

## **INTERNET SAFETY TIPS** **PARENTS~STUDENTS~TEENS~FAMILIES~**

The Internet is worldwide and unregulated. It is estimated that 605.6 million people went online in 2002. Would you ever let your children drive an automobile without first getting them driver's training? Of course not! The same applies to using the Internet safely. The following information will assist parents, students, teens, and families on how to use the **Internet safely**.

### **Website- surfing tips:**

- Always know the website address you are entering. Don't guess. Internet porn companies buy thousands of misspelled URL's (web addresses) hoping you will make a mistake. They know Internet pornography is highly addictive.
- There are over **260 million pornographic** web pages on the Internet, as of 2003. If someone accidentally visits a bad site, encourage your children to communicate this to you. \* See below. **\*\*Covenant Eyes filtering is now available\*\*which will block objectionable sites.**
- Pornography is more addicting than cocaine and imprints the mind with images.
- Keep the computer in an open area and **sign up to Covenant Eyes** accountability software. Our program teaches responsible use of the Internet through self-control, self-discipline, and personal responsibility.
- Be a part of your children's online experience. Explore the Internet as a family. Use this as a time to teach them Internet Safety.
- Explain to your children that not all websites are safe. There are predators and criminals using the Internet to scam people and steal personal information. Before buying anything online, tell your children that you need to be with them.
- \* If pornographic pop-ups suddenly appear on your screen or you accidentally visit a porn site, instruct your family to do the following: 1.) Immediately press the '**Alt**' key and then the '**F4**' key, which is at the top of the keyboard. This will immediately close out the pop up. If more come, continue to hold down the Alt key and press the F4 key. 2.) A second option is to immediately turn off the monitor and manually turn off your computer by holding the on / off button in for a few seconds. Encourage family members to communicate this information to you. Be sure to delete all 'cookies' and 'temp Internet files'. \*\* see below.
- If you receive 'Spam' email, do not click on links in the message unless you are **certain** of its credibility. These types of email contain links to websites and in some cases are 'mini' websites. **Use the Internet with 'purpose', not just to surf around and see what things look like. It is a powerful tool and needs to be used with great respect.**
- Use anti-virus software like Norton Antivirus, which may be purchased at Staples and Office Max. Perform the 'auto update' regularly to keep it current. Consider using **Norton Security** that will include a 'firewall' spam blocking, and other helpful features.
- Regularly delete 'cookies' and 'temporary Internet files' from the **Internet options** icon in the **control panel**. This will help your computer to work faster and keep unwanted pieces of information from collecting on your computer. To do this click on "Start" then click on **control panel**, then double click '**Internet options**'. Left click 'delete cookies', left click 'delete files'.

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### HANDLING EMAIL SAFELY

- DO NOT open unsolicited e-mail attachments- (Any email messages that have come from someone that you don't know.) Viruses, worms, and Trojan horses can be activated if you open an email attachment from someone that you don't know. **Even if the 'senders' name is familiar to you**, unless you were expecting them to send you an attachment, DO NOT OPEN IT. (This is called 'Spoofing'.) (An attachment is an email with a 'paperclip' off to the left.)
- **Delete Spam** by **holding down the 'shift key'** and left click **once** on a message. Then, look at the messages and left click again **up to, but not including** a message you want to keep. All the messages in between will be **highlighted**. Keeping the **shift key held down**, press the 'DELETE' key on your keyboard. Another screen will appear asking you to permanently delete, which you click '**yes**' to. This is quick and prevents you from opening unwanted Spam and seeing pictures or imbedded websites. \*\* **Using the Covenant Eyes program you can open your email program and all pictures will not appear if remain logged off of Covenant Eyes. You will only see text.**
- **Never respond to any Spam email** requests directing you to go to a certain website and give your personal information or to log in, or to update something, NO MATTER HOW CREDIBLE OR valid they may appear. This is called 'phishing'. Criminals can duplicate your bank's logo, their website and sender name trying to lead you to a phony website to enter in personal information such as: Social Security #'s, passwords, bank account #'s,
- We recommend using Norton Antivirus software. Be sure to **regularly update** the virus definitions by clicking on the 'auto update'. **If you are using Windows XP, turn 'on' the firewall.**
- **Understand** that there are criminals and predators sending email to deceive and capture personal information from unsuspecting users. Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the USA and can be very damaging.

### ONLINE CHAT GUIDELINES

- Chatting with people **you don't know can be dangerous. It is best not to engage in any chat rooms.** If you choose to engage in chatting, there are some important guidelines to follow.
- Don't open messages from people **you don't know**.
- Don't chat while angry. If you are ever threatened, be sure to tell your parents. Parents should contact the local law enforcement authorities.
- **Always keep private information private. Never** share your name, address, phone, city, state, or anything that could identify where you are and who you are.
- **Never share any financial information.**
- **Refuse all requests for personal information, to keep relationships secret, or to meet anywhere.**
- Report any suspicious or dangerous contact that makes you or your child feel uncomfortable.