

# Cybersafety – advice for parents.

## Protect Your Child's Online Life

- Prepare your children for the online world just as you would the real world.
  - Establish guidelines and rules.
  - Know who communicates with your children.
- Learn about the internet.
  - Familiarize yourself with the programmes your children are using.
  - Consider using internet filters or blocks.
- Place the family's computer in a common room, where supervision and guidelines are more easily observed and met.
- Talk about the benefits and dangers on the Internet and help your children make smart decisions while online. This is just as important as limiting your children's computer time when it comes to safeguarding them while online.
- Explain to your children instant messaging (IM) is only for chatting with school and family friends they know by face and are approved of by you. And go over your children's IM "chat list" with them. Make sure they are able to put a face to every screenname on the list.

## When communicating online:

- Tell your children not to say anything they wouldn't say in public.
- Reinforce people are not always who they say they are when communicating online.
- Make sure your children know how dangerous it is to give out personal information such as their name, mailing address, or e-mail address
- Stress the fact that it is not safe to get together with someone they first "meet" online.

## How to notice and address a problem

- Be sensitive to any changes in your child's behaviour or attitude.
- Be on the lookout for unknown telephone numbers on your bill or on your child's cellular telephone bill and unexplained gifts your child has received.
- Show concern, listen passionately, and remain calm if your children share any distressing incidents they have encountered while online
- Don't judge your children or threaten to remove their internet privileges
- Use the incident to discuss safety rules and reinforce the fact people are not always who they seem to be online.