



Family Insider — Online Gambling

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Gambling is big business in America, and students represent the fastest growing population of gamblers.

Although gambling was illegal, and even considered immoral, in our grandparent's generation, it is now widely accepted as a form of entertainment. Nearly every state has some form of legalized gambling. It has even become glamorous, with celebrities playing high-profile matches on national TV shows.

Students don't have to look far to find opportunities to gamble. High school and college-aged kids are hosting poker nights and betting on sports events. Banners ads, e-mails, and pop-up ads are everywhere on the Internet, and although gambling by minors is illegal in the United States, enforcement of Web site age restrictions is difficult, if not impossible. According to the Library of Congress, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) visited more than 100 popular gambling Web sites and found that many of the sites had inadequate age restriction warnings, 20 percent posted no warnings at all, and most had no effective mechanism to block minors from entering.

Online gaming can spark an interest in gambling and groom students to continue gambling at a later age. Web sites like PokerStars.com and sports betting sites allow participants to gamble with imaginary money and earn prizes and ranking on winner's boards. While many feel that these sites offer good, clean fun, they can be the gateway to future gambling prob-

lems. Many of these sites link to online casinos or sites where real bets may be placed. Because many high school and college students have credit cards, or easy access to their parent's credit cards, these sites can become the first step to a long road of gambling-related problems. Even students achieving minimal success with imaginary bets may feel that gambling with real money could yield greater satisfaction. Because online gamblers lose track of time and don't see the money actually leaving their possession, online betting can become quite addictive and costly.

Young children can be unknowingly lured by the appeal of gambling. Many elementary-aged Internet users frequent sites like neopets.com, where visitors create virtual pets and then collect and use points to care for and entertain them. Often the games on these Web sites are luck/chance games like poker, blackjack, or dice games that reward the winner with points used to purchase desired items or bet on other games. Though the youngsters aren't aware that they are gambling, they are experiencing the thrill of winning and playing the odds with the desire to win more.

So what can a parent do to curb the chances of raising a child with a gambling problem? Discuss gambling and its potential risks with your kids. Keep your computer in an open area in your home. Establish rules about what sites your child can visit and which online games your children can play, and explain why other sites are not appropriate. And remind your kids that gambling is illegal for minors and that they must always ask permission before using your credit card online.

"Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers."

~ Socrates

NAC Tracks

Are online gambling concerns for students overblown?

Yes or No



Ask an Expert—*i-PARENT Program Planning*



Q: *I would like to host an i-PARENT Program around the time school is getting out since kids will be online more when summer hits. What suggestions do you have for me to have a great event?*

Paul, Rhode Island

A: Great question, Paul. You are already doing the most important thing to make sure it is a success—planning months in advance. Too often people decide too late or procrastinate. The more you plan, the better off you will be, and the more your attendees will learn. And if planning is No. 1, Nos. 2, 3, and 4 are location, location, location. Here are some thoughts when it comes to choosing the right spot for you:

- Convenience – Find a spot that is easy to get to and to find.

- Size – Know how many people are likely to show up, and pick a place accordingly. You don't want 25 people in a room made for 100.
- Atmosphere – Pick some place that's quiet, comfortable, and conducive to learning.
- Cost – Find out if the venue is donated or if you will be billed.
- Inclusions – To help keep costs down, find a place that has everything you will need, including projector, screen, microphones if it is a big room, and chairs.

And, of course, don't forget the little things, such as invitations, flyers, laptop, projector, i-PARENT CD, and printable i-SAFE materials. And have fun! Best of luck, Paul.

**If you have a question for the i-SAFE team of experts, e-mail us at editor@isafe.org.*



In Action—*In the Classroom and Beyond*

While responsibility for supervising kids and teens on the Internet falls to parents, students must be taught how to act safely and responsibly online. The Bristol County, Massachusetts,

Sheriff's Office (BCSO) has teamed up with i-SAFE in an effort to help ease the burden of educators who are already being asked to teach so much to our students.

I chose i-SAFE because nothing else out there comes close. No other program compares with its curriculum, community outreach, and student-mentoring programs. Sheriff Thomas M. Hodgson has allowed me the opportunity to focus a lot of resources and manpower hours. He strongly believes that i-SAFE is a valuable program and that, collectively, we can empower students by educating them and providing them the tools to make better choices.

