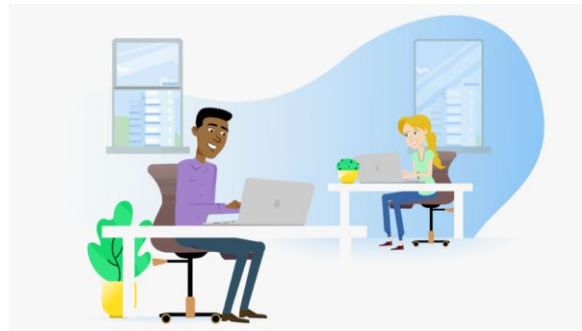


Parenting Good Cyber Hygiene

To thrive in the digitally-connected world, good cyber hygiene is necessary - not just for governments, not just for big business - but for individuals everywhere. This quick guide will help you discuss cyber safety with the young loved ones in your life.



Ages (5 to 9)

When it comes to online danger, kids aged 5 to 9 can be easier to protect. Not only are their online experiences less independent than older age groups, but there are also a lot of good parental

guidance apps that help protect them. However, no app is 100% effective. As many people have realized, inappropriate content can pop up unexpectedly, even with the best parental controls in place.

The best defence is arming your children with knowledge. The cyber hygiene you want to use with this age group is:

- Limiting their screen time and encouraging play that doesn't include screens.
- Giving them their first lesson on fake news by letting them know that just because they see it online, doesn't mean it's true.
- Asking them to tell you when they come across a negative experience online, whether it be an image or someone reaching out to them.
- Explaining to them that, unlike certain TV shows or movies, there are some parts of the internet that can not only be harmful to children, but even adults.
- Telling them that not everyone they meet online is who they say they are and not everyone they meet online is really a friend.



Ages (10 to 12)

The ages of 10 to 12 are usually when children get their first smart phone. The independence and autonomy that comes with having a smart phone makes monitoring their online activity challenging, but it also provides an excellent opportunity to teach them how to be responsible in the digitally-connected age.

The cyber hygiene topics you want to discuss with this age group are:

- Bullying is unacceptable whether in person or online.
- If they are cyber bullied, they need to tell you right away.
- Not everyone they meet online is who they say they are and not everyone they meet online is really a friend.
- If a stranger reaches out to them online, they need to tell you right away.
- The importance of balancing screen time with physical activity.
- Cyber criminals are not only looking for money but also sensitive information like your address or the name of your school.



Ages (13 to 18)

This age group is the most complicated to parent in the digitally-connected world, and the stakes can be much greater than with younger children.

The older kids get, the more they want their freedom. Giving them independence, both physically and digitally, while attempting to keep them safe becomes a delicate balancing act. The digital world topics for this age group get more complicated as the concerns become more serious. These talks need to revolve around the following themes:

- What they post online is there forever.
- Sexting can have horrible, unintended consequences.
- Bullying is unacceptable whether in person or online.
- If they are cyber bullied, they need to tell you right away.
- Talk to them about cyber crime; give examples of how real it is and how often it happens - not just to government or big business, but individuals everywhere at any age, regardless of financial status.
- Explain what cyber criminals are interested in stealing.
- Talk about the approaches cyber criminals use to steal from their victims.
- Talk about where we are most vulnerable to a cyber crime.
- Talk about what to do after a cyber breach.

By Danny Pehar