

# DIGITAL SAFETY

Growing up in the digital age provides unlimited opportunities for students to connect, learn and share information. While this has many benefits, families can feel overwhelmed as they navigate the new challenges associated with raising technologically savvy kids.

Having an open dialogue with students about making smarter, safer online decisions helps prevent some of the negative consequences that can occur in the cyberspace.

## RISKS

- ▶ Internet predators seek out victims who are looking for acceptance and looking to be heard. You can help protect your child from predators by carefully monitoring your child's online activities and relationships and discussing them with your child.
- ▶ In addition, teach your child to be wary of providing personal information online. Periodic reviews of what information about your family is posted on the Web can also help prevent offline danger.
- ▶ Cyberbullying is a growing problem and is just as real and hurtful as traditional bullying. Children may have a stronger reaction to mean e-mails and hurtful Web posting than their parents may realize. If your child shows warning signs of being bullied (e.g., suddenly becoming withdrawn, suddenly losing interest in things he or she used to enjoy, being anxious, sad, or moody, or having trouble sleeping), don't forget that the threat may be coming through the computer.
- ▶ The Internet has the potential to create a cyberbully, too. When communicating online, it can be easy to forget that there is a real person on the other end, and children may say things they would never say in person. Because you aren't able to account for body language or tone of voice in written messages, online communication can also lend itself to unintended misunderstandings. Make sure your child knows and uses proper "netiquette."

## SOURCES:

**NATIONAL PTA (PTA.ORG)**

• • •

**FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY  
INSTITUTE**

• • •

**INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST  
CHILDREN TASK FORCE**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <http://www.utahpta.org/safety-tips-technology-driven-world>
- <http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=964>
- <http://www.netsmartzkids.org>
- <http://www.getnetwise.com>
- <http://www.safekids.com/kids-rules-for-online-safety>
- <http://www.fbi.gov/fun-games/kids/kids-safety>
- <https://www.aacc.edu/technology/file/GamingTips.pdf>
- [www.NetSmartz.org/Teens](http://www.NetSmartz.org/Teens)
- <http://www.nsteens.org>
- [www.safeteens.com](http://www.safeteens.com)
- <http://teens.webmd.com/features/teen>
- <https://www.common sense media.org>
- <http://www.connectsafely.org>

**Utah  
PTA®**

*everychild.one voice.*

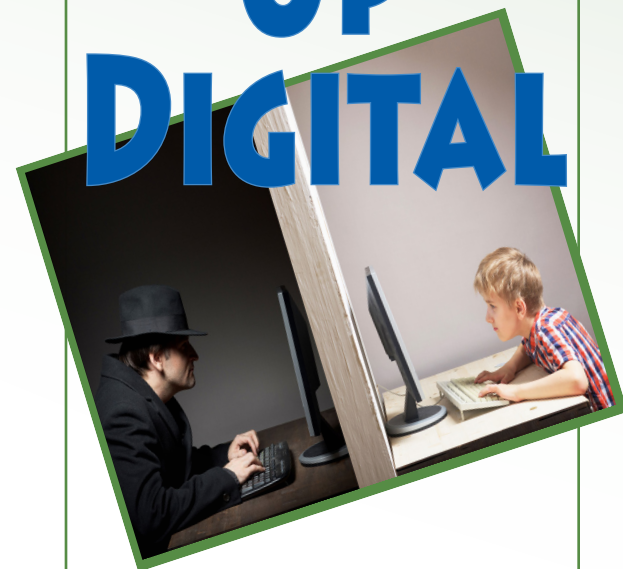
Produced by:  
Utah PTA

5192 S. Greenpine Drive  
Salt Lake City, UT 84128

utahpta.org • kids@utahpta.org

Tele: 801-261-3100 • Fax: 801-261-3110

# GROWING UP DIGITAL



**Utah  
PTA®**  
*everychild.one voice.*

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

## TALK WITH YOUR KIDS

- Stay calm
- Talk early and often
- Be open and direct

## BE A GOOD DIGITAL ROLE MODEL

- Curb your own bad digital habits
- Know when to unplug
- Show your kids how to collaborate and create online

## FRIEND AND FOLLOW BUT DON'T STALK

- Friend your kids on social media
- Respect their online space and don't overdo it
- Encourage your kids to create a good digital reputation

## MONITOR YOUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

- Search you and your families names to see what is online
- Teach your kids to protect passwords
- Enable privacy settings
- Turn off geotagging

**Never forget that filters and monitoring programs do not provide a complete solution for online safety. Educate, inform, and engage your children so that they may think and judge for themselves in our every changing digital world.**

## EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Search online for anything you don't understand
- Try out the apps, games, and sites yourself
- Explore for digital parenting tips and resources

## SET GROUND RULES AND APPLY SANCTIONS

- Agree and sign a family safety contract
- Set time and place limits for their tech use
- Enforce sanctions when necessary

## EXPLORE, SHARE, AND CELEBRATE

- Go online with your kids and explore their online world
- Take advantage of new ways of communicating
- Learn from them and have fun

## USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

- Activate the safety settings in your operating system, search engine, and games
- Use the parental controls on your children's phones, tablets, and game consoles
- Monitor your kids' use and their screen time
- Make sure they know that you are watching and why

# HAS A CRIME BEEN COMMITTED?

## WHEN TO REPORT A CRIME:

- ▶ If someone is sending or in possession of child pornography
- ▶ If an adult is sexually enticing a minor online
- ▶ If a minor has been sent sexually explicit materials

## HOW TO REPORT A CRIME:

- ▶ For immediate danger call 911
- ▶ Contact your local law enforcement agency
- ▶ Contact the Utah Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force:  
[Utahicac@utah.gov](mailto:Utahicac@utah.gov)  
Tipline: 801-281-1211
- ▶ Contact the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children 24 hours a day at 1-800-THE -LOST (1-800-843-5678) or submit a report online at: <https://report.cybertip.org>

## PRESERVE EVIDENCE:

In all instances, do not attempt to copy or forward any of the images or messages on your computer or cell phone. Immediately turn off the device to preserve evidence and call your local law enforcement agency or the Utah Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.