



## **ON-LINE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AND TEENS**

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Students use the Internet for academic purposes, and all persons use the Internet for exploring the web and contacting friends and family. These are valuable opportunities for keeping in touch with all aspects of our society and our world. However, the Internet can be dangerous due to inappropriate material and online predators who seek victims of all ages. Here are some ideas that can help insure the safety of members of your household when using the Internet:

- *Passwords.* On-Line account ID and passwords should be kept private and not even shared with close friends. Passwords should be changed if there is a possibility that someone else knows it.
- *Personal Information.* Never give personal information On-Line. This includes phone numbers, addresses, work or school locations, credit card numbers, or social security numbers of anyone in the family.
- *Photos.* Don't share photos of yourself or your family with anyone you do not know. Provocative photos should never be posted on-line – once they are on-line you have no control over who sees them or what is done with them.
- *Accountability.* Keep computers with Internet access in a central place in the home. Computers in private places, such as bedrooms, can be more easily used for dangerous Internet activities.
- *Limits.* Decide with your children what on-line activities are age-appropriate. Chat rooms, instant messaging, and websites such as YouTube, My-space, and others can be especially dangerous for anyone under the age of 16. Any Internet location at which strangers could contact a child is a "hunting ground" for predators.

For more information on Internet protection go to <http://www.netsmartz.org>.