



Family Insider—Opt in For Safety

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“Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see”

~ John W Whitehead

THE KEYSTONE of online shopping protection is a Web site’s privacy policy. No one wants to spend too much time reviewing the legal claims an online store or Web site makes when you give up your personal information, but once in a while you should take a hard look at them. A privacy policy is a Web site’s statement of how and why they collect information, what they do with it, what choices you have about how it is used. Once you read the privacy policy you should be able to decide whether or not to give information about yourself to the site.

Where to Find the Privacy Policy

If you don’t see a privacy policy on a Web site’s home page there are several places you can look.

▶ First, look for a button, an icon, or simply the words “Our Privacy Policy,” and click the link.

▶ Sometimes the policy is displayed when your customer information is being collected, such as when you create an online account or enter payment information.

▶ Links that refer to “policies,” “about us,” or “terms of service” may also bring you to the privacy policy.

▶ If these don’t work, use the site’s search function and insert the words “privacy policy.”

Web sites are not legally required to display their privacy policy and not all sites do. If you do not find a privacy policy, you may reconsider whether personal or financial information you give them will be safe.

Checklist for Reading a Privacy Policy

Here are a few tips for reading a privacy policy. Ask:

▶ What information does the com-



pany collect about me?

A Web site may collect a variety of information from users. Some collect only the information needed to complete the transaction, such as your name, mailing address, a phone number and credit card number. Others may ask about personal preferences and lifestyle, like the car you drive, sports you like, or how many people live in your home. i-SAFE discourages sharing information that isn’t

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NAC Tracks

Do you worry your children will one day use your credit card without permission to shop online?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes
- (3) It’s already happened

Vote here



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required to activate an account. Some companies use privacy policies to allow them to use spyware, a program that tracks your keystrokes. Be sure you aren't opening a door to all your private online activity by accepting such a policy.


▶ Is the information necessary for the online activity I am engaging in?

Yes and no. If you are ordering a subscription to a magazine the publisher will need your address and payment information. Does he really need to know your birth date, or your lifestyle preferences to deliver the magazine? No. If the publisher requests this kind of information, he may be collecting it so that he can market to you in the future or, for a fee, share your information with another company.

▶ How can I choose to limit their use of my information?

Most sites provide a “click box” at the point of sale. If the site provides opt-out, the box will be pre-checked. To opt out, click on the box to “un-check” it. If the site provides for an opt-in, the box will not be pre-checked and you consent to share your information only if you check the box yourself.

▶ Does the Web site provide a place where I can take my complaints or questions?

Some privacy notices provide a contact where you can bring your complaints. It is best to start there. They may participate in a privacy seal program, too, like BBBOnline or TRUSTe. But if the site does not handle the matter to your satisfaction then ask the seal program to initiate its own process. 

Tech Tip—Keeping Personal Information Private

From high tech to low tech, identity theft is heating up. Especially during the holiday shopping season it is always a concern. According to Todd Davis, CEO of LifeLock, an Arizona company that helps its customers avoid becoming victims of identity theft, the biggest company of its kind, identity theft is the fastest growing crime in the U.S. for the sixth straight year.

What can you do to keep your online shopping safe?

Never click on links sent in unsolicited e-mails; instead, type in a Web address you know. Use firewalls, anti-spyware, and anti-virus software to protect your home computer; keep them up-to-date. Always look for the “lock” symbol on the Web site you are buying from.

Don't use an obvious password like your birth date, your mother's maiden name, or the last four digits of your Social Security number.

Keep your personal information in a secure place at home, especially if you have roommates, employ outside help, or are having work done in your house.

Shred financial documents and paperwork with personal information before you discard them. Research reveals that virtually every household is throwing away personal information every week.


Protect your social security number. Don't carry your social security card in your wallet or write your social security number on a check. Give it out only if absolutely



necessary or ask to use another form of identification.

Don't give out personal information on the phone, through the mail, or over the Internet unless you know for certain who is on the other end.

We all need to be more careful with the information we retain. While shredding is the main way you can prevent yourself becoming a victim there are other things you can do. These include: (a) paying attention to billing cycles to ensure nothing has gone missing in the mail; (b) regularly checking your credit report with agencies to see if there have been any unexpected change and (c) protecting your mail by not leaving anything in your mailbox.

Maybe one of the hot Christmas gifts this year will be a shredder. Just remember to be careful when you go online to buy it. 

The Power One—Most Valuable Mentor Educates and Empowers

Students are often more technologically adept than their parents. The truth is, as Internet access becomes more readily accessible to students, the so-called “Digital Divide” (i.e., the discrepancy between parents’ knowledge and use of technology and their children’s) is ever increasing. Unfortunately, many parents still think their homes are safe from the hazards of the external cyber world. Parents do not comprehend that the intimidation, coercion, and fear that exist on the Internet have real-world penalties for them and their families. That’s why it is critically significant to expose online risks for parents and share with them what is occurring online today!

