75% of children are online four or more days per week and **72%** of children spend more than 2 hours on a typical day online. -Youth Internet Survey

89% of solicitations occur in chat rooms or Instant Messages. -Pew Study

73% of exposures occur while children are searching or surfing the Internet. -Youth and Society

43% of children exposed to inappropriate sites did not disclose it to any one. -Youth and Society

25% of children are exposed to unwanted pictures of naked people or people having sex. -Youth Internet Survey
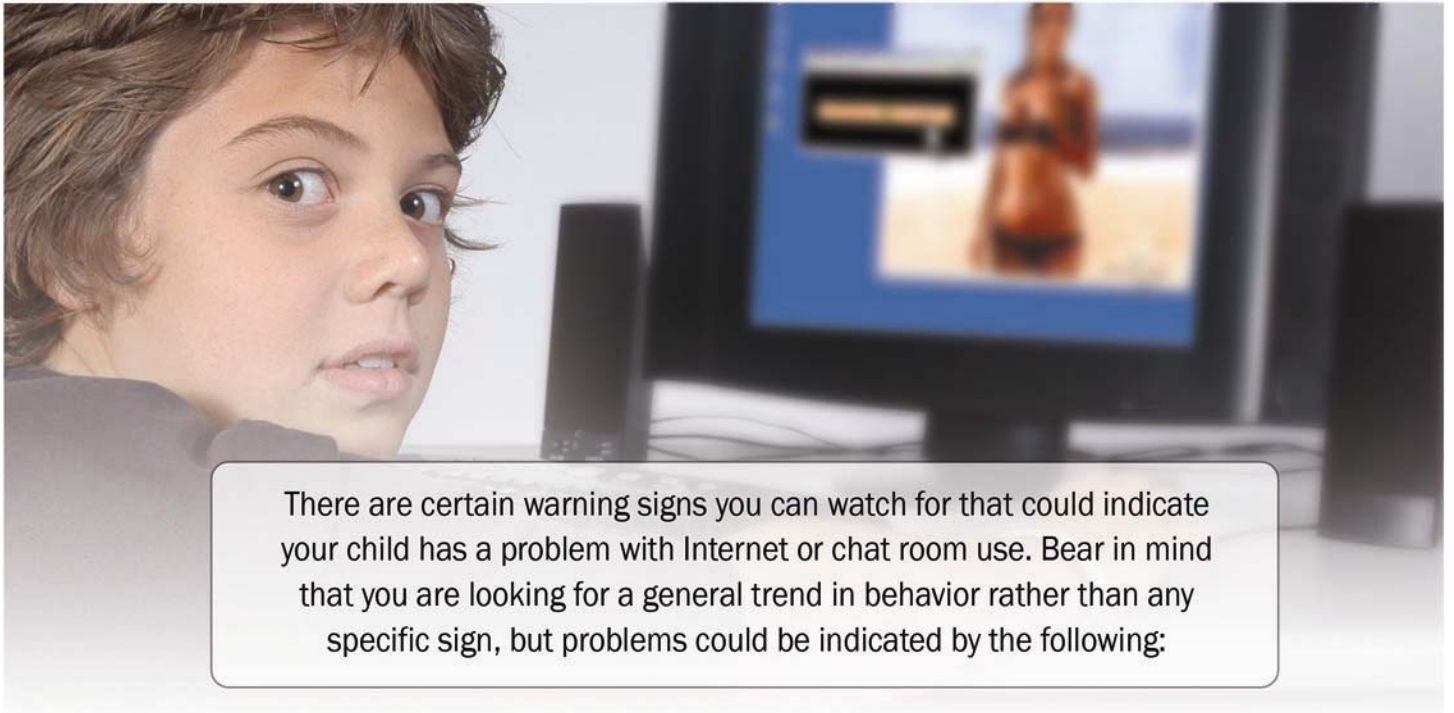
SAFE SURFING

Keeping kids out of harm's way on the Internet
Some advice and guidance for Parents from Data Doctors.

The Internet is a window on the world through which your kids can learn new things, find new games to play or make new friends. Just like in the real world, kids can get into trouble online. Parenting in the digital age means talking to your kids about this 'tough' topic and knowing how to protect your children online.

