

# INTERNET SAFETY FOR KIDS

keeping your family safe.

## Sheriff R. WHITE

**Parents, be aware of and involved with your children's internet activity. Teach your children internet safety rules. Here are a few to get you started:**

Never give out any personal information. This includes your name, address, phone number, the name of your school, city, family members, sports team you're on, parent's workplace, or anything that might help someone know who or where you are.

Never give your passwords to anyone except your parents. Never change the settings for your computer, or change your password without your parents' permission.

Do not answer emails or IM's from anyone you don't know as a "face to face" friend. This means if they are not a friend or family member you know in person, then you don't respond.

Never meet an online friend in person. They are strangers and may not be who they say they are. If anyone ever asks to meet you, tell you parents immediately.

If you ever feel uncomfortable, if anyone uses bad language or you see or hear something that seems wrong, immediately log off and tell your parents or a trusted adult.

Never lie about your age to access any website.

Never send pictures of your family or yourself to anyone online without first getting your parents' permission. NEVER engage in "sexting". NEVER forward any "sexting" photos you may receive.

Do not fill out "fun" questionnaires, even if they are forwarded to you from friends. Remember, once you send it out, you have no control over who it is forwarded to and it may contain personal information about you.

Follow the same Internet safety rules at your friends' houses, at school and at the library that you follow at home.

Remember, NOTHING is private on the Internet. Never say, do, or post anything that you don't want the world to see.

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## SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

Every parent should know and follow the following safety tips. Please take the time to read and share this information with your children.

**TAKE RESPONSIBILITY:** Know where your children are at all times. Be familiar with their friends and daily activities.

**BUILD SELF-ESTEEM:** A child who has low self-esteem cannot protect himself/herself. Listen carefully to your children's fears, and be supportive in all your discussions with them, replacing fear with knowledge.

**TEACH DECISION-MAKING:** Children at all ages can make decisions. Practice early with little decisions so big decisions later are easier. Teach them to trust their own feelings, and assure them they have the right to say NO to what they sense is wrong.

**BUILD SUPPORT SYSTEMS:** Children need positive adult role models and need to know where to go for help.

**CHOOSE SUBSTITUTE CARE GIVERS CAREFULLY:** Interview and monitor babysitters, group leaders, youth pastors, etc. Be alert to a teenager or adult who is paying unusual amounts of attention to your children or giving them inappropriate or expensive gifts.

**PROTECT KIDS WHO ARE HOME ALONE:** Set ground rules, emergency contacts, and responsibilities for latchkey kids.

**TALK WITH CHILDREN:** Teach your children that no one should approach them or touch them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If someone does, they should tell their parents immediately.

**BE SENSITIVE:** Watch for changes in a child's behavior. They are signals that you should sit down and talk to your children about what caused the changes.

**USE ROLE-PLAYING:** Rehearse safety situations with your child. Give them power through knowledge. Play the WHAT IF? game.

**LET KIDS BE KIDS:** Teach them what they need to know to be safe and let them know you will do your best to protect them. Don't scare the fun out of children. This and other safety information is available from the following organizations. Please share these tips with your family and friends.

- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com) -  
Stop It Now! [www.stopitnow.com](http://www.stopitnow.com)



# BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY

keeping your family safe.

**Sheriff R. WHITE**

**Parents, be smart about school safety.  
Here are a few tips to get you started...**

- If your child is ready to walk to school or a bus stop without adult supervision, make sure to plan the safest, most direct route, and walk it with your child beforehand.
- Teach your child never to talk to strangers, approach a car, or accept rides from anyone they don't know well or don't trust.
- If you've decided your child is old enough to arrive home alone, make sure to review emergency plans and set up safety rules such as calling a parent upon arrival to check in.
- Have a plan should your child miss the bus, or their ride does not arrive to pick them up.
- Be sure your child knows their home phone number and address, your work number, the number of another trusted adult, and how to call 911 for emergencies.

#### **Rules for a child that walks or bikes to school**

- Go with a buddy and always stay on the agreed upon route.
- Follow an emergency backup plan; such as carrying a cell phone or identifying a house along the route that is a safe place to go where someone would be home.
- Obey all traffic signals, signs and crossing guards.
- Wear bright colors to be seen easily.
- Wear your safety helmet when biking.

#### **Rules for a child that rides the bus:**

- Arrive at the bus stop a few minutes early.
- Establish a safe place to wait for the bus away from the street.
- Allow the bus to come to a complete stop and double check for other traffic before stepping out into the street.
- Cross 10 feet out in front of the bus and ensure the driver can see you.

#### **Rules for a child that is driven to school:**

- Stay on the school grounds once you are dropped off and while waiting to be picked up.
- Never go with anyone other than your parent or previously agreed upon person.
- Parents, watch your children until they safely enter the schoolyard or building.
- Always use age appropriate restraints such as a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt. The back seat is the safest place for children.

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## Safety Tips for Children

As soon as a child is old enough to articulate a sentence, he or she can begin the process of learning how to protect themselves against abduction and exploitation. Children should be taught all of the following safety measures and tips.

**WHO I AM AND WHERE I LIVE:** Teach children about who they are including their full name, birthdate, complete address, phone number (including area code), and their parents' full names.

**WHAT I DO IF I CAN'T FIND MY PARENTS:** If you are in a public place and you get separated from your parents, don't wander around looking for them. Go to a checkout counter, the security office, or the lost and found. Tell the person in charge that you have lost your mom and dad and need help in finding them.

**CHECK FIRST:** Always check with your parents, teacher or babysitter before getting into a car or going anywhere with any person. CHECK FIRST before going into a neighbor's house. CHECK FIRST before going anywhere. Your parents need to know where you are.

**USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM:** It's more fun and there is safety in numbers. You should not be wandering around the neighborhood after dark or alone.

**STAY AWAY:** If someone follows you on foot or in a car, stay away from him or her. You shouldn't go near the car to talk to the people inside.

**DON'T ASSIST ADULTS:** No one should be asking you for directions or to look for a lost puppy or to ask for assistance. Adults should ask adults not children.

**RUN, SCREAM, GET AWAY:** If someone tries to take you away, your best defenses are your legs and your voices. Yell "This person is trying to take me." or "This isn't my father (or mother)." Try to run and scream before they get too close. Call 911 from any phone. It's a free call, you don't need money.

**NEVER HITCHHIKE:** Never hitch or try to get a ride home with anyone unless you have checked and your parents have told you it's O.K. to ride with that person.

**DON'T KEEP SECRETS:** Don't keep secrets that make you feel uncomfortable. No one should ask you to keep a special secret. Tell an adult that you trust.

**YOUR BODY IS SPECIAL AND PRIVATE:** No one should touch you in the parts covered by your bathing suit, nor should you touch anyone else in those areas.

**KNOW THAT YOU ARE SPECIAL:** If you have a problem, - any kind of a problem - you can talk to your parents, a teacher, a counselor, your principal, a police officer or a friend of the family.

**YOU CAN CALL 911:** If you have an emergency, or are in a situation where you feel you are in danger, CALL 911. You will get help.