

## Introduction

Now that your child is a teen you no longer have the same control over her or his activities that you had when your child was younger. You hope you've given your teenager the tools needed to thrive and prosper independent of you, to stay safe, too. You've probably already talked with your teenager about safe internet use – but the rapidly-changing nature of the online world merits frequent reminders about internet safety.

## Table Talk

Review with your teen what it means to use the internet safely.

- Talk about the importance of not giving out personal information. Describe the types of information that should never be shared online, and why.
- Make sure your teen feels comfortable talking to you if something ever makes him or her feel uncomfortable or scared on the internet.
- Help protect your teen from embarrassment. Remind your teen not to post anything he or she wouldn't want grandma to see. Get your teens in the habit of assuming that whatever gets posted on the internet, stays on the internet.

## Tips & Tricks

There are things you can do to help ensure your teen's safety on the internet.

- **Use family safety tools on the computer.** Use safety settings on the computer to limit access to inappropriate websites and activities. Check the browsing history periodically to monitor what sites have been accessed on the family computer.
- **Set some ground rules for internet use.** Set boundaries for how much time your teen can spend on the computer and which sites he or she is allowed to visit.
- **Review proper internet etiquette.** Remind your teen not to gossip on the internet. Courtesy towards others, and not reacting with anger, can help keep your teenager from being a victim, or participant, of cyberbullying.

## Plan & Practice

Practice how to avoid cyberbullying or internet harassment, and practice how to respond to cyberbullying if it happens.

- Ask your teen to research the best way to respond if she or he witnesses someone being cyberbullied on the internet. Ask your teen to write down phone numbers and websites where bullying and stalking can be reported.
- Help your teen create a safe (non-provocative) moniker she or he can use to remain anonymous on the internet.
- Periodically put your teen's name in an internet search engine to see what comes up. (California now has a law that lets teens erase embarrassing posts and pictures from the internet.)

## Learn More

For more information on internet safety, check out the sites below:

- **Cyberbullying Safety Tips**  
<http://www.internetsafety101.org/cyberbullyingsafety.htm>  
This site provides tips for protecting your child from cyber-bullying.
- **State Cyberstalking and Cyberharassment Laws**  
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/telecommunications-and-information-technology/cyberstalking-and-cyberharassment-laws.aspx>  
A site that provides state cyber-stalking and cyber-harassment laws.
- **Unprecedented 'eraser button' law in California gives teens new Internet life**  
<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/calif-measure-kind-teenagers-erase-internet-article-1.1466400>  
This *New York Daily News* article discusses California's "Eraser Button" law, which allows teenagers to erase embarrassing Internet posts.