of age
majority of children did not engage in risky behavior, a significant majority of children did
 - 51% of boys and 27% of girls had posted personal information online.
 - 49% of students reported exposure to inappropriate images.
 - Nearly 10% reported posting such content.
E. B. Dewell, A. M. Bergson, and D. J. Cornsberg, "Distancing of Internet Risk Behaviors in a Middle School Student Population," Journal of School Health, 79:11, (2009).

Share Time: In your observation, what are the most risky internet behaviors to affect children in your setting (social group, school, region, country)?

Are there guidelines or legal requirements to protect children from being bullied or cyberbullied?
 - What are they?
 - How do they work?
 - What are the consequences of not following them?
 - How do they affect the school's culture and climate?
 - How do they affect the students' learning and well-being?

Understanding Filtering Technology:
 Filters raise red flags. This is called online over-filtering.
 Results can be a frustration. Some users may want to bypass the filters and it becomes a technological arms race.
 Implementation costs. Filtering software and time of services to set up and manage it.
 The school should have the philosophical discussion of what they choose to accept or deny by hardware/software security solutions such as filters.
 Will you block all media, including medical sites?
 Will you block all games, even educational ones?
 Will you block social networking?
 Will the same rules apply for young children as older ones? For teachers?

- Check government, teaching/librarian associations for guidelines on how to teach Internet safety.
- The school should adopt the curriculum and it should be taught not only in computer class but embedded in all subjects.
- The goal is to teach children to make choices while engaging in everyday activities on the Internet.

"A child may be so trained as to have, like the beast, no will of his own. Even his individuality may be merged in the one who superintends his training; his will, to all intents and purposes, is subject to the will of the teacher. Children who are thus educated will ever be deficient in moral energy and individual responsibility. They have not been taught to move from reason and principle."
Ellen G. White, Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students Regarding Christian Education, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1943), p.74.1.



Class/Lesson	Description of Content Lesson	Description of Cyber Lesson
Art	Visit an art museum. Students select a painting that they like. They research the painting online and prepare an art report.	Teach students to evaluate internet sources—research site in internet enable face Wikipedia.
Bible—Biblical Characters and the Old Testament	Identify and explore the experiences of a biblical character who demonstrated holiness. Students will research items through the year of God (example might be Simeon).	How people "kill" others online with words and actions (explore how frightened Christians were of Saul and how fighting cyber bullies/gangs feel).
Health—Physical Safety, Respect for Others	All human beings are made in God's image and should respect their bodies and those of others.	Assessing online solicitation: What does pornography do to the one being exploited?
Social Studies—Learning about another region/culture	Explore life/culture/customs in an online forum with a class to another location. Students share facts about their environment (living in a farm, in a city, by the beach, in the mountains); share photos of school.	Teach cyber etiquette and respect when communicating, without tools from to safely share information and photos... what to share and what not to share.

Your turn--How might you teach Internet safety in one of your classes?

- Engage in discussion to come to philosophical agreement
- Become familiar with legal parameters and curricular options
- If implementing technology solutions, hire a professional to manage them
- Develop Internet Safety Policy
- Filtering, rules & consequences, user contract, curriculum
- Set up a monitoring system to ensure that the policy is implemented across the school

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Filipino children/teens:

- Use the Internet to play games, visit social networking sites, listen to music, watch videos, share photos, and even do their homework.
- Have turned cyberspace into a "virtual playground."

Monique Lachica, "Pinoy Kids Getting More 'Techie'", ABS-CBN News, May 9, 2012

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/lifestyle/05/09/12/pinoy-kids-getting-more-techie-study>

- 45% Filipinos connect to Internet, while 36% listen to radio and 12% read newspapers.
- 85% of 16-20 year old and 74% of 21-24 year old Filipinos had accessed the Internet within the previous four weeks.
- Internet use in urban areas has surpassed 50% of the population.

Tam Noda, "Internet Usage Overtakes Radio," PhilStar, January 21, 2012. (Reporting on TNS Digital Life 2012 study):

<http://www.philstar.com/nation/article.aspx?publicationsubcategoryid=200&articleid=773104>

Addiction:

Internet activities (social networking or gaming) can lead to addiction and neglect of normal life and relationships.

Hacking/Viruses:

- Malicious software (known as Malware) is used to steal information, interrupt computer use, or gain unauthorized access to a computer.
- Malware includes spyware (spying on the computer system in the background), adware (forcing advertising to appear without the user's permission), viruses, worms, Trojans, etc. (various types of malware designed to damage computer systems).

Illegal/Inappropriate Cyber-activity:

Examples include pirated music, photos, or videos, plagiarism, and more hardcore activities such as gambling, child pornography, and pornography.