DATA DOCTORS
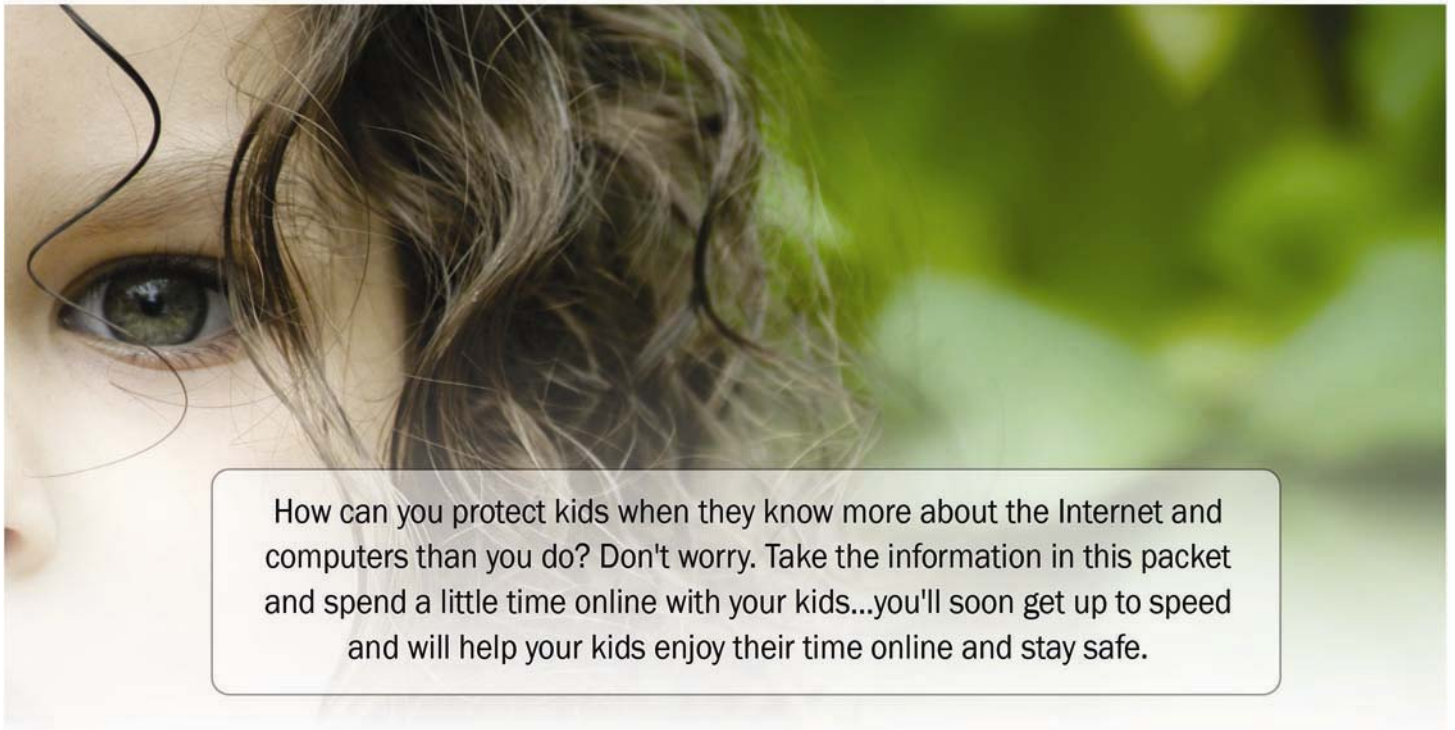Computer Services X®

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Warning Signs

There are certain warning signs you can watch for that could indicate your child has a problem with Internet or chat room use. Bear in mind that you are looking for a general trend in behavior rather than any specific sign, but problems could be indicated by the following:

1. Hiding computer CDs and disks.

2. A quick change of what's on the computer screen when you enter the room.

3. Spending a lot of time on the Internet or being online late into the night.

4. Changes in behavior, for example: secretiveness, inappropriate sexual knowledge, mention of adults you don't know, and sleeping problems.

5. Neglecting school assignments, avoiding normal social activities or withdrawing from the family.

6. The Internet browser history is empty.

7. Finding pornography or encrypted (coded) files on the computer.

8. Your child receives packages or gifts from someone you don't know.

9. You find an extra Internet dial-up account on the computer.

10. Your credit card statement lists charges identified only as 'website'.

Safety Tips for Parents

How can you protect kids when they know more about the Internet and computers than you do? Don't worry. Take the information in this packet and spend a little time online with your kids...you'll soon get up to speed and will help your kids enjoy their time online and stay safe.

Don't place an Internet-connected computer in a child's bedroom. Be sure the computer is in a common area of your home, like the family room, so you can easily monitor your child's usage.

Don't be nervous about going online with your children. Stay involved and get them to show you where they like to go. Ask a lot of questions so you can learn about the technology together.

Do check that your kids' visits to chat rooms are restricted to moderated areas run by reputable companies or organizations.

