

internet safety

Quick Fact: 95% of teens (ages 12-17) are online.

Lenhart A, et al. Teens, kindness and cruelty on social network sites. Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2010



I did some light research to find out how much time the average teenager spends online and found answers ranging from 31 hours a week, 6 hours a day, to every waking minute (if Xbox and gaming are included)! Typically, high school aged youngsters are checking status updates (and posting their own), uploading photos and videos, playing games, chatting on IM, video chatting, exploring their interests, and accessing information and files that peak their interest.

It can be difficult to accept but when something is posted online that information becomes *permanent*, and part of the author's digital footprint. Even if a photo or comment is removed after posting the electronic record will remain! Your child's digital footprint also has a reputation, because things that are posted online can reappear even years later. According to a 2008 Kaplan survey, 10% of college admissions officers at the nation's top 500 colleges looked at applicants' social networking profiles, and 38% of them stated what they saw "negatively affected" their opinion of the applicant.

When teens are on the internet take care to:

- **Educate** students about cyber safety
- **Place** the computer in a high traffic area of the house
- **Keep** personal information private

Below is a link to a video that has been shown by the Florida Attorney General's Child Predator CyberCrime Unit Victims Advocate at a previous cyber safety day held at the Clark:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4w4_Hrwh2XI&safe=active

tIPS

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM BULLYING

Internet safety for teenagers requires that parents monitor their children's online lives. Stay as involved as you can, and project your family's set of values into your child's online interactions.

- Get Involved in your child's online activities
- Block objectionable material.
- Keep the computer in a common area, where you can watch and monitor its use.
- Bookmark your child's favorite sites for easy access.
- Spend time online together to teach your children appropriate online behavior.
- Never open unscreened email from a contact that you don't know; if in doubt, trash it.
- Block pop-ups.
- Download free software only from a reputable and trustworthy company.
- Log off from all websites and shut down your computer when not in use.
- Log off from all websites and delete history, downloads, and cookies after using a public computer.
- Protect your home wireless network with encryption (hide your network name and at a minimum use WPA2).

