



A GUIDE to INTERNET SAFETY for PARENTS & KIDS

Licking County 
Job & Family Services
Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.

Children Services

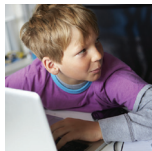
Keeping Children & Families Safe

Licking County Job & Family Services is committed to keeping every child and family as safe as possible. The internet can be a wonderful tool for children, youth and families. **Nothing is more effective for keeping kids safe on the internet than adult supervision.** Open communication with kids about the real dangers as well as safety tips and strategies are essential.

A challenge many families encounter is managing their children's use of the internet. Families must balance their children's use of the internet with other, healthy activities, such as participating in sports, a youth group or simply playing outside. Children's internet usage must be age appropriate. Parents/guardians must ensure that their children don't give out information that could make them susceptible to the dangers of the internet.

Signs your child might be at risk on-line. Does your child:

- Spend a lot of time online, especially at night?
- Turn the computer monitor off or quickly change the screen on the monitor when you come into the room?
- Become uneasy or defensive when you walk into the room or when you linger? This could be a sign that he or she is up to something unusual or even forbidden.
- Become withdrawn from the family?
- Use an on-line account belonging to someone else?
- Have pornography on their computer?
- Receive phone calls from someone you don't know or is making calls, sometimes long distance, to numbers you don't recognize?
- Receive mail, gifts, or packages from someone you don't know?



Cyber Safety Tips for Parents

- Keep the computer in a high-traffic area of your home. Agree on a list of rules and post it by the computer.
- Be familiar with the internet and discuss with children what is considered acceptable/unacceptable and safe/unsafe.
- Talk with your kids about the dangers of meeting people online.
- Open a family e-mail account to share with younger children.
- Know who your child is connecting with and who is connecting with them online.
- Tell your children never to give out or post personal information.
- Establish limits for which online sites children may visit and for how long.
- Remember that internet technology can be mobile, so make sure to monitor cell phones, tablets, gaming devices & laptops.
- Surf the internet with your children and let them show you what they like to do online.
- Set rules for social networking, instant messaging, e-mailing, online gaming, posting pictures and using webcams.
- Continually talk with your children about online safety and let them know they can come to you if they find something scary or threatening on the internet.
- Tell your children never to harass anyone online.
- Being bullied online or in a text message is serious; make sure your children know they can come to you for help if this happens to them.
- Be responsive and non-judgmental if they tell you about an inappropriate site they found accidentally.
- Utilize parental controls provided by your service provider and/or blocking software.
- Keep your antivirus and anti-spamware software up to date.

Cyber Safety Tips for Children

- Tell your parents or guardian if you see something that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Only add people as friends to your site if you know them in real life.
- Let your parents know who you talk to online.
- Never give out your name, address, phone number or school name.
- Don't give out your password.
- Don't use your computer or cell phone to bully anyone.
- Don't open files from strangers.
- If someone sends you an e-mail or text message that is mean or inappropriate about you or someone else, don't respond. Show your parent or guardian.
- Don't forward a mean or vulgar e-mail or text message.
- Never send an e-mail or message that contains a picture of someone else, especially a picture they might not like, without that person's permission. If you receive an inappropriate picture do not forward it and promptly tell your parent, guardian, or teacher.
- Talk with your parents about online safety and ask questions.



Discussion Starters for Parents

- Who do you usually talk to online?
- Do you trust the people that you meet online? Why or why not?
- Do you use Instant Messaging (IM) or chat rooms to talk to your friends and others?
- Do you know how to block others in chat rooms & IM? Can you show me how to do this?
- Have you ever chatted with someone you did not know in real life? What kinds of things did you talk about?

**Keep your kids safe
on the internet!**