

Parents:

It is not too soon to become vigilant if you even have an 8 year old. Other slightly older kids are evangelists about sexual material and teaching younger kids how to get around. Kids at school trade notes on URLs and methods of getting around filters and parental controls. Kids quickly learn how to change screens when adults wander by.

Several teenage girls who have been abducted were initially located by searching on-line profiles. In two publicized cases, the abductor established contact through Internet chat rooms and email. The girls willingly went with their abductors.

- Two 13-year old girls were abducted from Landover, MD on Saturday, 23 June 2001. Get information from WTOP, 1500 AM, Washington, DC. <http://www.wtop.com>.
- Two 15-year old girls were abducted from Alabama to Philadelphia and sexually abused. Listen to Child Safety on the Internet, Part II, Focus on the Family, 02 NOV 2000.

**The single most effective thing you can do is to allow computers to only be in a public area of the home.** Place the computer only in locations that can be under adult supervision at all times. Choose a location visible from the kitchen or wherever else the adult at home is likely to be. Do not permit a computer to be in a bedroom or other room not under frequent adult supervision. Do NOT allow a computer to be in a child's bedroom.

**By your personal example, and by continuing family discussion, ensure that your kids know your family values regarding sexually explicit material and sexual conduct.**

**Discuss the dangers of establishing personal friendships over the Internet with people you have not met. The Internet provides anonymity to people who communicate. People do not reveal their true character, and often pretend to be someone else. Even pictures are not necessarily of people claiming to be in them. Adults seeking to use children directly or vicariously for sexual purposes use the Internet as the primary method for making initial contact.**

**Discuss with your kids the importance of not placing personal information on a personal web site on the Internet. Further, do not exchange personal information with anyone (kid or adult) you have not already met in person. Particularly, do not give personal information to any adult without first getting parental permission.**

Kids learn to set up their own web sites at school. These usually include personal biography information. Discuss this with school officials to ensure that such information posted on the school web server is not accessible via the Internet. Ensure that the school has a policy that permits parents to view their kid's web site.

When signing up for a chat room or for free email, personal questions are often asked for the purpose of creating and posting a user profile. These profiles are searchable by content.

## Parental Checking

- Frequently walk by the computer while the child is using the Internet.
- If you notice the screen changing frequently when you walk by, take control of the machine and view other programs and files having buttons in the task bar.
- Use the "Last Accessed" selection in the drop-down list in Start | Find | Date | Find All Files. Select the button "During the previous \_\_\_ day(s)". Set the counter to one. Click "Find Now". This will generate a list in a dialog box. Scroll horizontally to the right to locate a column labeled "Modified". Click on the column label titled "Modified". This will cause the list to be sorted by date and time. You can adjust the column widths with the mouse just as you do in Excel.

**Monitor your family computer on a weekly basis for the web sites visited.** Some of the things to check are listed below.

### Netscape Navigator

- The box in which a URL can be typed has different names, depending on the version of Netscape you have. It can be called "Location" or "Netsite".
- Check addresses listed in the "Location" bar by clicking on the down-arrow on the right end of the "Location" or "Netsite" edit/list box near the top center of the Netscape Navigator window. Scroll and look for undesirable addresses.
- Check "Bookmarks". You can delete unwanted bookmarks by selecting Bookmarks | Edit Bookmarks.
- Check Communicator | Tools | History.
  - You can see when a site was last visited, and how many times it has been visited since added to the History list.
  - You can set the length of time an unvisited page reference will remain in the History list by going to Edit | Preferences and changing the expiration time. Setting the expiration time to 8 days will give you a week and a day between checks.
  - You can click on the icon of a page to revisit the site to see its content to evaluate it.
  - After viewing the History list, you might want to clear the History list. Do this using the Edit | Preferences menu.

### Internet Explorer

- The box in which a URL can be typed is called "Address".
- Check addresses listed in the "Address" bar by clicking on the down-arrow on the right end of the "Address" list box near the top center of the Internet Explorer window. Scroll and look for undesirable addresses.
- Check the History. You can place the mouse cursor on the right edge of the panel and drag the right edge to the right to make the panel wider. This will make it easier to see full URLs.
  - Click on each time category folder.
  - Within each folder are URLs of pages in cache. Click on each folder to see what pages are there.
  - You can find out additional information about each page by right-clicking on the page title. Select "Properties" from the context-sensitive menu that appears. This will tell you when that page was last visited, and how many times it has been visited since being added to the current History list.

## Cookies

- Cookies are stored in the directory C:\Windows\Cookies. You can find it with Windows Explorer.
- Most cookies are not easily read.
- You can spot some of the offensive ones by the title of the cookie. Some to look out for are any cookie name embedded with
  - words or abbreviations that are sexual in nature
  - po\_n, p\_rn
  - xxx
  - lolita
  - 1000stars
- About 2/3 of the porn sites are hosted on machines in Russia. Suspect cookies with names that end with “.ru”.
- Cookies of many porn sites have just IP numbers (34.128.88.21) rather than a character-based identifier.

## Chat Rooms

- ICQ and Chat Rooms are more productive than porn sites visited with a browser, and they do not log histories.
- A Chat Room with File Transfer enabled is used to trade pictures.

## Filter Programs

- Can filter web site based Chat Rooms, but does not filter Chat Rooms that are run outside of a browser. If you have separate Chat Room software, the browser history will not log visits.
- Specialized Chat Rooms are not screened.
- Filter programs do not work well. Kids learn at school how to get around them easily. Kids at school learn quickly how to avoid detection of illicit site visits. Libraries are also helpless.
- Reviews of Filter Programs
  - Conservative (Focus on the Family, Family Research Council): <http://www.filterreview.com/>
  - Liberal/Supporters (Disney, AT & T): <http://www.getnetwise.org/>

## Child Safety on the Internet

- **Child Safety on the Internet, Part I**, Focus on the Family, 01 NOV 2000. (Available on cassette tape.)
- **Child Safety on the Internet, Part II**, Focus on the Family, 02 NOV 2000. (Available on cassette tape.)
- **Child Safety on the Internet, Part III**, Focus on the Family, 03 NOV 2000. (Available on cassette tape.)
- **FBI guidelines for child Internet safety:** <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm>.