A recent survey by i-SAFE's National Assessment Center (NAC) revealed that more than half of parents feel they are limited in monitoring and sheltering their kids from inappropriate material on the Internet. That is why the BCSO works with schools to reach parents. They need our help—many more so than the students. Since November, I have done an average of one i-PARENT Program per week and counting.

After a recent training, Lenny Granfield, with the State Police in Bourne, e-mailed i-SAFE: "Linda's presentation



was outstanding because a) it was obvious that she knew the subject matter well and gave specific examples of local occurrences that made it even more startling and b) she displayed a passion for the subject and relayed the impression of how important the subject matter was." I have to say the passion I have for Internet safety has been shared by every law-enforcement officer I have trained.

Students and adults need the message and the education. We know we cannot do it alone, and neither can you. If you haven't already begun partnering with your local law enforcement, why not reach out to them today? If you are partnering with them, ask if there is more you can do. The future of our youth and our society is at stake; together we will keep it shining bright for our kids and our kids' kids.

*Deputy Linda M. Pacheco
Assistant Director of Public Programs
Bristol County Sheriff's Office*

Did You Know?

Don't Believe Everything You Click



So you're reading your favorite blog, and you see a cool link to a related product. How awesome that someone would make it easy for you to find what you need!! Or should we say, how spamtastic that it would appear at the right place at the right time.

That's right. Spammers are adding comments to legitimate blogs to lure readers to commercial sites. This newest version of spam is called a "splog," or "splogging." But it's not limited to legitimate blogs—bogus sites are popping up all the time that look like legit blogs. Some reports say as many as 60 percent of blogs on Google's free Blogger.com are "splogs."

The moral of the story: Don't believe everything you click.



Child Porn Found on iPod

The first report of a man arrested for having child pornography on an iPod is announced less than six months after the video iPod debuts. Texas attorney general's cyber crimes unit indicted 38-year-old Ron James Guzman on March 1.

Guzman, of San Marcos, Texas, is charged with nine counts of possession of child pornography. The charges include "several" lewd videos of children stored on an iPod. Investigators say there were also pictures of child pornography on the device.

Television stations in Austin, Texas, are reporting that Guzman has been under investigation since April 2005. They also say he faces multiple charges of sexual assault with a child by the San Marcos Police Department.



"WoW" Hits WOW Number

Heard of "World of Warcraft?" It's not a Discovery Channel show. It's an online role-playing game with six million users. But that is not the WOW of it. The wow is the fact that Blizzard Entertainment announced five million users only three months ago! The game is offered in English, French, and German, and will soon release a Spanish version. Which makes us wonder: Just how do you say WOW in Spanish?

But this is more than child's play. "World of Warcraft" has a group called "We Know." According to CNET Networks, members of this elite small group include, "Ross Mayfield, CEO of SocialText; Sean Bonner, who runs the Metroblogging network and who is a popular blogger in his own right; John Crain, the chief technology officer of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN); and Diego Rodriguez, a product developer at Ideo, a well-known design company." Some playgroup, huh?



In Your Neighborhood



Everyday there are many i-SAFE America events going on across the country. We've made it easy for you to get involved and help spread the message of Internet safety to your peers and your community. Simply check out our "Calendar of Events" at http://www.isafe.org/channels/sub.php?ch=ai&sub_id=3 to find an event near you.

The Power of One—Cyber Bullying



Years ago, bullying was generally associated with intimidating antagonists cowering over a seemingly helpless kid who was forced to dish out lunch money. Now, however, cases of cyber bullying, or any defamation of one person from another with malicious or false information over the Internet, are becoming more common. With the growing popularity of blogs and communities like MySpace and Facebook, many are unaware of the dangers of the Internet.

Students [at West Shore Junior Senior High School] have . . . taken initiative in educating others on Internet safety by becoming i-SAFE student i-MENTORs.

[T]echnology specialist Terri Friend said: “The goal is to get information out to the community.”

The club, currently consisting of 14 trained student

i-MENTORs, plans various outreach activities, including visiting charter middle schools, doing skits on Internet safety, and visiting homerooms to spread information.

“We have what we call a ‘brochure campaign’ where mentors go to various seventh- through ninth-grade homerooms to distribute information and talk to the kids,” Friend said.

Members of the club also created a two-minute skit with TV production on Internet safety to target similar audiences.

i-MENTOR training takes place during lunch in the cafeteria and targets seventh-graders who are most vulnerable to cyber predators and scam artists.

