

## SIX EASY STEPS TO

# PROTECT YOUR KIDS ONLINE



Today we parents are concerned with protecting our children from all the bad and evil in the world. Sadly, that is a part of the Internet. The Internet offers vast amounts of education, joy and fun. However, there are people out there that view your children as prey. They use instant messengers and social networks to stalk your children. However, with a few simple precautions, and some research, you can have your children surfing in relative safety.

**1. VERY IMPORTANT! Place the computer in a family room** - Putting your computer in a family room allows you to see what your child is doing and whom they are talking with.

**2. Start social media accounts of your own (at least one parent)** - Please do this. I know many of you loath social media. I get it, but it puts you at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to monitoring your kiddos. When you have access to a social network, you can see who your children's friends are. It also empowers you to monitor the social landscape of your children's social group(s).

**3. Remind your kids that online strangers are just that: strangers** - Your children can be approached by anyone while they are online. Children should not give out any information or pictures to someone they have not physically have met. If they do run across a net stranger, they should ignore them and talk to you immediately about the incident. It may be to the level of reporting to the authorities.

**4. Create separate accounts on PCs for your kiddos** - Doing this allows the parent to keep track of each child individually and help protect your private documents should the children accidentally download a virus. *Yikes!*

**5. Explain to your children the importance of passwords** - Do not make them easy, and do not pass them out! If your child does give out a password to one of their accounts, it can easily be exploited and may even leave you vulnerable. Explain to them that it is similar to giving their key away to your house.

**6. They should never meet someone they met online without telling their parents first!** - This is dangerous. Some quick stats you should know:

- More than 500,000 predators are online everyday.
- Kids 12 to 15 are very susceptible to being groomed and manipulated by offenders online.
- FBI stats show that more than 50 percent of victims of online sexual exploitation are 12-15 years old.
- 89 Percent of all sexual advances toward our children take place in Internet chat rooms and through instant messaging.
- In 27 percent of exploitation incidents, predators asked kids for sexual photographs of themselves.
- 4 Percent of kids get "aggressive" sexual solicitations that included attempts to contact the kids offline.

Parenting is different for each of you and each of you need to determine the amount of presence you have while your kiddos are surfing, playing or studying using the web.

***Here are some good links you can read to increase your cyber awareness for your children:***

[www.protectkids.com](http://www.protectkids.com)

<https://protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/>

<https://www.peerlyst.com/posts/protecting-children-online-a-guide-for-parents-gordon-serlikis>



**CHAMPION**

National Cybersecurity  
Awareness Month