



Keeping children safe on-line

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN AGED 10-11:

- Children in this age group are becoming aware of their personalities by comparing their opinions to other people's.
- They start expressing motivations based on their own points of view and not just on what their friends or families do or say.
- They are sensitive to social judgement.
- They are better able to follow rules, but they can also find reasons to break them because they have better reasoning skills.
- They often need to be alone, as they feel a growing need to decide their own path in life.
- They want to be treated like adults and often push their parents into giving them responsibilities they aren't ready to take on.
- They do more things by themselves, such as going for a bike ride or to the park, walking to school or to a friend's house and coming back home, or going to the mall or skateboarding.
- They can now stay home alone for short periods.

What children aged 10-11 like to do on the Internet...

- Chat over instant messaging and communicate by e-mail.
- Use search engines to find out about different topics.
- Play on-line games, keep an on-line diary, visit music websites, upload photos (using a webcam or other digital device) and create personal websites.
- Post messages and photos on social media sites.
- Watch and post videos on video sharing sites.

WHAT TO TELL YOUR CHILDREN...

- The Internet is a public place, just like a shopping mall, the corner store, the neighbourhood, the park or a friend's house, and you need to monitor their on-line activities to keep them safe.
- People can pretend to be anyone on the Internet.
- Some people with bad intentions try to take advantage of children's vulnerability, and the Internet allows these people to directly contact children personally and anonymously.
- They need to be careful when sharing things about their personal lives with people and avoid revealing their emotional states, as someone with bad intentions could use this information inappropriately.
- They should never respond to messages that upset them, make them afraid or disturb them and they must tell an adult they trust if they get messages like this.
- They should tell an adult they trust if they come across inappropriate content on the Internet (pornography, violent images, etc.).
- They must tell an adult about new friends they make over the Internet and they must never meet these people in person unless they go with a parent or an adult they trust.
- They must not share photos of their friends without their permission.

Remember that the Internet can give children a false sense of security when they are at home and alone in front of the computer.

Recommendations

- Establish house rules for Internet use.
- Limit the time your children spend on-line.
- Know all of your children's passwords and aliases.
- On a regular basis, check your children's contacts and find out who they talk to.
- Help your children create on-line profiles. Ensure they use neutral aliases, i.e., that don't reveal their interests or age and that don't contain photos.
- Ensure your children always ask for your permission before giving personal information or agreeing to anything. Explain what personal information is and the circumstances in which they may have to provide it.
- Don't let your children use a webcam without supervision and make sure they always ask your permission before receiving or sending someone photos.



This information was adapted (with permission) from the *Personal Safety and Health Child Development* sheet for parents of children aged 10-11, from the Kids in the Know program of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. For more information, visit www.kidsintheknow.ca

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