IV. Practical Tools for Educators and Families

Educators and adult family members can provide opportunities for children and youth to develop skills to protect themselves from hate on the Internet. The following tools and activities, included in this section, are designed to support this process:

- Internet Guidelines for Parents & Families, Teachers, and Librarians
- Internet Tips for Kids
- Responding to Hate Online: Some Scenarios
- Web Site Evaluation Form
- Families on the Internet: Suggested Activities and Discussion Guidelines
Internet Guidelines for Parents & Families, Educators, and Librarians

1. Locate computers in open areas shared by the family. Position computers so that adults can easily view what is on the screen. When supervising children’s computer use, establish a consistent, helpful presence that discourages the perception that adults are violating children’s privacy.

2. Post, discuss, and reinforce with children the Internet Tips for Kids.

3. Spend time visiting Internet sites with children. Use these opportunities to demonstrate and model practical application of a critical thinking approach to assessing content and accuracy. Encourage questions about material children do not understand.

4. Be aware of the online activities of children. Initiate discussion about children’s online experiences.

5. Discuss with children the dangers of sharing personal information with others online and continually reinforce the importance of this guideline. Clarify the kinds of information that should never be shared (names, addresses, phone numbers, names of schools and grade levels). This is a critical safety rule for people of all ages.

6. Provide children with opportunities for skill development and the necessary tools and resources to assess accuracy of Web site content. Provide supervised opportunities for children to practice these skills online.

7. Instruct children to immediately notify the appropriate authorities (parent or other adult family member, teacher or other school personnel, librarian, etc.) when they encounter hate online.
Discuss and provide opportunities for children to practice strategies for responding to individuals and groups encountered online that promote intolerance and hate. Distinguish between immediate strategies (logging out of chat room) and long-term strategies (writing a letter to the local Anti-Defamation League office or police department to provide information about the Web site).

Explore and utilize services and resources provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to protect children from encountering hate online, such as built-in filters. If your current ISP does not offer family-oriented services, explore other local options for this Internet access.

Restrict time children spend online, and provide guidance for structuring online time. Limit unstructured random surfing, and consistently supervise children’s online activities.

Model safe use of the Internet, avoiding potentially dangerous situations, including online romance and gambling. Children are keen observers of adult behavior and will often emulate it, despite warnings to the contrary.

Stress personal responsibility in children. Knowledge and education are key weapons against hate and intolerance. Establish an environment of open communication to build awareness of children’s online activities and to take necessary steps to protect children from online encounters with people who promulgate hatred and bigotry.

Talk frequently with children about what sites they are visiting, and what they are seeing and hearing online. Use these opportunities to teach and reinforce skills to assess online content and safety.
Internet Tips for Kids

**If you encounter hate online, notify someone immediately.** If you see any threatening or offensive language online, immediately report it to a parent or other adult family member, a teacher or other school staff.

**Do not give out identifying information,** including your name, your street address, the town you live in, your telephone number, or school name without asking a parent. Just as you would exercise caution and judgment giving personal information to a stranger you might meet in person, never share any personal information with someone you don’t know in a chat room, discussion board, e-mail, instant message, or online form.

Never accept e-mail, e-mail attachments, downloaded files or links to Web sites from people you do not personally know.

**Keep your passwords a secret.** Don’t even tell your best friend.

**Log off and discuss concerns if an online experience makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.** If you read anything that upsets you in a chat room or on a Web site, leave the site immediately and notify a teacher, librarian, parent, or other adult family member.

Never agree to meet someone in person without asking a parent first.

**Seek out reliable sources of online information.** When doing research on the Internet, focus on sites with Web addresses that end in “.org,” “.gov” or “.edu” – these suffixes indicate that the sites are sponsored by not-for-profit organizations, governmental agencies, and educational institutions, like schools and universities.

**Do not respond in any way to online messages that communicate hate.** Do not engage in dialogue with individuals advocating prejudice, hatred, or violence toward any person or group. Log out of the site and notify an adult about your experience.

**Use critical thinking skills to determine reliability of online information.** If a Web site seems disorganized, is poorly written, or makes claims you question, search for alternative sources of information.

**Know who is sponsoring the Web sites you visit.** By clicking on the “home” or “about us” sections of Web sites, you can determine the sponsor of a Web site. If you determine that a Web site is sponsored by an extremist group or other organization you are unfamiliar with, the information on the site is suspect.

😊 **DO . . .** discuss with your family Web sites you have visited that interest you or that you have questions or concerns about.

