

Lesson 4 Internet Safety (Because online is forever!)



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1. Public v. private/personal
2. Trustworthy v. untrustworthy sites
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- The internet is a great tool for learning information, exploring new hobbies, and making friends!
- However, just like figuring out how to ride a bicycle, we have to learn to use it safely and responsibly.
- Most important is remembering that what goes online, stays online... forever! ...and ever!

It seems like there is nothing the internet can't do (try and think of something!), but with all the wonderful benefits it brings us, it also comes with a little bit of danger.

However, it's nothing we can't handle with a little education.

Safely navigating the internet only takes a few steps: know what sites are safe, understand how to recognize when a person is or isn't safe, and always remember - what goes on the internet stays on the internet... forever.

So, let's learn how to post, respond, and interact confidently.



“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest”
– Benjamin Franklin

When our students and children are beside us, we can keep them relatively safe.
We look out for who comes in and out of our space.
We can monitor behavior.
We can teach as we go along.

But the more they learn and grow, the more unfettered our students invariably become (and - hooray! - that is the goal). Therefore, we need to ensure that before they venture out, whether for just a few hours or to live independently, they have the knowledge and ability to keep themselves safe from personal victimization. We must also ensure that they understand how not to mistakenly commit personal safety violations against others.

Our Personal Safety Curriculum teaches students basic concepts to keep themselves and others protected from harm **without** delving into topics of sexuality.

Because instilling and bolstering general safety concepts will pervade all areas of their lives. Boundaries are boundaries, whatever the situation.
Consent is consent, whatever the activity.
We will continue to repeat and reinforce these principles throughout the curriculum so that students will always know that they can - and should - communicate what they do and do not want, whatever the scenario.

Please continue to role model these concepts as you work with your students!
They are watching us...

This unit is about INTERNET SAFETY.
It's a whole new world and we want it to be safe!

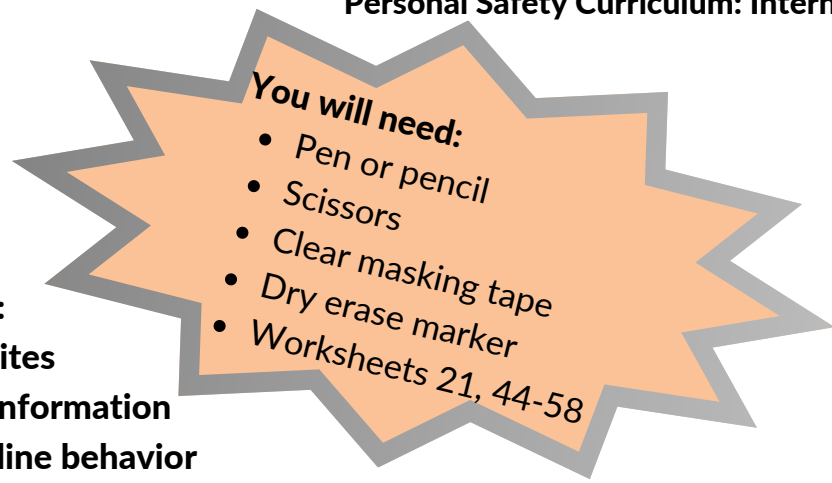
Topics will include:

Learning how to interact online

Finding safe spaces on the internet

Meeting new friends online and in person

Spotting cyber-predators



Learning objectives for this lesson:

- Recognizing safe/unsafe websites
- Discerning public and private information
- Understanding appropriate online behavior
- Communicating with cyber-friends
- Knowing how to safely meet online friends in person
- Navigating social media
- Handling/avoiding online bullying

**You may read this lesson as it is written or use your own words.
And because everyone's abilities are different, you may choose to skip some worksheets.**

Section 1: Public v. private/personal ★

Remember way back in Lesson 2 (seems like we were just kids then, huh?) when we learned about public and private? Well, the internet is yet another place where they are important! We need to be sure what is appropriate (that is, what is ok, not offensive or upsetting to others) to put on the internet and what should be kept private or *personal*.

PERSONAL means having to do with one's private life, relationships, and emotions rather than matters connected with one's public or professional career.

In other words, personal things are all about YOU. Your feelings, your private thoughts, what goes on in your head, heart, and body. When something is personal, you might not want to share it with others - and you don't have to! Especially online, where anyone in the world can see or read it. Because of that, things that are personal should be kept private (for your eyes and ears only!) and off the internet.



Take out **WORKSHEET 21, "What are Public and Private?"** again. Review what makes places public or private. Discuss how a public place might feel private or might have private spaces within them. Then discuss how a private place may sometimes not be so private! Now discuss which thoughts, feelings, or personal actions should be kept private and off the internet! Which might be ok to post so others can learn about them?



