



San Dimas Sheriff's Station

Neighborhood Watch News

Families on the Internet

The Internet can be a great tool for both adults and kids, but it can also be dangerous.

Here are some safety tips to help you and your family be computer safe.

There are two major areas of concern - meeting people online and identity theft.

As a rule, children should never plan to meet in person with anyone online. Explain that people may not tell the truth about who they are. This applies to adults as well.

All meetings should be in safe, public places and an adult you know and trust should always be present.

Do not give out 'identifying information' over the internet. This includes full name, address, phone number. Even pictures, school or business names can be used to locate you. This applies even when communicating with your known friends. Almost anything you type, whether in an email or an 'instant message' might be read by people you don't know.

Making purchases online - Rules need to be established with your children about making internet purchases. And remember, seldom is anything truly 'free.' Downloading 'freebies' can not only encourage additional solicitations, but can be the source of other programs and pop-ups that can be annoying.

Encourage skepticism toward websites that offer prizes or giveaways.

Consider using a family-safe search engine or filter, blocking or ratings systems. Some ISP's have a 'kids only' section so that you can be sure the children won't have access to questionable material.

Keep the communications lines open with your children. Do not blame the victim! If your child tells you about an upsetting event that happened, don't blame them. How you react, may well make a difference in how much will be shared with you now or in the future.

If you suspect criminal activity, please contact San Dimas Sheriff's Station at (909) 450-2700.

Resources

Kidsafe - Guide rules for use by the youngsters in your family - www.safekids.com/kidsrules.htm

CyberTipline, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children - www.missingkids.org 800-843-5678

Federal Trade Commission - consumer fraud issues - www.ftc.gov

U.S. Department of Justice - www.usdoj.gov/criminal/cybercrime/reporting.htm

Porn Spam - contact the US Attorney's office and your Internet Service Provider (ISP)

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