Tips for Parents
Stay informed about
Cyber Safety!

CRIME STOPPERS
CALL 713.222.TIPS

Sprint®

Blocking access to the cyber world is not an option. With kids online more than ever it is important that we educate our youth on how to stay safe on the internet.

- **Tell your child to always trust their instincts.**
- **Encourage your child to tell you if anything makes them feel uncomfortable.**
- **Teach your child to "ask first" when in doubt.**
- **Make sure your child knows that it is never their fault if they are victimized.**

SAFEGUARDS

Privacy – Content posted online is never private and will stay there indefinitely. Many sites sell and/or share content posted on their site.
- Make sure your child uses the highest privacy settings on all accounts.
- Remind your child not to accept friend requests from people they have never met face to face.
- Remind your child not to share personal information online.

Location services – While it is not advised to disable tracking features of mobile devices completely, it is suggested to turn them off for social media, games and camera.
- Apple devices: settings > privacy > location services
- Android devices: settings > security & location > location
- Snapchat: Go to your profile > settings > see my location > ghost mode

INAPPROPRIATE & ILLEGAL CONTENT

Remind your child to be mindful of their digital reputation. Posting inappropriate and/or illegal content may have social, academic and/or criminal consequences.

Sexting – Sending sexual or provocative images online.
- If anyone in the photo or video is under the age of 18, it is a crime to create, show, send, receive, or forward provocative images.
- Make sure instances of inappropriate images/videos being shared are reported – Failure to report may be a crime!
- If your child has been affected:
    + Ask site administrators and perpetrators to remove the image.
    + Block users who make offensive comments.
    + Contact law enforcement.

Terroristic threats – Threat to commit any crime involving violence to any person or property with intent to cause a reaction, cause fear of serious bodily injury, prevent or interrupt the use of a space.
- Threats need to be taken seriously and reported, even if it is a joke or the perpetrators claim they are kidding.
- Teach your child to save any evidence by taking screenshots and help them to document any incidents.
- Contact law enforcement.

Inappropriate content – Kids are curious and will access or can be inadvertently accessed.
- If your child encounters inappropriate content make sure they know:
    + To block, and report unlawful content to law enforcement when necessary.
    + To back out and exit.
    + Not to share with or show minors.
    + Tell a trusted adult.

CONNECTING ONLINE

Cyberbullying – Includes abusive texts or emails, hurtful and/or unlawful content being posted or shared online.

- Set expectations for online behavior and execute consequences when expectations fail.
- Teach them to be an ally to someone being victimized and not to participate just to "fit in".
- If your child is being bullied online:
    + Reassure your child that it is not their fault.
    + Teach your child how to block users and contacts. Ensure your child then seizes the communication.
    + If the harassment continues, contact police.
    + Save evidence of any incidents with screenshots.
    + Report the behavior to the site on which it was posted.
    + Ask for help – schools should have a policy in place to manage these issues.
    + Seek counseling if your child shows signs of distress.
    + Contact police if there is blackmail, threats, extortion or assault.

Unsolicited contact – Strangers and people known to your child may text, message, call, email, or send private messages through games, social media, apps, etc. Crooks may use pop-ups, prize offers, and spam email to lure your child. Make sure your child knows:

- Do not respond!
- Block, unfriend, and exit.
- The best way to keep youself safe while gaming is to only talk about the game you are playing.
- Report unlawful behavior or requests.
- Never meet an online friend face to face unless you are with a trusted adult.
- Do not share personal information such as phone number, address, name of school they attend; nor supply false information.
- When in doubt – ask for assistance before responding.

Personal information – securing personal information is a critical component of online safety.

- Make sure your child remembers to:
    + Use different screen names, passwords and gamertags for each account.
    + Obtain parental permission before downloading content or opening attachments from unfamiliar sights.
- Teach your child to be extra cautious with their passwords:
    + Passwords should include upper and lowercase letters, a number and/or a symbol.
    + Do not use your name or the year you were born in emails, screen names, passwords, or gamertags.
    + Never share passwords with anyone other than a parent/guardian.

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How to Report a Tip

Call 713.222.TIPS (8477) | Use our **Mobile App** Download app name: Crime Stoppers Houston | Go to **crime-stoppers.org**

www.crime-stoppers.org | 713.521.4600 | info@crime-stoppers.org