Take out **WORKSHEET 44, "Private 'I'."** Circle all the places, clothes, and behaviors that are personal/private. Discuss why you think your answers are correct. **BONUS:** Discuss what you think might happen if these personal/private things became public. How would you feel if your teacher saw them? What about the personal thoughts and feelings we talked about? How would you feel if your boss heard them? Your friends? There are no wrong answers, just what you think!

As we can imagine, others learning our personal thoughts, feelings, and behaviors - as well as seeing our private clothes or body parts - would be pretty embarrassing. After all, there's a reason these things are being called "private!"

But when we post something on the internet, whether it is pictures, posts, blogs, or chats, anyone can see them and they are out there *forever*.

We'll say it again...

THE INTERNET IS FOREVER.

One more time...

THE INTERNET IS FOREVER!!!

Because of this, and because we can't always control who gets to see what we've put online, we have to be selective about what we post (really think about if we want it out there!) and how to protect ourselves when we do post it.

Take a handful of flour or sugar or sand outside. (No, we won't be baking or making a castle, we'll be learning about internet safety!)

Hold out your hand and blow hard on the little pile in your palm. Watch all the tiny specs fly into the air and then either land or float away.

Can you gather it all up again? Why or why not? And if you do, are you sure you've gotten *all* of it? How do you know one spec didn't land where you can't find it? Or flew farther than you can see? Or that someone else didn't pick it up or that it didn't land in their hair and they walked away with it?

That's what it's like putting your information on the internet. It goes out into to the world and you can't get it all back, even if you try!

On
your own



Remember how we said,

THE INTERNET IS FOREVER? (There, we said it again! Why? *Repetition helps us remember things!*)

Well, there's another fact we really, really, really need to know about the internet:

PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE INTERNET ARE STILL STRANGERS.

Now say it with us:

PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE INTERNET ARE STILL STRANGERS!!!

Give yourself a round of applause!

We need to understand that...

PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE INTERNET ARE STILL STRANGERS!!!

...because when we start chatting with people, sharing pictures of our dogs and favorite baseball teams, visit Spawn Island a couple of times (any Fortnite fans out there?), and find ourselves getting to know people we meet online, we might begin to think of them as friends and be tempted to tell them private/personal information.

BUT WE SHOULD NOT? And why not? Because...

PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE INTERNET ARE STILL STRANGERS!!!

We may spend hours talking, but there is still no way to really know who you are talking to when online. We can't see them and, even if we can via FaceTime or Skype or Zoom, we still don't know that they are really who they say they are. They may live in a different place than they say they do; they may be older or younger than they look; they could be different in a number of ways.

Because of that, we should never tell our private/personal information to someone we've met online. Not even if they feel like a friend. Not even if they tell us their private information. It's simply not safe.

So, what information exactly should be kept private online?

To begin with, keep private anything you don't want *everyone* to know or see.

Because we have to assume that if one person can find your information, anyone can!

Keep those personal things (those things that are about YOU and are no one else's business) to yourself and only post what you don't mind strangers, acquaintances, helpers, friends, and family knowing and seeing! You know, the public stuff.

There is also a list of things that should absolutely never, ever, EVER be posted publicly online.
No matter who asks for it.

No matter if you really want to post it.

Not in a chatroom, not while texting, not on social media.

This is information that should never go online for any reason (or without the OK from your trusted adult):

- Your last name
- Your home address
- Where you work
- The name of your town
- The name of your school
- The name of your school mascot (go, Tigers!)
- Your phone number
- Your bank information
- Your credit card information
- Your travel plans (which would let others know when the house will be empty)
- Your social security or government ID number
- Your passwords
- Your social media page, like Facebook, Instagram, and other platforms (someone could use social media to find out more information about you)
- Your email address

Because (say it with me now)...

THE INTERNET IS FOREVER! and

PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE INTERNET ARE STILL STRANGERS!

You're doing great!



Take out **WORKSHEET 45, "Personal Information."**

Look at the items/information that you should never put online. You may even want to print out the worksheet and hang it somewhere near your laptop, computer, or iPad so it's easy to remember!

BONUS: Try to find this information around your house - look at a credit card, bank statement, and social security card. Discuss what they do and why they need to stay private!

Section 2: Trustworthy/untrustworthy sites

Before we talk about how and what we should and shouldn't post, let's first talk about where it's ok to go on the internet in the first place. After all, there are millions of sites to visit online - we want to make sure we stick to the places that are *trustworthy*!

TRUSTWORTHY means able to be relied on to be safe.

UNTRUSTWORTHY means unsafe!

What does it mean to call a site "unsafe?"

According to McAfee, an unsafe site could either use *malware* or *phishing* against you.

(*What* or *what* against me? We'll tell you...)

