How to Keep Your Kids Safe Online
The digital playground
The Internet has become the new playground for children and an important part of growing up. They use social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to socialize, Google for their homework, YouTube for videos, and Spotify to stream music. Hours are spent playing online games like Farmville and Club Penguin.

But letting your kids go online requires more than just setting up and paying for the Internet connection. Without your guidance, your kids may end up visiting bad sites and encountering the wrong kind of people. It’s important to know the possible online risks in order to create a safe and nurturing online environment for your kids.

Let your children learn and play in sites made especially for kids. Here are some of our favorite sites:

- **Scuttlepad**. Photos, status updates, and comments are reviewed in this all-kids social networking site.

- **Youngzine**. This news site lets your kids keep up with current events without any age-inappropriate content.

- **KidzVuz**. A video site geared toward kids ages 7-12, KizVuz keeps kids safe online by reviewing each video before they go up.

- **RamoGames**. This online directory features hundreds of children’s educational games in various categories like history, math, and geography.
5.6M children, ages 12 and below, have Facebook accounts. Facebook requires users to be 13 years or older.

Source: [http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine/2012/06/facebook-your-privacy/index.htm](http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine/2012/06/facebook-your-privacy/index.htm)
Consider the Internet an expansive multimedia library with readily available content for children to find and to absorb. But not all available content are appropriate and safe for children. Kids may be exposed to sites with pornography, gruesome images, violence, and other inappropriate content. Your kids can also end at unsafe sites through innocent search results or by clicking links to “safe” videos.²


Keep it appropriate! Kids will be able to discover content that can enhance their knowledge.

- **Establish limits.** Tell your kids about the sites they can or cannot visit. Explain why some sites are inappropriate. Help set up bookmarks for your kids' favorite sites to lessen the chance of visiting other sites.

- **Do a quick check.** Make sure that the sites your kids visit are age-appropriate. Some sites specifically state the minimum age required to visit them.

- **Use parental controls.** Most browsers have a built-in filter to ensure that only kid-friendly search results show up.

- **Establish open communication.** When your kids are accidentally exposed to inappropriate sites, start a heart-to-heart talk to discuss the issues and concerns they may have with the material.
Who’s in your neighborhood?

88% of teens have witnessed “mean or cruel behavior” on social networking sites

Kids can easily socialize with their friends or make new ones through the Internet. But there is also the risk of being cyberbullied or encountering online “grooming.”

Cyberbullying refers to harassing or bullying someone through information communications technology, particularly that of mobile phones and the Internet. Cyberbullies may hide behind fake personas which make them hard to trace and stop.¹

Online “grooming” is a way for online predators to victimize unsuspecting children. Sexual predators may attempt to befriend children online through flattery, sympathy, or gifts.²

¹ http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST06-005.html

Keep it friendly! Enable your kids to develop and nurture their friendships with their peers.

• **Play nice.** Tell your kids to treat people online the way they would want to be treated. Encourage them to only befriend people they know in real life. Tell them to ignore cyberbullies. Bullies like getting a reaction out of their targets.

• **Report harassment.** Instruct your kids to report to you any interaction that makes them feel uncomfortable. Raise these incidents to the site administrators.

• **Show interest!** Find out who your kids talk to online. Ask details about their online friends. This lets you track if any suspicious activity is going on.

• **Use technology.** Parental monitoring software like the [*Trend Micro™ Online Guardian*](http://www.trendmicro.com/cloud-content/us/pdfs/home/brochures/br_online-grooming_safety.pdf) can help keep tabs on your children’s activities. It can monitor interactions in popular sites regardless of the privacy settings and the device used to access the account.
The privacy issue

One in three online teens reports sharing one of their passwords with a friend or significant other.

Source: http://pewinternet.org/Commentary/2012/April/Pew-Internet-Teens.aspx
Privacy is a major concern for anyone who goes online. Kids might have a difficult time discerning what type of information is appropriate to share on the different platforms available. Aside from voluntarily sharing sensitive information, kids may also become inadvertent victims of data leaks via mobile apps on smartphones.

Keep it Private! Here’s how kids can go online freely without being monitored or tracked:

- **Check privacy policies.** See how much personal information your kids’ sites require in order for users to post. Use available privacy settings.

- **“Think before you post.”** Explain the importance of thinking twice before revealing anything online. Help fill out online profiles. Make sure they don’t share phone numbers or addresses online. Encourage them to use nicknames only.

- **Review mobile apps.** Take the time study the permissions and the data Android apps expose.

- **Double-check your security.** Protect your family’s privacy with Trend Micro Titanium 2013. It checks privacy settings in your favorite social networks to ensure that your information remains private.
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Trend Micro Incorporated (TYO: 4704; TSE: 4704), a global cloud security leader, creates a world safe for exchanging digital information with its Internet content security and threat management solutions for businesses and consumers. A pioneer in server security with over 20 years’ experience, we deliver top-ranked client, server and cloud-based security that fits our customers’ and partners’ needs, stops new threats faster, and protects data in physical, virtualized and cloud environments. Powered by the industry-leading Trend Micro™ Smart Protection Network™ cloud computing security infrastructure, our products and services stop threats where they emerge— from the Internet. They are supported by 1,000+ threat intelligence experts around the globe.

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