Don't forget to warn your children about the dangers of giving out personal information such as phone number, address or even their full name. Internet predators use this information to solicit your children.

Don't ever allow your children to get together with someone they've 'met' online. Take an interest in your kids 'e-pals' just as you would their other friends.

Do discuss your family's Internet Use Contract and ground rules with any adult supervising your children online.

Don't let your kids respond in any way to an offensive message or e-mail. Tell them to close any Web site that makes them feel uncomfortable. Encourage them to show you anything that makes them uneasy. If they do, don't be angry or accusatory, or they may not confide in you again.

Do contact the authorities immediately if you are worried that your child, or any child, is in danger.

DATA DOCTORS Computer Services

Questions and Answers

Q: How can surfing Web sites be harmful to my child?

A: A child may come across material that is pornographic, obscene, encourages violence or hate, or shows frightening images, like autopsy photos. Other sites on the Web may inappropriately collect personal information from children, like names, street addresses, or the name of the school a child attends. Children should be taught to never provide such information without permission. Be sure to review the privacy policies on sites visited by your child.

Q: How can I find out what my kids are up to when they are on the Internet?

A: There are a number of ways to get a handle on what your children do and where they go on the Internet. There are monitoring tools that record where the child goes; some even warn kids when they are entering an inappropriate site. You also can review the surfing history on your Web browser or look at the cookies on the computer's hard drive.

Q: What can I do to help my kids understand the dangers and risks online, without frightening them?

A: A great way to help your kids have a fun and constructive time on the Internet is to work with them to come up with your own family online safety rules. You can have a family discussion and jointly draft an Internet Use Contract. Have everyone sign it, and post it near the computer as a reminder of the rules.
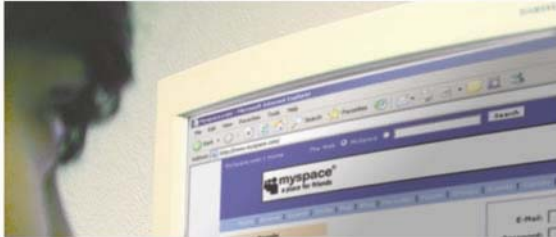
Q: How do I find 'kid friendly' sites on the Internet that are safe for my children?

A: Finding places on the Internet that are educational, fun, and appropriate for kids is one of the most important things a parent can do. Visit www.getnetwise.org/kidsites as a starting point, with links to cool Web sites that have been reviewed and recommended by reputable organizations. There are links to great sites for families and teens, too.

Q: Can instant messaging (IM) be monitored the same way chat rooms are?

A: IM is a one-on-one, real-time chat technology. It can be fun, but it also can be dangerous if your child is messaging a stranger. IM can be controlled and monitored by most parental control software packages. Always discuss the dangers of IM with your children.

What exactly is MySpace and should I let my child use it?

myspace
a place for friends

One of the prime objectives in the early days of the Internet was to create a sense of community.

MySpace.com is a recent teenage social-networking phenomenon and a testament to how easy the Internet makes it to become part of a virtual community.

MySpace is part blog (weblog or online journal), part forum, part instant messenger, part e-mail, part newsgroup and part photo journal.

What started out as a small community of people that "networked" with each other has become one of the top 20 trafficked websites on the entire Internet.

It's popularity has become so big that NewsCorp (FOX) recently purchased the parent company of MySpace (InternMix Media) for a reported $580 million.

Why would a media company want to buy a community based web property? Simple. Advertising! MySpace has caught the attention of the teenage world and has advertisers lined up to gain access to them.

It is rare to find a teen that does not have their own "shrine" to themselves on MySpace and that is where some of the concern begins.

As a parent of a "screenager", I have long been exposed to this fanatical world and have some words of warning for parents.

First of all, this site is rated PG-16 by the creators and much of the content posted by other teens is vulgar, sexually suggestive and much of the advertising is aimed at an older set. You must be at least 16 years old to participate in the community according to the terms and conditions of the site, but there is nothing to stop anyone of any age from joining.

If you are going to let your child participate in MySpace, there are many areas that you must address. The first is what your child is permitted to post on their site.

Make sure you review their profile regularly (which is viewable by anyone in the community) to ensure that no personally identifiable information is listed.

Another big area of concern is what they share with others, specifically when it comes to copyrighted material. Teenagers have no concept of copyright laws and think that everything they own is within their rights to share with their friends on MySpace (especially music).

The amount of time spent on the site is another area that you must address or things will get out of hand quickly. You can monitor and or control all of these areas with various parental control programs, but the bottom line is you must set ground rules with your child and then stay involved.

