

Crime Prevention Tips



Information, images, and websites on every topic are available on the Internet. This makes the web a great resource for children to learn many things. But there are many websites that children may not be prepared to see, including ones containing pornography and promoting hate, discrimination and violence.

If you would like further information on this topic or are interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch, please contact Josephine County Crime Prevention Office at 541-474-5136.

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Dangers Kids Face Online

Most children don't go looking for inappropriate information, but they may stumble across it. If children do see something online that makes them uncomfortable, they should talk to an adult they trust right away. Adults can help by talking to children about what they see and do online and by telling them they won't get in trouble if they admit they came across something inappropriate online. In addition, filtering devices are available to block websites containing certain words. To find out more, check with your ISP provider or search for a company that provides this service. But the best way to make sure children don't see anything inappropriate is to go online with them.

Cyber bullying

Bullying is often thought to happen at recess or after school, but it also takes place online through email, instant messenger, websites, and text messages sent to cell phones. Cyber bullying can be just as harmful to kids as face-to-face bullying.



Luring

Children often provide personal information to people online without realizing the possible dangers. Although cases are rare, some adults do use email, instant messenger, and chat areas to gain the trust of a child and then arrange an in-person meeting. Children must know to never give out any personal information online and that people they meet online may not be who they say they are. Ask children to tell a parent if anyone they know only from the Internet asks to meet them in person. If the parent approves of the meeting, it should be in a public place and with an adult the child knows and trusts.

Plagiarism and Other Copyright Violations

Many people may not realize that it is illegal to copy or download information they find online without giving proper attribution to the creators or paying for it. That's why it's important to explain to children what is legal and illegal to do online. Copying information off websites without giving credit to the author of the content is illegal. If children do this and use content that is not their own for a school paper, they could fail the paper or the class if caught. Usually downloading music, movies, or software for free or from file sharing websites is illegal. However, there are a growing number of alternative services that offer legal downloads for a fee.



Legal and Financial Issues

Identity theft is a fast-growing problem in the United States that typically happens to adults, but children can be victims too. Some websites are designed to trick people into giving out personal and financial information. Some websites target children through offers of prizes if they fill out surveys with their personal information. Check with your parents before you buy anything online.

Stay Safe Online

You can protect kids by telling them to never give out personal information online, never purchase anything over the Internet, and never open emails from someone they don't know without checking with their parents first.