🚫 **DO NOT . . .** contact the sponsor of a Web site or provide any personal information, such as your e-mail address or screen name, without first discussing your interest with a parent or other adult family member.
Responding to Hate Online: Some Scenarios

Ongoing family dialogue about the online experiences of children assists children in developing the necessary skills to promote safe navigation of the Internet and to appropriately respond to individuals and groups using the Internet to promote hate.

Attempts by members of hate groups to involve children and youth in their activities should be reported to law enforcement authorities or to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The ADL Web site (www.adl.org) also provides useful information on hate groups and offers free filtering software that redirects children’s attempts to access hate sites, connecting them instead to Web pages that provide factual information about the nature of these organizations.

The following scenarios are useful for review and discussion with children of all ages; they provide opportunities to discuss potential situations that may arise online. Children should have opportunities to develop and practice responses to these scenarios. A set of sequential discussion questions follows each scenario to assist children in using critical thinking skills to develop appropriate responses. Each scenario also includes a section of Useful Discussion Points, designed to provide additional guidance for parents or adult family members in leading these discussions with children.

---

Scenario 1

A friend you just met in a chat room suggests the two of you have a private chat. Once you get in the private chat-room, the friend starts talking about his hatred of Jews. He asks you if you ever heard of the Holocaust and when you say you have, he tells you that it is all a lie and that it never really happened. He gives you a Web site address that proves what he is saying.

Consider the following:

- Would you continue to chat with this person? Why or why not?
- What are some possible consequences of continuing to chat with this person?
- Would you be interested in visiting this Web site based on what this person said?
- What can you know about the identity of the person you are chatting with? What can’t you know?
- Should you tell anyone else about this conversation? If so, who? Why is this important?
What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Discuss the potential dangers to your child of visiting sites sponsored by groups that promote hate, bigotry, and misinformation. Explore with your child Web sites that provide factual information about the Holocaust (http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/pages/, www.adl.org/main_holocaust.asp, or www.aish.com/holocaust/default.asp). Encourage your child to discuss concerns about online experiences with you before taking any action.

Scenario 2

You are checking your e-mail one night and find an e-mail message from someone you don’t know. You open the e-mail and read a message that suggests you check out a great Web site that has a lot of games and free stuff. The e-mail contains a hyperlink, which you click on to go to the site. It seems to have a lot of fun activities. You think the Web site might be a religious site because the sponsors are a group called the World Church of the Creator.

Consider the following:

- What are some possible consequences of opening an e-mail from someone you don’t know?
- If you decide to spend some time on the site playing games, why might it be important to know the purpose or beliefs of the sponsoring organization?
- If you were unsure, how might you determine the purpose and beliefs of the sponsor of this site? If you determine the purpose of this site is to promote hatred, what should you do?
- Who, if anyone, should you tell about this experience? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Discuss with children the possible consequences of opening e-mail messages from people they do not know (computer viruses, increased “junk” e-mail, exposure to inappropriate or offensive content). Discuss ways your child can assess the content and accuracy of Web sites. Provide guidance about what steps children can take when they become aware they are visiting a site that promotes hate and bigotry (not to provide any identifying information, log off site, discuss with parent or other adult family member). When children raise questions or
concerns about particular Web sites, work with them to identify alternative Web sites that are reputable and that provide verifiable information.

Scenario 3

One of your friends’ and your favorite online activities is to visit a site that hosts bulletin board discussions for kids your age on topics that interest you. During the past week, you have been participating in a lengthy discussion about name-calling and bullying at school. You and your friend have just posted a message where your friend mentioned she was African-American. Suddenly, you get an instant message that includes a racial slur and a threat against the family of your friend.

Consider the following:

■ What is the first thing you should do?
■ Should you respond to the instant message? Why or why not?
■ What are some of the possible consequences if you decide to respond to the instant message?
■ Would your response differ depending on whether or not you knew the person who sent the instant message to you? If so, in what way?
■ Who, if anyone, should you tell about what happened? Why is this important?
■ What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Encourage children to recognize the potential danger when hate speech includes threatening language. Clarify and practice the steps children should take if they are ever threatened online (log off immediately and notify an adult family member or teacher). Reassure children of their safety and help children understand the necessity of taking all threats seriously, including those wagered through the seeming anonymity of the Internet.

Scenario 4

You are using a search engine to research the Civil War for a class project. When you click on one of the links from the search results, you find that that it is a site for the Ku Klux Klan. As you look around the site, you notice that by providing your e-mail address, you can play an online video game. You love to play video
games and this one looks like fun.

