

What Can Parents Do?

1. Self education- Learn what kids may be exposed to online – Learn what the risks are.
2. Communicating, educating, e-mentoring your kids about:
 - Online risks
 - Chatrooms, game site risks
 - Predators and to be aware of manipulative behavior, gifts, requests for nude pictures, grooming
 - Predators don't look scary, they look like you or I, or the person down the street
 - Teaching your child that if they get in a situation that feels uncomfortable, that they should and can always come to you and that they won't get in trouble if they do
 - Only friend people they know on Social Networking Sites
 - Never meet someone they've met online without talking to an adult first
 - Turn off webcam when not in use
3. E-mentor kids online especially when they have a computer in their bedroom. ScreenRetriever enables parents to monitor children's computer activity live wherever the child's computer is located in the home including who your child is communicating with using their webcam.
4. Set limits and ground rules about what your child is allowed to do online, sites they visit, information they post, who their friends are on social networking sites, who they are chatting with. Go over the ScreenRetriever tips before they are allowed on the computer.
5. Learn the language your kids use on the computer and cellphone, like A/S/L or GNOC.
6. When your child comes to you with a problem, be there for them, and don't over react. Many kids don't tell their parents when they have a problem online because they are afraid they will lose computer privileges.
7. Start e-mentoring/e-monitoring early when kids go on the computer so that your family values and rules are ingrained early.

According to the FBI more than 40 percent of kids have computers in their bedrooms and online predators are everywhere online.

- There are ways to turn the webcam on without you knowing you're being watched.
- Many kids become friends with complete strangers online with 70 percent of kids accepting "friend" requests regardless of whether they know who they are friending.
- A little less than half (43 percent) of teenagers who first met someone online later met them in real life.
- YouTube and other video sites where kids post videos about themselves is another vehicle for predators to find children.

FBI stats parents should know:

- More than 500,000 predators are online everyday
- Kids 12 to 15 are susceptible to being groomed and manipulated by offenders online
- FBI stats show that more than 50 percent of victims of online sexual exploitation are 12-15 years old
- 89 percent of all sexual advances toward our children take place in internet chat rooms and through instant messaging
- In (27 percent) of exploitation incidents, predators asked kids for sexual photographs of themselves

Online solicitation and potential consequences

- 1- exposure to inappropriate content online, including pornography
- 2- harassment and cyberbullying
- 3- excessive use of or addiction to the Internet
- 4- sexual cyber-solicitation
- 5- maliciousness and abuse, including sex, violence and theft, when online communications with strangers lead to in-person meetings
- 6- prosecution of young people who do not see the negative or serious consequences of their online actions or statements, including harassment, defamation, threats, or sexual solicitation (Löfgren-Mårtenson et al., 2015).

Studies show a link between excessive use of the Internet and various mental health disorders, including addiction, depression, anxiety, attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity.