

Internet Safety – Top tips for Parents

Teenagers

1. Make sure your teenager understands the risks of your privacy being compromised – financially and socially and not to give out their password or other details to anyone.
2. Make a contract with your teenager and agree the rules together. Make sure your teenager understands the reasons behind the rules.
3. Update the filtering software and privacy settings on your computer to meet the demands of a teenager. Use a filtering program to restrict the content that your teenager accesses – such as sexually explicit, hate groups, graphic violence, criminal activity or inappropriate such as gambling, alcohol or drugs, such as <http://www.netnanny.com/>
4. If your teenager uses social networking sites such as Bebo, MySpace and Facebook, educate him or her to ensure they are using them safely. For more information, see www.thinkuknow.co.uk
5. Ensure your teenager understands on-line safety rules: Some people may not be who they say they are, so limit the people on their contact list to people they know in the real world; don't allow them to post theirs, or their friends' phone number, address, or school details. Ensure they don't post their plans or meeting places publicly.
6. Keep the communication channels open with your teenager – help them understand the risks involved in posting photos of themselves on their profile or sending them to others where they lose control of the image.
7. If you feel your teenager is the victim of cyber-bullying, save all evidence, learn how to block the bully online or contact your service provider if they are being bullied via text message or messaging.
8. Talk to your teenager about the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP - www.ceop.gov.uk) "Report Abuse" button - you can press that button to report any type of online abuse and it will be followed up by the police. This includes cyber-bullying, hacking, viruses, mobile problems, harmful content, and sexual behaviour.
9. Continue the safety lessons you taught them through childhood – not to meet up with a stranger without being accompanied by you or another trusted adult, and to always to meet in a public place.
10. Your teenager will soon be an adult and needs to know not just how to behave but how to exercise judgment, reaching their own conclusions on how to explore the Net and life in general in a safe and productive manner.