Neighborhood Watch NEWSLETTER

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What's New

SPECIAL EDITION
NWC&SS - 2017
Part 3: A four-part Series

Keep Your Kids Safe and Happy Online

In this article, we'll share the online risks, and give you guidelines and resources that will enable you to address each one with confidence, so you can feel good about the time your child spends online.

In the first part, we'll give you the information you need, and help you establish clear guidelines for your children. In the second part, we'll give you resources for each situation that could possibly arise.

We'll start out by looking at online security in a general way, and then move on to the special challenges our children face when they go online.

Your Five Part Strategy

You will just about eliminate all online risks when you set aside a little bit of time, and implement this simple **Five Part Strategy**.

- Learn the risks.
- Explain them to your child.
- Create clear guidelines to address each one.
- Have your child agree upon the guidelines.
- Learn the resources available to you.

Many Resources are Available

Many resources are available to help parents create a safe and rewarding online environment for their children. The key is just to be aware of them. We have posted a short list of resources for each risk area at the end of the article.

These are great resources, but the list is by no means comprehensive. That means you have many resources right at your fingertips for any situation that can possibly arise.

Guidelines and Agreements

The first thing to do is to sit down with your child and agree upon a set of guidelines they will follow online. This gets things off on the right track, and they will be much more willing to cooperate with you as their online world evolves, once you have established this foundation based on mutual agreement and good communication.

Let them know you're going to "drop in" occasionally to see what they're doing, because you know there are many temptations online. It's also because you care about them, and you're curious and want to know what they're excited about, and what's happening in their life online.

Finally, let them know that if they break the agreement you will suspend their online privileges for at least a week.

Online Security

Now we'll give you a number of best practices you can implement which will minimize the likelihood of something bad happening when your child is online.

Education is the key to defeating those in cyberspace that wish to do us harm. Here are some important guidelines.

Use security software on your computer.

Use strong passwords that contain letters, numbers, and special characters. ·

Don't click on pop-up ads. They can cause viruses. ·

Never let your child download anything to their computer or cell phone, without discussing it with you first.

Set up Google Alerts with your family member's names.

Keep Personal Information off the Internet

A recent survey shows that over 50% of children have posted personal information online. Tell your child to **NEVER** give anyone sensitive information.

This includes organizations, government, and any others that wish to get hold of your valuable information. Don't ever give out any of the following:

- Address
- School name
- Birth dates
- Phone number
- Schedules
- Social security number

If your child feels the cause may be legitimate, tell them to get you the phone number and website address of the organization. Check them out online, then call them to (a) verify their identity, and (b) make sure the information they are seeking is for legitimate purposes.

Social Networking Sites

These are sites that kids use to share and post information about themselves, and connect online with both friends and strangers.

Kids must be at least 13 years of age to set up a profile on nearly all social networking sites and apps.

Privacy Settings

Every social networking site has privacy settings that need to be implemented. This includes Skype, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Have your child adjust his or her privacy settings so that only "friends" can view their activity.

Key Strategies

Remind your kids that their video chats can be recorded without them knowing it.

Review settings on social networking sites with your child and understand how they work.

Apps and Games

Almost all children play computer, portable or console games. They play online with people who are strangers to them and their families. Tell your child to let you know when they want to play a new game.

Apps and games are age rated, which means they're not all appropriate for your child. Some are sexually explicit.

Key Strategies

· Have your child only download apps directly from Apple or the Google Play Store. This will ensure they don't get viruses when downloading the app.

· Have your child consult with you before they download an app.

· Check its age rating. · Read a couple reviews.

· Get together with your child after they download the app. Make it a fun together-time activity. This is a good way to involve yourself in their online world.

Now that we've set the stage for a safe and happy online experience, let's go on to address the two most common challenges our children are most likely to face when they go online.

Cyberbullying

In a recent survey of 10,000 teenagers more than half said they would not tell their parents if someone bullied them online. Here are the reasons they gave:

- I don't want my computer or phone taken away.
- I don't want my parents coming to the school and embarrassing me.
- I don't want to get in trouble for downloading apps I am not allowed to use.
- I don't want my parents to know what my friends are really like.

The results of this survey are a good cause for reflection.

What it really means is that it's very unlikely that the parent ever sat down with their child, carved out an online strategy they both felt good about, and participated with them in their online world.

In other words, they never gave their child any real support. Otherwise, the child would feel good about getting their parent involved if things went astray.

Signs your child may be getting bullied

- Declining grades.
- Loss of interest in activities.
- Less interaction with parents, friends or siblings.
- Change in temperament (sulking, easily agitated, anger, etc.).
- Isolationism.
- Depression.

Hate Speech

"Hate speech" includes saying mean things about a person's religion, race, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental disabilities. Here's your child's strategy:

- Don't respond or retaliate.
- Completely block the person from all your online venues. · Save the texts, photos and offending messages.
- Talk to a trusted adult (parent, teacher, counselor, coach).

Teach your kids to reach out

if something uncomfortable happens online.

