



# Teens: ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

## Internet and Cell Phone Safety: It's a Teen's World

There's a world to explore. You may like honing your talents at school and achieving your best grades, but you also know that adventures await and there are many new things to discover. You can begin your explorations on the Internet, but it presents risks as well as opportunities. The same is true of all the new electronic wireless devices that everyone seems to carry. The tips below are good ones to follow, and they can be a springboard for talking with parents, teachers, and school counselors if you ever need more information or face a dilemma about your Internet or wireless use.

- Don't open files from strangers.
- Protect your personal information online, on your cell phone, or in social networking sites unless it's information you're comfortable with sharing with all the world.
- Remember, potential employers and college admissions officers search for information on you on social networking sites while they are weighing their decisions.
- Never arrange to meet someone in person you have talked to online. Stick to the friends you know.
- Don't open emails from someone you know is a bully. And don't harass anyone online or by email or text message. If you get a message that is meant to bully someone else, don't forward it.
- Don't send a picture of someone else by email or text message without their prior permission.
- Never send anyone a revealing or other inappropriate picture of yourself or someone else by Internet or text message, even just to flirt. Depending on your age, you could be charged under pornography laws with being a sex offender—with a police record that will last for life.
- If you are being bullied or harassed, whether by text message or photo, tell a parent or your guardian. You're never too old to ask for help.
- Protect your computer with a password—one that contains upper- and lowercase letters and numbers. Make them hard to figure out. Don't tell anyone your password, not even your friends.
- If someone sends a mean or threatening message, don't respond. Save it or print it out and show it to an adult.
- Learn what a firewall is and how it can protect your computer.
- Keep your antivirus and anti-spamware software up to date.



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