Aura Lee, a teenager and October’s Most Valuable Mentor (MVM) from North Dakota, is a member of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), the career technology student organization. Aura Lee admits that when she first joined i-SAFE, she, like her parents, did not recognize the real threats that exist online.

“I had no idea that so many people are out there trying to trick kids into meeting them in real life.”

Since joining i-SAFE, Aura Lee has been on a mission to educate and empower students and parents throughout North Dakota about safe and responsible use online.

“All of my friends are online and using social networking sites like Myspace and Facebook. They use them to talk about their favorite music, TV shows, and just to keep in touch with all their friends. It’s scary to think that strangers can see that personal information that you put on your page intending it only for your friends.


“Parents need to become familiar with the risks and threats on the Internet and learn how they and their children can navigate Cyberspace safely,” she urged.

To help parents and students, Aura Lee participated this month in the Upper Great Plains Technology Conference & Trade Show, sponsored by United States Senator from North Dakota, Byron L. Dorgan. Aura Lee’s presentation on illegally downloading intellectual property online was a huge hit! Her dynamic presentation spoke directly to young people in a way that’s relevant to students today. She used true-life stories to impress on her audience how their online actions can have serious real-world consequences.

After participating in Aura Lee’s presentation and hearing about her experiences online, attendees have written in to i-SAFE letting us know how important it is to be safe and responsible online. Here are some testimonials that came from attendees.

1. **Never trust someone online that you do not know in real life.**
2. **It’s always important to keep your personal information to yourself.**
3. **Downloading files illegally online can be dangerous to your computer!**

One thing is for certain, there are very few barriers to keep our students out of trouble on the Internet. Technology (i.e., computers and the Internet) now permeates our society and individual lives to such a pervasive extent that every parent must, at the very least, get to know the basics of Internet safety. And, to protect our children from harm and proactively discourage risky online behavior, we must teach them how to recognize and avoid dangerous and unlawful online behavior and how to respond correctly.

The best solution – get involved with i-SAFE today and learn how to be safe and responsible online. 




What’s New with i-SAFE?

i-SAFE is now global. Internet use crosses all borders, which means there is a need for Internet safety education across borders as well. With the i-SAFE International Education Program, i-SAFE’s world-class curriculum and professional development training is available for educators to use in their country’s classrooms around the world.


Did You Know?

Applying for That Dream Job Online? Be Careful

According to the FBI, people looking for a new job online have more to fear than rejection. Identity thieves can target online job applications, by posting jobs with Craigslist, HotJobs, and Monster.com. They've been harvesting home addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and sometimes birth dates and social security numbers. The FBI says it is currently investigating all kinds of online job scams including one where an applicant responded to an ad, was contacted via e-mail for a fake interview, then asked for personal information for a pre-employment background check. Think twice before including personal information like your driver's license number or social security number on your resume. Instead, consider posting a resume anonymously with an e-mail address as the primary point of contact. Most importantly, the FBI warns job seekers to look out for red flags such as spelling and grammatical errors when culling job offers online. 



189 Million Can't Be Wrong


Internet usage has reached a milestone. Here are the numbers. According to new information from eMarketer, 63% of the U.S. population ages 3 and older now use the Internet at least once a month. That amounts to about 189 million people. The biggest gain is among seniors. The number of Internet users 50 and older is up more than six percent from three years ago. Women edged out men as primary online users, making up 51% of the U.S. Internet user population. Children are also on the Internet more often. Forty percent of those aged 3-11 and 74% of teens, ages 12 to 17, are using the Internet at least once a month. 

Vishing

Here's a new twist on the familiar "phishing" Internet scam. Identity thieves are sending e-mail spam warning you that your bank account or PayPal account have been compromised. Nothing new so far. However, unlike typical phishing e-mails, there is no fake Web site address in the message. Instead you are asked to call a phone number to verify your account information. If called, an automated voice message says, "Welcome to account verification. Please type your 16-digit card number." Don't do it! You've just been vished! This new scheme uses VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) telephone numbers that are available through Internet telephone providers like Skype. It's fairly easy to get a VoIP number anonymously, which is not the case for normal telephone numbers.

Security experts say that as Internet users get wise to traditional phishing scams, this new phone-based tactic may reap



a whole new set of victims. It's not hard to avoid this scam. Never call a number provided in an e-mail regarding financial security issues. Instead, call the phone number provided on the back of your credit card or bank statement if you have security concerns. And remember, credit card companies normally refer to customers by their full names in any communications. If the e-mail does not refer to your full name, it's probably a fake. 


