20 Internet Safety Tips

1. Teach children to "Crash and Tell," i.e., immediately turn the computer off and then tell a parent, guardian, or teacher.
2. Find out if anyone has pulled up inappropriate material on your computer by going to http://www.contentwatch.com/. Then click on Content Audit. This free service can help you determine what inappropriate material may have been viewed on your computer.
3. Place the computer in an open, supervised area of your home.
4. Have rules about Internet use.
5. Warn children to stay out of chat rooms, out of newsgroups, and off instant messenger programs.
6. Teach children NEVER to give out personal information online or arrange to meet someone in person that they met online. Never share your name, address, email address, family members' names, school's name or mascot, age, or photos.
7. Learn enough about your computer so you can see what sites have been visited Check your browser's history often (pressing Control-H will open the history in most browsers).
8. Install a filter on your Internet, realizing filters aren't foolproof and that your child still needs supervision.
9. Check every disk that comes into your home. A "friend" might give your child inappropriate material.
10. Carefully monitor gaming websites.
11. Role play with children about how to act when they see something inappropriate online.
12. Teach children the rapidity with which addiction can occur. (Addiction can happen to some people in a single exposure of inappropriate material, according to Doctor Rick Hawks.)
13. Know that even though a child is protected in your home, he or she is not necessarily protected in the community.
14. Recognize that girls as well as boys can be exposed to inappropriate material online or elsewhere.
15. Remember that free disks with free hours of usage do not install child-safe filters.
16. Ask your children what they have seen online. Be calm and non-accusing as they share. Maintain a good relationship so you can talk about these issues.
17. Talk to your children about what they saw online at school or the library.
18. Take one-on-one time to have fun with your children, listen to them, and give them a lot of positive comments.
19. Help children feel good about themselves, and keep the avenues of communication open so they will be open with you.
20. Spend time online with your child. This can help you learn what potentially dangerous websites your child visits, you will be able to recognize changes in your child's Internet use, and your child may even teach you some tips you can use online yourself!