MALWARE is software designed to disrupt, damage, or gain unauthorized access to a computer system. Basically, it wants to mess up or steal from your computer.

Sometimes, we call it a "virus."

Either way, we don't want it!

PHISHING means tricking you into telling personal information! (Which we just learned should be kept private!) They usually do this in order to take our money, and as much of it as they can.

Like sites that use malware, we want to avoid sites that phish for our credit card numbers or passwords.

(Them: "Got any bank account info?" Us: "Go phish!")

Luckily, there are ways to avoid sites like this getting hold of our private/personal information.

Here are a few tricks:

On
your own

Follow along on your computer, tablet, or smart phone throughout this lesson. It will make the information much clearer if you are looking at it!

- **Check for the "S."**

When we look at the address bar that runs across the top of the browser on a website, we find the URL address (for instance, The Arc of NJ's URL address is "https://www.arcnj.org.")

Check to make sure that the address of any website you visit begins with "https," not just "http."

If there is no "https" nor "http," look for a little padlock icon  at the far left.

Both the "s" and the padlock icon are there to let you know that the site is secure and that no one can access your information.



- **Check for spelling.**

A fraudulent, or fake, URL address is sometimes a misspelled version of a real URL address. For instance, www.hellothere.com might be misspelled www.hellotheir.com or www.helothere.com.

These sites do this so that common misspellings will direct users to their site instead of the one the person is really trying to access.

Always make sure that you have properly spelled your website address before hitting "enter." And never go to a website that has been emailed to you if the email itself is poorly worded or misspelled. (A real company will always spellcheck their correspondence.)

- **Google it!**

Google lists their search results in order of popularity - the ones that are used most often will appear first.

If you search a website in Google and do not see it within the first page or two, think about not visiting the site. It does not have as much traffic which may be because it's not secure.

- **Check for signs of realness.**

Sometimes, fake websites will send emails asking us to go to their site.

Before you do, look up the website on another tab and check for a "contact us" or "about us" page. Are people listed?

Is there a physical address or phone number?

Call the number from the "contact us" page of the website (not from the email you received) and ask if they really sent the email.

If not, do not click through.

- **Don't click hyperlinks.**

If we receive an email with a hyperlink to a website (to click to be brought directly to that page), do *not* click the link, but type the URL address in a new tab.

A hyperlink is usually blue and underlined, either a web address (URL) or just words, like this:

[Click here to get your free koala straight from Australia!](#)

or

<http://malware.donotclickme.toolate.net>

Even if the hyperlink has the secure "S" after the "http," it's still best not to click it.

Type in the URL manually or just ignore/delete the email.

Remember: it could have been sent by someone trustworthy but the link itself might be unsafe.



- **When it comes to news, consider the source.**

Many sites like to publish "news" that seems unbelievable - and that's usually because it should not be believed (some news is fake news)! When reading up on current events or researching for school, make sure you get your information from trustworthy sources. Look for popular news sites like big city newspapers, outlets like the Associated Press and Reuters, and unbiased sources like PBS. And if it sounds ridiculous, it probably is!

- **Listen to your gut.**

Does an offer seem too good to be true? ("A new car for \$50? What a deal!")

Does the website look strange?

Do you feel uneasy? Your gut is trying to tell you something!

What do we mean by your "gut?"

GUT is another way of saying "intuition," the feeling your body gives you that lets you know if something is not right.

Have you ever watched a movie and for some reason didn't trust one of the characters? Maybe you didn't believe what they were saying or you didn't like the way they treated or behaved with others. That was your gut telling you that this person might not be trustworthy.

Or did someone ever ask you to hang out and you suddenly felt a little nauseous or your hands got clammy or you got tense and wanted to say "no?" That was your gut again!

And were you ever about to do something - maybe something you were afraid of or that seemed dangerous - and you felt like you couldn't move? Again, that was your trusty gut, or intuition.

We get those cues or "little voice" telling us not to do something or interact with someone when we have the feeling that it's just not safe or right.

So, if your intuition is telling you it's not a safe internet site to visit, not a good photo or comment to post, not a person to chat with, or not a smart purchase to make, believe it! (Remember, we have a gut for a reason!)

On
your own

Turn on the TV and find a show or movie you haven't seen before. Talk about what your gut tells you about the characters - who is a bad guy and who is a good guy? Why do you think so? Is there evidence besides your gut making you believe this?



The Struggles of Getting Therapy while Deaf ft Rikki Poynter

Rikki Poynter is a web sensation, content creator, public speaker, accessibility consultant, and writer who is deaf. She began as a YouTube makeup vlogger, but has since launched the #NoMoreCRAPtions movement which advocates for accurate closed captions for accessibility. Through this campaign, she also aims to bring awareness to issues of online accessibility and mental health. This is one of many people with a disability who understands the power of the internet!