Consider the following:

- Should you go ahead and type in your e-mail address? What are the possible consequences of providing identifying information, such as your e-mail address, to the sponsors of this site?
- Have you ever heard of the Ku Klux Klan? What do you know about this group?
- Based on your current knowledge, should you continue to explore this site?
- Who, if anyone, should you tell about visiting this site? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses

Reinforce that children should never provide identifying information to online acquaintances or on Web site forms without first discussing their interest with you. If children inadvertently visit Web sites sponsored by groups that promote hate, discuss with your child the possible motivation of the group. Supplement your child’s knowledge of the Ku Klux Klan with factual information (such as www.adl.org/issue_combating_hate/uka/default.asp or www.tolerance.org/maps/hate/group.jsp?map_data_type_id=3). Encourage children to discuss their online experiences; provide regular opportunities for them to do so.

Scenario 5

For the past several months, you have been conversing with an online friend you met in a chat-room. Recently, the two of you have started "instant messaging" one another every evening. The friend has told you that he is the same age as you and attends a school near yours. Tonight, when the two of you were discussing your concerns over the recent terrorist attacks, your friend said, “Muslims all hate America. They all celebrated when they heard about the attacks. If we all killed one Muslim, maybe we’d be even.” You respond that you disagree and that you have some Muslim friends that were as upset as you were. The next message says, “Wait! You better not be telling be you’re one of them, because if you are, you better watch your back . . .”
Consider the following:

- How did the comments made by your friend make you feel? What do you think your friend meant by "You better watch your back?"
- Do you think you should respond to this comment? Why or why not?
- Can you be sure of the identity of the person you have befriended online?
- What are the possible consequences of having given identifying information to a person you don’t really know?
- Do you think you should continue this online friendship? Why or why not?
- Who, if anyone, should tell you about this experience? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Discuss with children their thoughts about what their friend said. Provide an opportunity for children to discuss their feelings and disappointments. Ask them to consider how their feelings would differ if they discovered their online friend was an adult rather than a peer. Discuss the possible consequences of the responses your child is interested in pursuing. Supplement your child’s ideas with factual information about Muslims, Islam, and Arab culture.
# Web Site Evaluation Form

**Directions:** This form provides a format for evaluating the credibility and reliability of information provided on a Web site. Complete this form and consider the information you have gathered before accepting online sources of information. If you cannot find the answer to a particular question, write “no information” or “not applicable” on the line. Record examples or key ideas to assist in your evaluation.

## I. General Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Web site</th>
<th>____________________________________________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web site address</td>
<td>____________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject of Web site</td>
<td>____________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II. Design and Navigation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the home page include a table of contents or menu?</th>
<th>__________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the text relate to any graphics, sounds or videos that are included at this site? If so, give examples.</td>
<td>____________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If there are links, do they take you where you are supposed to go? If not, what is the problem linking to other sites?</td>
<td>____________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you navigate around the web site without getting lost or confused?</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What impression do you get from the design and graphics?</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Host or Sponsor

Is there a statement explaining the purpose of this site? If so, what is it? ________

_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Who is responsible for this Web site (person or group)? _______________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Is there an “About Us” link or a link to information about the person or group who is responsible for the site? ________________________________

Can someone be contacted offline about this site? _______ If so, who? ________
_______________________________________________________________________

Have the authors of this site described where they got their information? ______

IV. Content

Does this site include the date that it was written? __________________________

When was it last updated? ________________________________

Does the site cover what it says it’s supposed to cover? ______________________

Does the information seem reliable? ________________________________

How could you or how did you verify the information? ______________________
_______________________________________________________________________

Give an example of something at this site that you might want to verify using another source and explain why.

_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
Do you think this site would help you learn about the topic you are studying? In what ways?
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

What key words do you notice in this site? ________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

What is the relevance of these key words? How might they help you determine whether a site is misleading?
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

V. Opinion Rating

Why does (or doesn’t) the Web site interest you?
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Would you recommend this site to someone else studying this topic? Explain why or why not?
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

© 2000 Anti-Defamation League
Families on the Internet: Suggested Activities and Discussion Guidelines

The following additional activities and discussion questions will assist families in promoting children’s safe navigation of the Internet.

1. Review the Internet Tips for Kids with children. Discuss each tip listed and ask why the tip is important. Suggest children choose a location to post Internet Tips for Kids so that it will serve as a reminder as they work at the computer.

