🖥 **Computer Corner**

Top 10 Ways To Stay Safe Online

(NAPSA)—You don't have to be a computer genius to protect yourself online and you don't have to spend a lot of money. By following a few commonsense tips, you can make the most out of your Internet experience while protecting yourself and your family from online threats.

1) Protect your computer. The best thing you can do to keep the bad guys out of your computer is to use three inexpensive technologies: anti-virus software, anti-spyware software and a firewall. Some security companies provide all three in one easy-to-use package.

2) Protect your identity. On the Internet, your personal data (Social Security number, birth date, etc.) is extremely valuable and can be used against you. Keep it protected.

3) Protect your children. Children face unique risks on the Internet and require unique rules and safeguards. Monitor your kids' online activities closely. There are many tools available to help you protect them from online threats.

4) Stay up to date. Those security tools won't do any good unless you keep them up to date. You should be able to set them to update automatically. The same goes for your computer itself. It should be set to automatically install security updates.

5) E-mail safely. E-mail is a favorite tool of online crooks. Even legitimate-looking messages can be scams. Learn how to filter for "spam" and spot the signs of scam e-mails.

6) Protect your accounts. Choosing hard-to-guess passwords

Protecting yourself, your family and computer requires some simple precautions; not a computer science degree.

and changing them regularly can help prevent criminals from getting at your money or personal information.

7) Make copies. Regularly backing up your music, photos and other important files can save you if your computer crashes or is stolen.

8) Know your options. If something does go wrong, there are resources available to help get you back on your feet.

9) Keep informed. Subscribe to the National Cyber Alert System from the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team at www.uscert.gov. Through the alert system, you can receive timely information about current cyber security problems to protect home and office computers.

10) Get your school involved. Suggest or sponsor an event at your local school or university designed to increase student and staff cyber security education and awareness. Download EDUCAUSE's cyber resource kit online at www.educause.edu.