

# Computer Basics Part 2 – Protect your Children

In these instructions we will cover the following:

- Can I surf anonymously, or do people see what I am doing?
- Teach your kids not to give out information
- Are chat rooms safe?
- Are social websites safe?
- How do I protect my kids?

## Introduction

The Internet, as shown in this lesson, can be a scary place, but just as with any tool, the Internet can be, if used wisely, a powerful tool to find what you need. So as you read this information consider it like fire – it is useful, but can be dangerous if not treated with the proper respect.

## Can I surf anonymously, or do people see what I am doing?

First off, anything that you see, any site you hit can be and is, in many cases recorded. In fact, this site, which is kid friendly, even records information about your movements on our site. Why? I have our site set to record information so I can better determine what people like to see. In addition, I find it amazing to see all the hits (views of the website) that are made from people all over the world. To view what this site records, [Click Here](#).

Some sites record information about you so they can better market their products to you.

So, to surf the web isn't really anonymous. Somewhere, somehow, someone is tracking your movement. Kinda scary if you think about it.

## Teach your kids not to give out information

I started off these instructions with the fact that you cannot fully be anonymous when you surf the web. Children, and many adults, do not understand this. If they are in a room all by themselves they don't realize that others can be watching their movement. This is one of the reasons why you should teach your children NOT to give out information about themselves.

For example, do not let them give out their name, age, phone number, address, e-mail address, etc. without your approval. Why? For example, many years ago, when I was a single man, I was chatting with a woman on the Internet who I met online. I suggested she check the website I had at the time. She gave me her first and last name and what she did for a living and where she worked. From that information and within 15 minutes, I was able to

- get a map to the exact building she worked in.
- obtain her work phone number
- find her home address

- find her home phone number
- get a map to her home address

With another hour I would have been able to find out much more. So when she was going to give me her phone number to call her, I instead gave her number to her. She was scared and needless to say I didn't get the chance to date her. Although I did this simply to see if I could, it probably wasn't the best idea I had. My point is, with just a little information a lot of information may be found.

Also, teach your children to contact you before filling out any forms online or clicking on any *accept* buttons. A few years ago our daughter was on a website which she thought was safe, she entered our home phone number into the field and clicked the *accept* button. Without knowing it, she had signed us up to have a monthly charge added to our home phone. It took me a couple of months to get it off and to block our phone number from having anything added in the future.

### **Are chat rooms safe?**

In simple terms, chat rooms are NOT safe. Any chat room can also have predators on it. How does your child know that the person they are talking to is actually another child? They don't. Anyone can be anything they want on the Internet. So I do not recommend chat rooms for children, ever!

### **Are social websites safe?**

Again, NO! Social websites, in my opinion, are used by many teenagers to give them a way they can escape from their parents. Where they can do what they want. These sites usually allow them to give access to only those they want to give access to and they use different screen names so if your child is not always honest with you then you as a parent may not actually know if they are on such a sight or not.

### **How do I protect my kids?**

There are a few things you can do in addition to teaching them to not give out their information...

First, do not allow a computer in any room of the house that they can hide themselves away while they use it... which means, no computer in their bedroom either. Allowing your child to have a computer in their bedroom is like giving them a television with access to thousands of porn programs they can watch for free and giving them a phone with access to talk with anyone they want in those filthy programs.

Second, not only should you have the computer in an open room such as the living room where everyone can walk by and see you should have the computer in a lockable computer cabinet. This makes it so that if you ground the child you can easily lock the computer from their use. Using a software lock may not always work if your child is very computer savvy, but keeping the computer physically locked up will always prevent it's use.

Third, if you feel you should provide your child with a cell phone do NOT give the child access to the Internet on the cell phone.

Fourth, as any good parent already knows, make sure you know who your children's friends are. And, make sure those friend's parents know your standards on computer use. If your standards can't be held then those are no longer your children's friends. Period.

Fifth, obtain software for your computer such as Net Nanny. There are many software packages available that will track the movements of your computer on the Internet. In addition, the Windows Vista operating system has some features that may help you already built in by blocking (or trying to block) inappropriate sites. These software packages are never fool-proof so don't only rely on these to protect your child.

I hope this information has been helpful to you.  
You may print this information if needed.

Check [www.scottfam.us](http://www.scottfam.us) for additional information!