2. Visit with your child Web sites that critically explore issues of bias and prejudice. Assist your child in becoming aware with the resources available on these Web sites; for example, the Web site of the Anti-Defamation League (www.adl.org) provides factual information on hate groups and a variety of classroom and community programs and resources to combat prejudice. The Web site of the Southern Poverty Law Center (www.tolerance.org) provides current statistics on hate crimes and sample Web pages that demonstrate some of the strategies employed by groups that promote hate and bigotry through the Internet. Additional online resources are included in the Bibliographies at the end of this publication.

3. Visit www.worldtrek.org/odyssey/teachers/treasure.html and do the Internet Treasure Hunt with your child.

4. Ask children to take you to their favorite Web sites. Inquire and discuss what features children like about the sites.

5. Spend time teaching children the skills to evaluate their favorite Web sites (consider using the SNAP process, page 32, for younger children and the sample Web Site Evaluation Form created by the Anti-Defamation League, page 44, for middle and high school students).

6. Choose a topic of interest to your family and use a search engine to search the Web together to gather information. Suggested search topics include the origins of your family surname, a potential vacation spot, things to do in your community, or recipes for a favorite kind of food.

7. Discuss with children what actions they might take if they were to encounter a hateful Web site. The following are some suggested actions:

   - tell a teacher, parent, or other adult about the Web site
   - remove the hate site from your screen
   - install filtering software in your personal computer
   - inform responsible authorities about the threatening, hateful, or violent material you find (parents, teachers, police, civil rights organizations)

8. If children have personal e-mail addresses, ask if they have ever received inappropriate e-mail messages. Instruct children not to reply to any unsolicited e-mail and to show you any future e-mail messages that concern them.
V. Bibliographies
Suggested Resources for Families

The following list of resources includes magazines, Web sites, and books that provide information and guidance for families seeking a safe online experience.

Magazines for Families

PC World
Every issue is filled with articles, monthly PC product rankings, news, and Web site reviews.

Wired
The focus is on current issues, technological advances, and the information revolution.

Yahoo! Internet Life
This publication combines print and online content to give users easy, direct access to the best sites on the World Wide Web. Every issue has hundreds of Web site reviews. Yahoo! Internet Life is also available online at www.yil.com.

Web Sites for Families

Bsafe Online
www.bsafehome.com
This site is a vertical service provider (VSP) that distributes and supports a new and growing line of Internet filtering and security applications for the home, school and small business markets.

KidsClick!
www.kidsclick.org, http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick
This is a search engine designed by librarians to guide young Internet users to quality, age appropriate Web sites.

KIDS FIRST!
www.cqcm.org/kidsfirst/index.shtml
Sponsored by the Coalition for Quality Children’s Media (CQCM), a national not-for-profit, voluntary collaboration between the media industry, educators and child advocacy organizations. The mission of CQCM is to teach children the skills to become critical media users and to increase the availability of quality children’s media. Although KIDS FIRST! does not presently evaluate Web sites, the principles and articles presented are applicable to children’s Internet use.

Kidz Privacy
www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/kidzprivacy/index.html
This site is a campaign to spread awareness of the Federal Trade Commission’s 1998
Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act and offers tips to keep children safe from online predators.

Parents Guide to the Internet
www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/internet
This online publication was written by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. The guide helps parents bridge the gap between what children know and what they know to be able to assist children with their school work and help them get ready for the information age of the next century.

A Parents’ Guide to the Internet…and how to protect your children in cyberspace
www.familyguidebook.com/aboutbooks/subindex.html
This is an excellent online book that offers comprehensive discussion and guidance for parents concerned about Internet usage by children.

Protecting Children Online
www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cnty/cntydepts/safety/da/protection/index.html
Sponsored by the County of San Diego District Attorney, this is an example of a local Web site that provides statistics and direction for parents concerned with keeping children safe from Internet predators.

Yahooligans! Parents’ Guide
www.yahooligans.com/parents/index.html
This Web site offers resources and articles about safe surfing, monitoring, policy-making and online security.

Books for Families


Suggested Resources for Educators

The following list consists of recommended Web sites and books that are available for teachers and librarians to help them promote safe and educational use of the Internet to their students.

Web Sites for Educators

AT&T Learning Network: Resources for Teachers
www.att.com/learningnetwork/teachers
This comprehensive site is self-described as the place “where education and technology e-merge.”

ProQuest: Information and Learning
www.bigchalk.com/cgi-bin/WebObjects/WOPortal.woa/db/Home.html
This site provides an extensive spectrum of educational Internet services to teachers, students, parents, librarians and school administrators involved in K-12 education. The site is divided into easy to navigate sections for teachers (by level), students, librarians/media specialists, and parents.