“The programs encompass more than just safety,” [Officer Jesus] Martinez said. “It also addresses plagiarism, intellectual rights, and identity-theft protection.”

Homeroom teachers also have the ability to sign up for i-SAFE related activities.

“The biggest problem is giving out information,” Friend said. “No one should give out personal information. A lot of kids visit Web sites or chat rooms and become comfortable enough to give out more information. Always be aware that you never really know who they are. Be very cautious in what information you give out.”

*Nicole, Staff Writer for The Roar,
West Shore Junior Senior High School*

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Internet Safety Tip for Parents



Teach responsible use of online resources.

Without this knowledge, children are likely to make missteps when downloading or seeking information for use in schoolwork, which could ultimately cost millions and set kids back in school. A recent report released by the U.S. Senate says that theft of intellectual property costs the American workforce more than 100,000 jobs and \$5.7 **billion** in wages. And that was back in 2000!

Of course that does cover more than kids downloading music illegally. They only cost the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) \$3 billion last year, and that doesn't include how much the movie industry lost.

i-SAFE surveyed students about this epidemic, and here is what we found out:


- 68 percent of students have been told what is legal

and illegal to download online.

- 46 percent of students believe nobody is harmed or loses money if they download music without paying for it.
- 65 percent of students believe they should NOT be charged to download music or movies online.

Of course this only deals with theft. What about cheating? Don't forget good old-fashioned plagiarism. i-SAFE didn't, and here's what kids told us:

- 75 percent of students use the Internet when they need information to help with schoolwork.
- 43 percent of students have copied information directly from the Internet for use in schoolwork.
- 44 percent of students did NOT give credit for copied work in school papers to the author or owner.

We cannot emphasize enough the responsible use of online resources. The price your children will pay in the end may leave them behind for the rest of their lives. 

Get Involved

Set an i-PARENT Board Meeting

You have chosen a director, and you have identified community leaders to invite. Now it is time to set up the board meeting. So where do you start? Much like we told Paul in the “Ask an Expert” section, two things are critical: Plan ahead, and pick the perfect place.

You know your community much better than i-SAFE does. You know where parents gather and where they are likely to gather. So pick a place near there. You know the times that work for parents in your area. So pick a time that fits your community’s lifestyle.

And remember, an i-PARENT Board Meeting can be anywhere. It doesn’t have to fit a typical meeting atmosphere. It only needs to be a good place to meet, discuss, and learn.

*For any questions, contact lcunningham@isafe.org.



Team Up with i-SAFE

Currently, i-SAFE has reached more than one million students with Internet safety information. By providing free materials, programs, and educational videos, students are learning how to make positive choices when challenged with today’s technology. Not only are students learning to protect themselves against predators, they are also learning how to make decisions regarding intellectual property, identity theft, and more.

i-SAFE strives to provide your family with the most current information regarding the issues youth face today on the Internet. In order to bring our programs and materials to your community and your home, we rely upon donations.

We would be grateful if you, or perhaps someone you know, could assist i-SAFE in educating as many children as possible. Since i-SAFE is a 501(c)(3) corporation, your donations are fully tax deductible.

To donate, e-mail donations@isafe.org or go to http://www.isafe.org/channels/sub.php?ch=gi&sub_id=2.

We Value Your Input

Do you have a question or a comment about an article? Perhaps you have a story you wish to share with other readers. Do you know somebody whose story will inspire others to get involved? Whatever the case, we would like to know. Please e-mail us at editor@isafe.org with questions, comments, or contributions. If snail mail is your preference, **send written correspondence to:**

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i-SAFE has moved! Be sure to make a note of our change in address for future correspondence.
And remember:
Stay safe in Cyberspace!

The series of i-SAFE newsletters also includes the *i-EDUCATOR Times* and *Kewl Timez* (for students). We encourage you to read the others and ask you to use the main article to initiate discussion and action with your students and your community.

About i-SAFE

Founded in 1998 and active in all 50 states, i-SAFE Inc. is the leader in Internet safety education. i-SAFE is a nonprofit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower youth to make their Internet experiences safe and responsible. The goal is to educate students on how to avoid dangerous, inappropriate, or unlawful online behavior. i-SAFE accomplishes this through dynamic K through 12 curriculum and community-outreach programs to parents, law enforcement, and community leaders. It is the only Internet safety foundation to combine these elements.

www.isafe.org

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