X-BLOCK Contest—Video Skit

Announcing *i-SAFE Live!* the first ever i-SAFE Video Skit Contest.

Parents, your kids now have a way to get creative while being safe online. Now it's their turn to create a funny skit about online safety, record it on camera, and send it to

i-SAFE. If their skit is a hit, we'll feature it on the X-BLOCK Web site and i-DRiVE TV. Plus, your son or daughter will win the Most Valuable Mentor award!

It's simple – it's easy – it's fun.

Click here for details on how to enter. 

Ask An Expert—Online Gaming Learning the Limits

Online video gaming is a changing landscape. According to new research, many game designers are turning away from the “shoot-‘em-up” games popular with college students to design games that exercise the brain. For example, one game challenges players to make words out of a jumble of letters in a certain amount of time. Players then compare results in a chat room. Despite the new family-friendly trend, online video gaming sites remain a place where safety should come first. We talked to Matt Tieger, a senior game designer at High Moon Studios in California for some insight.

Q. Why is online video gaming becoming so popular?

A. Video games over the last few years have really grown from kind of a niche market to a mainstream kind of thing. I think games are kind of moving into an environment when everyone is going to start playing them. Games are an escape in lots of ways. I think the power in these systems is soon going to allow us to create crazy cool visions, some of which are very realistic.


Q. What should parents know about online video games?

A. Well, I have a bit of a leg up here because I make video games for a living and I know what kinds of games are out there and how people are interacting with them. I think that's a big responsibility for parents, taking the time to be informed, whether online or single player games. Games have ratings on them like M for mature or E for easy. I'll see parents buying games that are too complicated for children that are six or seven years old. I think, as a par-




ent, it's important to be an informed consumer about what your children are doing.

Q. What can parents do to keep their kids safe on a video gaming Web site?

A. I think that the game should be part of the common space of your household. In my house, for example, the computer is not in my child's room, it's in a common space. We try to instill at a young age that you shouldn't be doing things on the computer that make you feel like you need to be locked away in your room and doing things on your own. You need to set up rules for what your kids are doing online and let them know what's not safe. Their world is very different from an adult's concept of the world, so setting some ground rules for things that you feel are inappropriate is, I think, a responsibility that we have as parents. 

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Bumper Sticker Contest Winners

The winner has been named and i-SAFE has buckets full of bumper stickers. Our National Bumper Sticker Contest was a huge success. Students were asked to design a bumper sticker with a topic like social networking, piracy, cyber bullying, or online predators, or one of their own.

Entries flooded in from as far away as Alaska and Hawaii. We counted over 1,345 entries! It was truly exciting to see so many creative students take part.

And the i-SAFE Bumper Sticker Contest winners are:

▶ For the Elementary level:

With her wonderful, “be safe, be happy,” bumper sticker, the award goes to Caroline from Atlanta, Georgia.


▶ For the Jr. High level:

With his fancy artwork of, “the computer’s gonna get ya,” bumper sticker, the award goes to Dylan from Stuarts Draft, Virginia.

▶ For the High School level:

With his subtle yet, “to the point,” bumper sticker, the award goes to Ellis from Meridian, Mississippi.

And now, for our Best In Show. This year’s i-SAFE National Bumper Sticker Contest Grand Prize winner is...Dylan, from Stuarts Draft, Virginia. Dylan will have his artwork reproduced into an actual bumper sticker for him and all his classmates. Congratulations, Dylan. Way to go!!!

A big congratulations and a “job well done” to all of you who entered this year’s i-SAFE bumper sticker contest. Now, let’s see if you guys can outdo yourselves with our next contest. Check out <http://xblock.isafe.org> to learn about our next big competition. 



Team Up With i-SAFE

i-SAFE has reached over 2.2 million students with Internet safety information. By providing free materials, programs, and educational videos, students are learning how to make positive choices while using Internet technology. In order to bring our programs and materials to your community and your home, we rely upon donations. To donate, e-mail donations@isafe.org or go to www.isafe.org/donations.

We Value Your Input

Do you have a question? Please e-mail us at editor@isafe.org with questions, comments, or contributions. If snail mail is your preference, write to: i-SAFE Editor, 5900 Pasteur Ct., Ste. 100, Carlsbad, CA 92008

The series of i-SAFE newsletters also includes the *i-EDUCATOR Times* and *Key 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 students, parents, seniors, and community members to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experiences. i-SAFE provides knowledge that enables them to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior, and to respond appropriately. This is accomplished through dynamic K through 12 curriculum and community-outreach programs to students, parents, law enforcement, and community leaders. i-SAFE is the only Internet safety foundation to effectively combine these elements. www.isafe.org

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