

CHAPTER TWO

HAVING THE “TALK”

AGE APPROPRIATE TIPS

It is never too early to talk to your kids about internet safety. Children as young as two are using tablets, cell phones and computers these days. Parents who talk to their kids about safe internet use on a regular basis are more likely to have kids who understand what is expected of them online.

2 – 8 years old

Sit with your children and supervise them closely while on the device.

Set clear rules for length of computer time and what sites/apps are appropriate to visit. Allowing them to only use bookmarked sites is a good way to control what sites they can visit.

Talk about “strangers” that are online and why it is important to not give out any personal information to them or to chat with them in any form.

Go to www.netsmartzkids.org for some short, fun videos and e-books for this age group regarding specific subjects on internet safety.

AGE APPROPRIATE TIPS

9 – 12 years old

Have the computer in a common area.

Talk to your kids about cyberbullying. Help them to understand the consequences of saying hurtful things online.

Set clear rules about what is appropriate to post online in regards to pictures, language, personal information, etc. Talk to them about the longevity of their actions and how it may affect them in the future.

Explain to them the consequences of file sharing and downloading music, games and movies.

Make sure your kids check with you before purchasing or downloading anything on the Internet.

Tell them to never share their passwords except with you.

Let them know to never open an email from a stranger because it may contain a virus and harm the computer.

Ask them to tell you if a stranger is contacting you online immediately.

As a parent, you should learn how the social networking sites that your child is using work and be on them as well.

Have your entire family sign a “Family Internet Safety Contract”.

13 – 18 years old

Follow all of the above

Talk to your teens about the dangers of online gambling and other illegal and harmful activities that can be done online. (Prescription drugs, pornography, tobacco and alcohol sites)



Although 71 percent of parents said they had talked to their children about online behavior, only 44 percent of children agreed that they had. –Pew Internet Research