

Protecting Our Children

Tips To Teach Young Children Safe Online Habits

(NAPSA)—An eye-opening survey on young children and the Internet suggests that parents might want to give their kids a talk about “bits and bytes” before they talk about the “birds and bees.” The survey, conducted by Harris Interactive and commissioned by the computer experts from 1-800-905-GEEK, revealed that children are being introduced to the Internet at young ages. Specifically, 20 percent of online adults with children under 18 in the household report that at least one child in their home was introduced to the Web at age 3 or younger. An even higher proportion of these adults—41 percent—are allowing children online at 6 or younger.

Giving “The Talk”

With the goal of helping parents to educate young children about safe online habits, 1-800-905-GEEK encourages adults to give a “bits and bytes” talk to all young ones venturing online. Here are some suggested guidelines that parents should follow when talking with their children about proper Internet usage:

1. Keep it Private—Make sure your children know how important it is to remain anonymous on the Internet. They should never give out personal or private information of any kind. Encourage them to tell you about anyone on the Internet who asks them to reveal personal information.

2. Don't Connect in the Real World—Remind your kids how dangerous it is to have a real-life, face-to-face meeting with someone from the Internet.

3. Play by the Rules—Consider creating household rules gov-



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erning when your children can use the Internet and what they are allowed to do online.

4. Keep it Real—Remind your kids that not everything they read online is true. Many Web sites contain gossip, rumors, misleading information or outright lies.

5. If it Seems Too Good To Be True—Let your children know that advertisements appearing too good to be true—such as those offering free products—are usually a trick of some kind.

Controlling Online Content

Even the most intelligent, well-informed children can still succumb to the temptations of the Internet. To best protect them, 1-800-905-GEEK suggests that parents remove computers from their children's bedrooms (or any place where the Internet can be accessed in private), keep an eye on the Web sites their kids visit, and don't be afraid to read their e-mail. To learn more about child Web safety, download the free “Parents Guide to Internet Safety” found at www.1800905GEEK.com/press.