Cyberbullying:

Publishing untrue or unflattering comments, facts, or photos about the child as well as behaviors normally identified as bullying, such as threats and harassment.

Grooming/stalking by pedophile or other criminal:

A criminal may contact a child online and encourage a meeting that can lead to abduction, exploitation or death.

Identity Theft:

Occurs through phishing (emails that trick people into revealing sensitive or personal information), downloads from dangerous websites or by the secret installation of software that captures keystrokes.

Loss of Control Over Personal Photos/Information:

Once posted online, personal data, photos/video (sometimes in a compromising situation) are difficult to retract.

Loss of Online Reputation:

A poor choice of publishing behavior/activities may cause loss of respect that can follow a child into adult life.

Children and Teen Online Behavior

Activity	Description	Commonly Associated Risks
Socializing	Uses social networking sites (Facebook). “Friends” often include people whom the child has never personally met.	Cyber-bullying, grooming, stalking, identity theft, dangerous websites, loses control of personal photos/ information, loses online reputation
Sharing	Shares photographs, videos, files, and personal information.	Cyber-bullying, grooming, stalking, hacking/viruses, identity theft, dangerous websites, loses control of personal photos/ information, loses online reputation
Online Gaming/ Gambling	Plays games. Teens access online gaming sites where adults and children play.	Addiction, grooming, stalking, inappropriate or dangerous ideologies/websites
Searching	Browses Internet for homework, entertainment, or personal interest. Browsing may include legal or illegal content	Hacking/viruses; identity theft; illegal, inappropriate cyber-activity; in-appropriate use of bandwidth, dangerous ideologies/websites
Down-loading	Downloads content to share, or to manipulate in order to create something new.	Hacking and viruses, identity theft, illegal or inappropriate cyber-activity, dangerous ideologies/websites

US study of more than 400 children averaging 12 years of age:

- **majority of children did not engage in risky behaviors, a significant minority of children did:**
- **31% of boys and 27% of girls had posted personal information online.**
- **40+% of students reported exposure to inappropriate images.**
- **Nearly 30% reported posting rude comments.**

E. B. Dowell, A. W. Burgess, and D. J. Cavanaugh, “Clustering of Internet Risk Behaviors in a Middle School Student Population,” Journal of School Health, 79:11, (2009).

Share Time: In your observation, what are the most risky Internet behaviors to affect children/teens in your setting (social group, school, region, country)?

Are there guidelines or legal requirements to:
Protect children from bullying (which would include cyberbullying)
Protect children from pornography?
Use filtering?

Administrators, school board and teachers, learn:
What filters are and what do they do? Internet filters block access to some content or to certain sectors of the web based on preset rules.

What solutions there are for protecting the school's bandwidth (keeping users from slowing down the systems by streaming movies, etc.

What solutions there are to protect the school's network and systems from hacking and malware?

Understanding Filtering Technology:

Filters make mistakes. This is called under- or over-filtering.

Resistance to circumvention. Savvy users may seek ways to bypass the filters and it becomes a technological arms race.

Implementation costs. Hardware/software and time of personnel to set up and manage it.

The school should have the philosophical discussion of what they hope to accomplish by hardware/software security solutions such as filters.

Will you block all nudity, including medical sites?

Will you block all games, even educational ones?

Will you block social networking?