The School Must Respond

California Law requires the school get involved if a child is being bullied and it impacts their school day, even if it happened away from the school. The perpetrator can face consequences. It's important for parents to keep the schools accountable if they feel their child is being bullied.

Inappropriate Behavior

There are many negative influences out there, and kids can make mistakes, and get talked into doing things. Here are some of the more common issues to watch out for.

Online Dangers You Should Report

We all know that even though it's just a small percentage of people, unfortunately there are predators online who want to spend time with your child. Here are online danger signals you should report to the police immediately:

- Someone sends your child photos or videos containing obscene content.
- Someone speaks to your child in a sexual manner.
- Someone asks to meet your child in person.

Inappropriate Posts

Talk with your child about the types of photos that are appropriate to take and post.

Statistics show that about 10% of teens under 18 take a sexually explicit or nude photograph of themselves. If it's too revealing, it is considered child pornography, which is illegal in the United States.

Remind your kids that pictures last online forever and can never be deleted.

One-on-one situations

Instruct your child to ***never meet with anyone before telling you***. This includes friends, neighbors, and people the child would normally trust. You want to know where they are always.

Sexting

"Sexting" means to send or receive photos or videos that show someone's body where it would normally be covered by a bathing suit.

It's illegal to send these pictures or videos if the person is under 18. It doesn't matter if the photo or video was taken by the child themselves. It's still illegal. Unfortunately, "sexting" happens frequently in middle school and high school. A "sexting ring" is formed when a kid shares the picture or video with someone, who shares it with someone else. It can end up circulating widely through their entire social circle, and could end up in the hands of someone they don't even know.

This can be a catastrophic life altering experience.

It causes tremendous embarrassment which can lead to all kinds of issues. The child might stop coming to class; they can get isolated and often lose friendships. It can all lead to a deep depression, and in the end, they may even need to change schools.

It becomes even more serious when adults groom relationships with children online, for the purpose of asking for photos and then trading them with other adults.

Strategy

If your child receives an inappropriate photo or video, they should immediately give it to their parents, who should report it to the school, other parents, or police.

Make Electronic Activity part of a Balanced Life

We can all become obsessed with text messages, computers, electronics, and the entire online universe that's waiting to be explored.

It's recommend you give your child "down time" where they don't have access to their computer or cell phone. This ensures some balance in their life, where they can focus on other activities and family relationships.

Study Time

Social networking, texting, phone calls and gaming can all cut into effective study time. Have the child turn off their phone and put it in the charger while they're doing their homework.

Some of your child's homework may require online access. Explain to your child if they go to their social media accounts or play games during homework time, you will suspend all use of their accounts for at least a week.

Resources

There are many resources available to parents and educators who wish to ensure a quality life online for their children. Here are some recommend sites:

SafetyNet

The Free SafetyNet App is available for Apple and Android phones. It gives parents and students a quick and easy way to check their knowledge of cyber safety. In addition ...

SafetyNet will come to your child's school or your community and give a 45-60 minute presentation that covers all the issues covered in this newsletter.

To schedule a presentation in the San Diego area, or obtain more information about the SafetyNet® program, please contact:

Kristen Amicone
San Diego Police Foundation
kristen@sdpolicefoundation.org
(619) 232-2130

Sexual abuse or exploitation

www.stopitnow.org

www.darkness2light.org

www.meganslaw.ca.gov

Online safety and security

https://wiredsafety.org

www.getnetwise.org/videotutorials

An app that keeps your child's mobile device "locked, blocked, and safe."

www.curbi.com

In 2016 Clairemont Neighborhood Watch launched the National Night Out fundrasier program to help raise awareness and money for the San Diego Police Foundation; we raised $1,000. Our goal in 2017 was to double those donations.

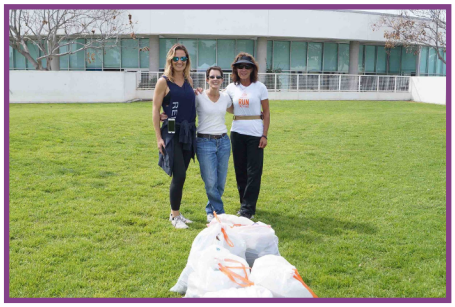
Clairemont, Univeristy City and Pacific Beach collectively raised $8,518 in 2017!

Our biggest single donation came from the "Over the Hill" Car Club for $5,000. Special thanks to our wonderful Clairemont Captains Stevi and Drew for coordinating this donation!!!

CLAIREMONT- NNO

UNIVERSITY CITY - NNO

PACIFIC BEACH – NNO



A Special Shout Out to our Professional Photographers:
Greg Hom - University City
Jeret Williams - Clairemont

San Diegans Encouraged to Participate in SDPD Chief Selection

CITY WELCOMES RESIDENTS TO SHARE PRIORITIES VIA CITYWIDE COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND ONLINE SURVEY

https://www.sandiego.gov/police/about/next-police-chief

We're always looking for new captains and co-captains.

If you know anyone who's interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch program please ask them to visit us at:

ww.sandiegoneighborhoodwatch.com

Remember to visit the site for announcements, workshops, resources and community events.

Thank You for all You Do!