



Computer Corner

Protecting Students' Laptops From Hackers

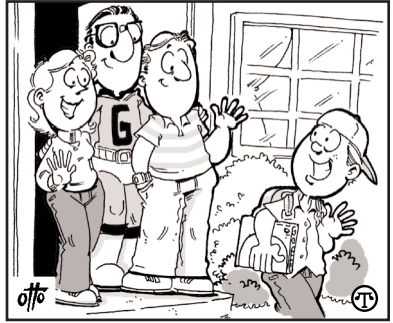
(NAPSA)—It's important for students to protect their wireless laptops—and identities—from e-intruders. That's the advice from experts who say that wireless Internet connections leave laptops vulnerable to attack from hackers and "eavesdroppers" looking to steal passwords, data and more. Fortunately, laptops can be protected—but many students don't realize they need to take different steps to protect laptops than they do to protect desktop PCs. Experts offer these tips:

- **Go Invisible**—Wireless laptops can be protected with a software firewall—not to be confused with the *hardware* firewalls that many PCs use. A software firewall is a program that makes a laptop "invisible" while its user surfs the Web. It also gives the user control over what programs are allowed to access the net.

- **Get Help**—Students who have technical or security problems with their laptops can work with tech-support companies such as Geeks On Call. The businesses usually go right to a student's dorm room or home and can update and secure a student's laptop on the spot.

- **Get Updated**—Regularly download Windows updates to your laptop. Updates plug security holes that could be used to steal passwords and data. There are two ways to patch Windows: Turn on the automatic updates function, or go to the Windows Update site at <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com> and manually download the patches.

- **Stay Protected**—Install an anti-virus program to help protect laptops from viruses, worms and Trojan horses. Just be sure to keep



A student's wireless laptop can be protected from hackers.

the software up-to-date. Many laptops come with anti-virus software preinstalled, but the software expires after a certain amount of time.

- **Who's Looking At You, Kid?**—Spyware and adware are unwanted software that gets maliciously installed on a computer. They can slow down a laptop and be used to observe a laptop's activities and then transmit that information over the Web. Anti-spyware software is available to detect and delete spyware and adware. Just be sure to choose software from a reputable company and scan your laptop regularly.

On-site tech-support companies like Geeks On Call offer services to students, including troubleshooting, maintenance, upgrades, networking and training/consulting at their homes or dorms. When virus and spyware issues surface or other computer headaches arise, the company's certified technicians deliver prompt, expert PC service on-site, including information on safely erasing data.

To learn more, call 1-800-905-GEEK or visit www.geeksoncall.com.