GREENSBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Online Safety for Kids, Tweens, and Teens

PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Since social networking sites are about sharing, you may be prompted or tempted to reveal personal information. Do not post your picture, or give out your address, telephone number, parent's work address/telephone number, or the name and location of your school without your parents' permission.

- When available, set the privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. It's ok to limit who you share information with.

- Never agree to get together with someone you "meet" online without first checking with a trusted adult. If your parents agree to the meeting, be sure that it is in a public place and bring an adult along. At the very least, make sure your real friends know what you're doing.

- Be leery of those who want to know too much. There's no rule that says you have to tell them where you live, what your last name is, or anything else personal. Your business is your business. Let them stick to theirs. And trust your instincts. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable, leave the site.

PROTECT YOUR COMPUTER

- Keep security software current. Having the latest security software, web browser, and operating system are the best defenses against viruses, malware, and other online threats.

- Make passwords long and strong. Combine capital and lowercase letters with numbers and symbols to create a more secure password. (Remember, passwords are the keys to your accounts. The only people who need to know them are YOU and your parents. Not your brother, sister, best friend, or teacher – just you.)

- When it doubt, throw it out. If you get suspicious e-mails, files, or pictures from someone you don't know and trust, trash them just like any other junk mail. You have a lot to lose by trusting someone you've never even met. The same goes for clicking links that look suspicious – even if you know the source - just don't do it.

BE NICE

- It is easy to say things from behind a computer screen that you would never say face to face. Don't say things on line that would ruin your reputation, or someone else's.

- Avoid chat rooms or discussion areas that look sketchy or provocative, and don't let people online trick you into thinking of them as real-life friends if you've never met them in person. Just the same, don't let people goad you into online fights. Things can get out of control really fast.

- Do not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way makes you feel uncomfortable. It is not your fault if you get a message like that. If you do, tell your parents right away so that they can contact the online service.

- If you are playing an online game and another player is making you feel uncomfortable, block them and/or report them. Keep a record of what the other player said, and do not continuing playing with them.

- Know how to block and/or report a cyberbully. If someone is harassing or threatening you, remove them from your friends list, block them, and report them to the site administrator. Don't respond to the bully. Instead, keep a record of the conversation, and share it with a trusted adult.

http://www.gsopd.org