

5 Tips to Keep Kids Safe Online

Kids today have more access to information than any generation before. Computer, tablets and smart devices are common at both school and home. Because of the risks associated with the internet, including identity theft and cyberstalking, talking about personal online security should be a conversation that you often have with your child.

Talk to your kids about:

- **Protecting their information.** Remind your kids never to give out personal information, such as Social Security number, account numbers, and passwords to anyone they interact with online. Even little bits of information, such as birthday, home address, or telephone number can be used to piece together personal information.
- **Using strong passwords.** Strong passwords include a combination of numbers, symbols, uppercase letters, and should not include names or words that are easily guessed. Teach kids to use different passwords for every online account they have to prevent others from accessing their personal information.
- **Phishing.** Teach your kids about Phishing and warn them not to click on links or download attachments in emails or messages they receive, regardless of who sent them. They should also not reply to text, email, or pop-up messages that ask for personal or financial information.
- **Downloading free stuff.** Free games, ring tones, or other downloads can hide malware. Warn your kids not to download anything unless it is from a trusted source that you approve, and been scanned with security software.
- **Peer-to-peer (P2p) file sharing.** Some kids like to share music and games using P2P file sharing software; P2P file sharing comes with risks. Kids can accidentally provide access to your computer's private files. Shared files could contain spyware, or other malware designed to harm your computer or steal your information.