Children on the Internet
www.otal.umd.edu/UUPractice/children
This document analyzes the elements of quality educational Web sites. Statistics and tips on Internet usage by children are offered as well as a list of recommended sites.

Education Planet: The Education Web Guide
www.educationplanet.com
This Web site directs teachers, students and parents to web-based educational web tools and e-learning services. An Extensive ‘Search’ option links the user with over 20,000 educational supplies for all grade levels. Teachers share ideas on how to integrate technology into curriculum.

NZiTtech Network’s Safety Online: Building Safer Online Communities
http://www.nzitech.net/safety/index.htm
This online publication is a safety resource guide for Educators and Parents. The guide aims to help educators, teachers, and parents decide on strategies to help protect their students and children online. It includes information about dangers, strategies for protection, monitoring, filtering, and empowering your children to make effective decisions when using the Internet.

Yahooligans!: Teachers’ Guide
www.yahooligans.com/tg/index.html
This site offers many online lesson plans by subject and general resources for teaching Internet literacy including use policies and related links.
Books for Educators


Suggested Resources for Students

The following Web sites and books are recommended for youth who use the Internet for schoolwork or entertainment.

Web Sites for Students

America Links Up: A Kids Online Teach-In
www.getnetwise.org/americalinksup/index2.html
America Links Up: AKids Online Teach-In is a public awareness and education campaign sponsored by a broad-based coalition of non-profits, education groups, and corporations concerned with providing children with a safe and rewarding experience online. This site contains a number of valuable resources for parents and kids.

Ask Jeeves for Kids
www.ajkids.com
This site is an easy and kid-friendly way for kids to find answers to their questions online. A student enters a question and the engine returns one link that has been reviewed to assure quality, appropriate content. Designed to be a fun destination site focused on learning and “edutainment.” The service combines human editorial judgment with filtering technology to enable kids to find both relevant and appropriate answers on the Web. This site also includes study tools, games, and a message board.

Kid Pix
www.kidpix.com
This Web site is sponsored by The Learning Company School Division and is a popular multimedia creativity title in schools across the nation.

KidsClick!
www.kidsclick.org
This is a search engine designed by librarians to guide young Internet users to quality, age appropriate Web sites.

Yahooligans! TheWeb Guide for Kids
www.yahooligans.com

Books for Students


Additional Online Resources

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking: Promoting it in the classroom. ERIC Digest. (ED 306554)  
www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed306554.html

Critical thinking skills and teacher education. ERIC Digest. (ED 297003)  
www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed297003.html

Three definitions of critical thinking  
www.criticalthinking.org/k12/k12library/definect.nclk

Teaching critical reading through literature. ERIC Digest. (ED 363869)  
www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed363869.html

Untangling the Web: Critical Thinking in an Online World  
www.library.ucsb.edu/untangle/jones.html

Hate on the Internet

A parent’s guide to hate on the Internet: Helping your child safely navigate the information highway  
www.adl.org/issue_education/parents_guide_hate_net.asp#1

The Consequences of Right-Wing Extremism on the Internet  
www.adl.org/internet/extremism_rw/before.asp

Combating Extremism in Cyberspace: The Legal Issues Affecting Internet Hate Speech  
www.adl.org/Civil_Rights/newcyber.pdf

Internet Safety for Children

Children Online  
www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/online.htm

Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA)  
www.cdt.org/legislation/105th/privacy/coppa.html

A Critical Framework for Media Literacy  
www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/bigpict/mlframe.html

SafeKids.com  
http://SafeKids.com
Teen Safety on the Information Highway

Useful Statistics

Computers and the Internet
http://kids.infoplease.lycos.com/ipka/A0772279.html

Filtering Programs Useful but Far from Perfect
www.safekids.com/articles/fILTERING2000.HTM

Home Computers and Internet Use in the United States: August 2000

How Many Online?
www.nua.ie/surveys/how_many_online/index.html

Internet and Web Use in the United States: Baselines for Commercial Development

Internet Users in the U.S.
http://kids.infoplease.lycos.com/ipka/A0778257.html

The Land of Confusion? High School Students and their Use of the World Wide Web for Research
www.michaellorenzen.net

The National Center for Education Statistics
http://nces.ed.gov

Safe and Smart: Research and Guidelines for Children’s Use of the Internet
www.nsfb.org/safe-smart/index.html

Third of UK Children Use Internet
http://cyberatlas.internet.com/big_picture/demographics/article/0,1323,5901_150351,00.html

U.S. Tops World in Online Time
www.childrennow.org/newsroom/news-00/cam-ra-8-7-00.htm
References


