

# Army Reserve Child, Youth & School Services

## HOW CHILDREN AND PARENTS CAN STAY SAFE ONLINE

1. Talk to kids regularly about how to use technology. Set rules and limits, and keep technology out in the open. Tell children what you expect of their online behavior just as you would tell them about their behavior in public. After all, the Web is a public place. Keeping technology out in the open helps make sure kids are not doing anything online they would not want their parents to know about.
2. Learn to avoid clicking links, responding to advertisements and opening emails when they come from someone you do not know or that appear suspicious. Online safety is not just for children, but for your computer as well. Taking the time to explore the ways the Internet can be malicious to your hardware will save heartache down the road.
3. Educate your children on the dangers of cyberbullying. Kids should never share passwords and should learn to log in and out of a computer so that no one might impersonate them, even as a joke. They should feel comfortable coming to a parent if they are feeling threatened by peers online and should know the consequences of being a cyberbully. Regularly discussing bullying with your children should leave them with a clear understanding of what it means to be bullied and to be a bully and how to respond.
4. Talk about what it means to have an "online reputation." The term "online reputation" is used for all the information available about you on the Internet, whether through conducting a search or by viewing your profile on a social network. The composite portrayal of you can often tell a different story of who you really are, and children are not privy to how they can accidentally self-sabotage their academics, careers and relationships. Using privacy settings and parental controls and having a regular discussion about what it means to post something on the Internet should keep online reputations on the right trajectory.
5. Establish a line of communication. It is also important that kids know they can talk to you when they make an online mistake, like falling for a scamware alert, downloading something dangerous to the computer, or even when they are being bullied. Many kids realize when they have downloaded a virus or have encountered a bully online, but few are comfortable admitting it to their parents.



Source: Santana, Marco. "Don't let the Web snare your kids." *Des Moines Register* 25 May 2014, Metro ed., sec. Business : D3. Print.

*CYSS Mission: To support readiness and quality of life by reducing the conflict between military mission requirements and parental responsibilities*



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Fort Family Outreach & Support Center assistance is available 24/7  
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