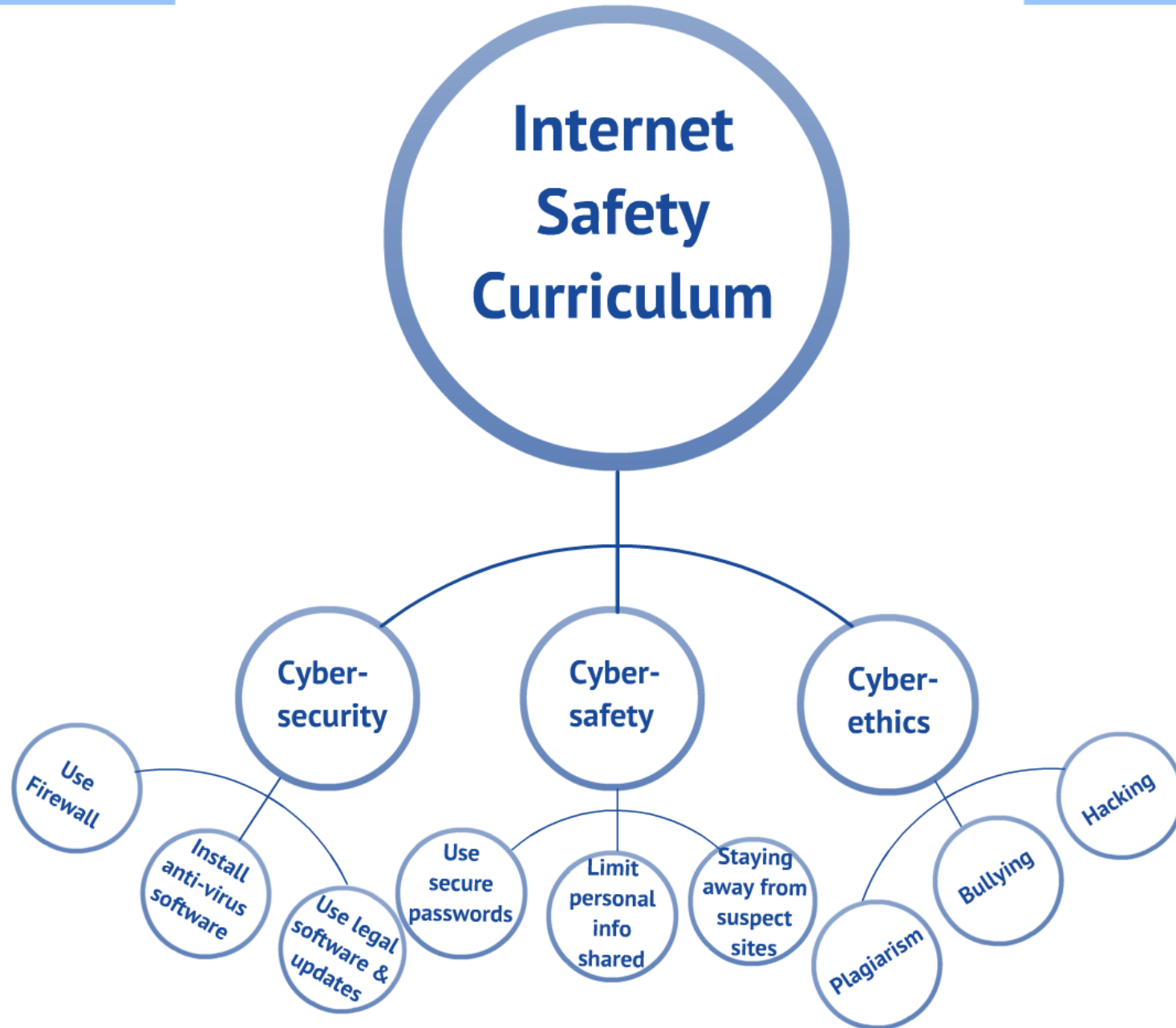
Will the same rules apply for young children as older ones? For teachers?

- **Check government, teaching/librarian associations for guidelines on how to teach Internet safety.**
- **The school should adopt the curriculum and it should be taught not only in computer class but embedded in all subjects.**
- **The goal is to teach children to make choices while engaging in everyday activities on the Internet.**

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Internet Safety Curriculum



Davina Pruitt-Mentle, C3 framework cyberethics, cybersafety, cybersecurity: Promoting responsible use, Maryland: Educational Technology, Policy, Research and Outreach (n.d.). Accessed June 14, 2012 at http://www.edtechpolicy.org/cyberk12/Documents/C3Awareness/C3_framework_full_final.pdf

<i>Examples of Implementing Cybersafety Lessons</i>		
Class/Lesson	Description of Content Lesson	Description of Cyber Lesson
Art-- Appreciation of a piece of art	Visit an art museum. Students select a painting that they like. They research the painting online and prepare an oral report.	Teach students to evaluate Internet sources—museum site is more credible than Wikipedia.
Bible--Biblical Characters and Sin and Redemption	Identify and explore the experiences of a biblical character who demonstrated bullying tendencies but overcame them through the grace of God (example might be Saul/Paul)	How people “kill” others today with words and actions (explore how frightened Christians were of Saul and how frightening cyber bullying can feel).
Health-- Physical Safety, Respect for Others	All human beings are made in God’s image and should respect their bodies and those of others.	Avoiding online solicitation. What does pornography do to the one being exploited?
Social Studies-- Learning about another region/culture	Explore lifestyles/cultures in an online forum with a class in another location. Students share facts about their environment (living on a farm; in a city; by the beach, in the mountains); share photos of school.	Teach cyber etiquette and respect when communicating online; teach how to safely share information and photos...what to share and what not to share.

Your turn--How might you teach Internet safety in one of your classes?

- **Engage in discussion to come to philosophical agreement**
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 - **(Filtering, rules & consequences, user contract, curriculum)**
 - **Set up a monitoring system to ensure that the policy is implemented across the school**