

Dear Taylor Parents,

For the next few weeks, your child will be learning about Internet Safety as part of the Computer Lab curriculum. Our curriculum incorporates information from www.CyberSmart.org and www.ikeepsafe.org. We approach online safety in the same way that you probably handle physical safety at home. For example, you probably don't allow your young children to wander alone in an unfamiliar neighborhood. You might give your older children permission to go places without you, but only when assured that they know your safety rules, are able to handle themselves around strangers, and can obtain help in uncomfortable situations. Similarly, we will teach young children to take a parent or other trusted adult along when they go to the Internet. Older children will learn clear age-appropriate rules and limits for the Internet, will discuss uncomfortable situations, and will demonstrate their ability to apply safety rules and strategies to a variety of situations.

At age-appropriate levels, we will teach children to safely manage their online experiences by:

- Protecting their identities online
- Knowing how to recognize and deal with uncomfortable situations and react safely
- Recognizing that, although online relationships may be rewarding, the people they meet on the internet must be treated as strangers, using the same safety precautions they would when encountering strangers face-to-face
- Knowing when to seek the help of a trusted adult

What Families Can Do

Ensuring the online safety of your children is an ongoing process that needs to be a topic of discussion in the home. Here are some things that you can do at home:

- Make certain your children know the private identity information that is never to be revealed online without your permission
- Establish age-appropriate ground rules for family Internet access (where, when, and which Internet resources can be accessed)
- Supervise the online experiences of younger children and encourage older children to discuss their online experiences – both the enriching aspects and the uncomfortable ones

The Internet is a huge resource for our children. As they become older, they will be using it frequently for homework and other class projects. As parents and teachers, it's important that we ensure that they are armed with information to keep them safe while they use this wonderful resource.

Working together, we can help keep our children safe!

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