Parents have no choice but to take the time to learn what their kids are doing or suffer the consequences.
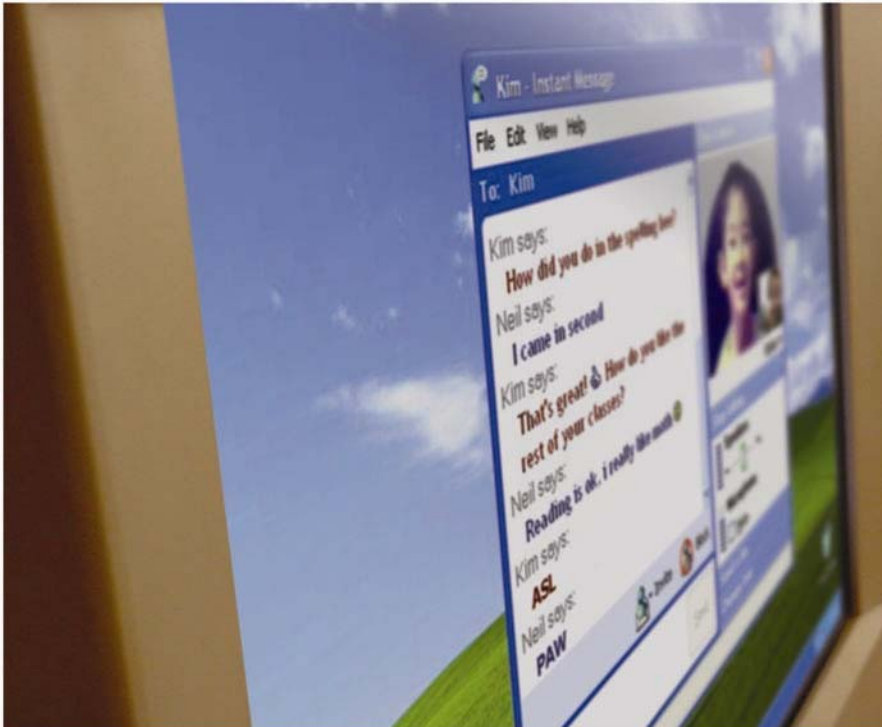
As a free public service, all Data Doctors locations now offer help for anxious parents. Any parent can take their computer in for a free scan of the system (for signs of kids involved in objectionable activity), a safe surfing guide and a free trial of a parental control program as well as a quick tutorial on how to use the software.

For the nearest participating location go to DataDoctors.com.

Here is a handy collection of commonly-used terms and phrases to help navigate the Internet

Chat Lingo

PAW - Parents Are Watching

POS - Parents Over Shoulder

ASL - Age/Sex/Location

PA - Parent Alert

F2F - Face To Face

FOAF - Friend Of A Friend

LD - Long Distance

MOOS - Member(s) Of the Opposite Sex

MorF - Male or Female

NAZ - Name, Address, Zip

OLL - Online Love

TDTM - Talk Dirty To Me

WUF - Where Are You From?

Bandwidth
Rate at which information travels through a network connection, usually measured in bytes per second

Bookmark
A browser file that saves addresses of frequently-visited Web sites

Browser
Software that allows access to material on the World Wide Web, (i.e. Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer)

Bulletin board
An area of a Web site where users post messages for other users to read. An electronic version of the familiar cork bulletin board.

Byte
A unit of measurement for computer memory

Chat Room
An online forum for real-time (or live) text exchanges. Visitors usually have a common interest and communicate by typing messages that are instantly displayed on the computer screens of others. Aliases are often used to preserve anonymity.

Client-based filter
Software that, when installed on a computer, monitors Internet use, blocks access to specific types of material, restricts time spent online and/or prevents people from revealing personal information

Commercial Internet Services
Large online services like America Online, CompuServe, Microsoft Network (MSN) and others. Usually fee-based, these services provide Internet access, as well as offer proprietary content, games and chat rooms.

Here is a handy collection of commonly-used terms and phrases to help navigate the Internet

Cookie
Information sent by a Web server to a user's browser that may include information such as login or registration identification, user preferences, online "shopping cart" information, etc. Cookies help personalize Web surfing.

Cyberspace
The digital world, or computer-based world. Includes online 'places' and communities on the Internet or on private computer networks.

Discussion Group
An assembly of users focused on a specific topic that meet online to share information that is not real-time.

E-mail
'Electronic Mail' is a message sent from one computer user to another. Can contain text, multimedia elements, or attachments.

Filtering software
Tools that classify Internet content and allow users to manage access to material.

Firewall
Hardware or software that secures computer files by preventing unauthorized access.

Hardware
Computer equipment such as monitors, keyboards, CPUs, disk drives, and more. Does not include software.

Home Page
The starting point or front page of a Web site; also the default page for the user's browser.

HTML
'Hypertext Markup Language' is the computer language used to make information 'readable' on the World Wide Web.

Hyperlink
Image or text that can be clicked to transport the user to another page, either on the same Web site or to a new one. Text links appear underlined or in a different color (often blue), or both. Image links have borders, or the cursor changes as it passes over them.

IM or Instant Message
Technology similar to chat rooms, which notifies a user when a friend is online and allows them to "converse" by exchanging text messages in real-time.

Internet
A global connection of computer networks, a sort of "network of networks," which shares a common addressing scheme. Also known as "The Net".

Intranet
A private connection of computer networks, usually inside a company or organization, that is not accessible by the public.

ISP
'Internet Service Provider' supplies connection services, usually for a fee, and provides little or no content.

Modem
A hardware device which allows computers to send data across telephone lines or other delivery systems. Available in different speeds. The higher the speed, the faster the data transmission. Cable modems are among the fastest.

Here is a handy collection of commonly-used terms and phrases to help navigate the Internet

Mouse
A small, palm-sized hardware device used to give commands to the computer.

Multimedia
A combination of two or more types of information such as text, audio, video, graphics, and images.

Netiquette
Practices and forms prescribed by social convention of the users of the Internet; online etiquette.

Personally identifiable information
Data such as name, physical home address, or e-mail address, that can isolate an individual user.

Posting
The sending of a message to a discussion group or other public message area. The message itself is called a post.

Privacy Policy
The guiding principle under which a Web site operator handles the personal information collected about visitors. It is published on the Web site and often includes a description of what information is collected, how it will be used, with whom it will be shared, and a method for opting out of certain uses.

Search Engine
A tool that enables users to locate information on the World Wide Web using key words. Some search engines are specifically designed for use by children.

Server
A "host" computer that stores information and programs, and makes them available to users of other computers via a network such as the Internet.

Server-based filter
Software installed on a host server, such as a Web server, to keep out Web pages that include content meeting specific criteria.

Software
A computer program. The "brains" of the computer. A collection of code that operates the machine (such as Windows and MacOS). Also, 'application software' for specific uses (e.g. word processing, games, spreadsheets and more).

Surf
To search for information on the Web in a random, non-linear way.

Spam
Unsolicited or unwanted "junk" e-mail. Also inappropriate promotional or commercial postings to discussion groups or bulletin boards.

TCP/IP
Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol is the conventions or standards that computers use to communicate with each other over the Internet.

Upload
Copying or sending files or data from one computer to another.

URL
'Uniform Resources Locator' is the Web address of a site on the Internet (i.e. the http://www.datadoctors.com).

Web Site
A collection of "pages" or files linked together and available on the Web. Companies, organizations, governments and individuals publish these sites.

World Wide Web
A hypertext-based navigation system on the Internet; also referred to as www and the Web.

Webmaster
A person responsible for administering a Web site.

Family Contract for Internet Use

The Children Promise:

• Never to give out personal information without permission (addresses, telephone numbers, parents' work address/phone, school name or location)

• To show our parents how to surf and teach them about the Internet

• To tell our parents right away if we see anything that makes us feel uncomfortable

• Never to get together with someone we "meet" online without first checking with our parents

• Never to send a person our photo or anything else without first checking with our parents

• Not to respond to any messages that are mean or make us feel uncomfortable and to tell our parents right away

• Not to give out our Internet password to anyone (even best friends) other than trusted family members

• To be good online citizens and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law

The Parent(s) Promise:

• To know what services and Web sites the children use

• To keep an eye on children when online and remind them of the rules that keep them safe

• To accompany our kids if we agree to a meeting with an "e-pal" in a public place

• To not overreact if our child has a problem. To try to solve the problem and prevent it from happening again

• Not to use a PC or the Internet as an electronic babysitter

• To help make the Internet a family activity and plan family events using the Internet

• To get to know the children's "online friends" just as they try to get to know other friends

• To be good online citizens and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law

I agree to the above
Child sign here:_____

I agree to the above and will help my child follow this agreement
Parent(s) sign here: _____

"What Do I Do Next?"

If You're not comfortable navigating parental controls on your own...
Call Data Doctors today to schedule your

FREE PARENTAL CONTROL SESSION

Our free safety session includes:

- A free computer checkup.
- Search for and reveal inappropriate downloaded content.
- Free installation of parental control software.
- Step-by-step overview of how to use parental control software.
- Free education packet on internet security.

Visit www.datadoctors.com to find the location nearest you.

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Computer Services

Safe Surfing | Keeping kids out of harm's way on the Internet
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