Take out **WORKSHEET 46, “Picking a Trustworthy Website.”** Draw a line from each internet fact/sign of safety to a healthy flower/plant; draw a line from each internet fact/sign of unsafety to an unhealthy flower/plant. (You can use a flower/plant more than once!)



Take out **WORKSHEET 47, “Safe to Surf?”** Circle the clues in the pictures that the site is untrustworthy. (There may be more than one clue per picture!) What makes you think they are untrustworthy? Why do you think the ones you did not circle are trustworthy? Discuss!

Section 2: Netiquette and staying safe ★

By now, you’re probably thinking, “Hey, team at The Arc of New Jersey, what’s with all the crazy words you’re introducing in this lesson?” And you would be right to wonder! The creation of the internet brought with it a bunch of new words, phrases, ideas... and things to look out for. So, in order to combat the dangers, we first have to learn about these other things, some of which sound, well, weird. Here we go...

NETIQUETTE is the appropriate way to behave online. Like “etiquette” (polite behavior), it has to do with interacting with others in an acceptable way, but “netiquette” is on the net! (The internet, that is.)

See? The word’s not so nutty anymore...



You know how you are allowed to walk around your home in your bathrobe, kick off your shoes in your room, and scream-sing “Old Town Road” while playing air guitar in the privacy of your shower, but you are not allowed to do any of these things at school, work, or your cousin’s wedding? That’s because of the rules of etiquette! We have to think about how we should behave in public.

Most of the rules that tell us how to behave in public also apply to how to behave online (except for the bathrobe, shoes off, air guitar part - as long as your camera stays off (and it should!), no one can see what you’re doing as you chat, so go for it!)

Netiquette rules talk about how you should use your words and how to appropriately interact with other people.

- One big rule of netiquette: If you wouldn't say something to someone's face, do not say it online! Insults are insults whether they are spoken or typed. So keep your good manners while posting just like you do in person!
- Give people space. We sometimes feel eager to hear from others, but enthusiasm can turn to harassment very easily.

Practice the 3x3x3 rule!

If you want to contact someone, you can text, email, or call them up to three times the first day, three times the second day, and three times the third day.

If you still haven’t heard back from them by the end of the third day, it’s time to stop reaching out.

No one wants someone constantly trying to reach them, so give them space and see if they contact you later!

If not, there are always other friends to make...

HELPFUL Tip

- Another helpful hint to staying appropriate online is by using the T.H.I.N.K. method!

Before you post anything - a picture or a comment - ask yourself:

Is it **T**True? (We don’t want to post fake news on the internet...)

Is it **H**elpful? (Are your words helping someone or hurting them?)

Is it **I**nspiring? (Do your words excite or encourage people?)

Is it **N**ecessary? (Do your words need to be said?)

Is it **K**ind? (Will you make others feel good or make them feel bad?)

(The letters spell out “think!” It’s a great way to remember these five questions!)



Take out **WORKSHEET 48, “Simply T.H.I.N.K.”**
Review the worksheet, print, then hang it where you can see it when you’re online! Make sure to look at it every time before you post and ask yourself the questions before you put anything online. If you don’t T.H.I.N.K. first, you might hurt someone’s feelings!

Remember, just because we now know about netiquette doesn’t mean everyone else does. Sometimes others will interact with us in a way that makes us upset or uncomfortable, even if they don’t mean to (maybe they need to read this lesson!). In that case, it’s important to act as a *self-advocate*.

A **SELF-ADVOCATE** is someone who speaks up for themselves and their own interests. We may have a person in our lives who will help us tell others what we want and need, and who will stick up for us - when we act as a self-advocate, we are that person for ourselves!



Take out **WORKSHEET 49, “Keeping Up Boundaries... Even Online!”** Have one person read the first “If” and the second person read the corresponding “Then.” Discuss how this may be an effective way to self-advocate. Then, move on to the next one!

BONUS: Discuss other ways we can approach the issue. What else could you say to self-advocate?

Section 3: Making friends online ★

Making friends online is a little easier than in person simply because there are so many more people online to meet and so many sites on which to meet them! But making friends can still feel difficult. Here are some tips to drawing people to you so you can decide who you’d really like to be friends with:

- Be positive!

It’s much easier to interact with someone who notices the happy things in life and can see the good in a situation. Too many complaints or snarky comments can make others start to feel bad, and they won’t want to stick around for more! So, balance out the negative with positive.

- Show interest and be a good listener.

Everybody wants to feel like what they have to say matters - show others that you care what they think and feel by inviting them to tell you! Then follow up with a question or two. It can be as simple as, “What makes you feel that way?” or “How long have you been doing that?” Just as important, though, is that your potential friend takes as much interest in YOU as you do THEM. Someone who does all the talking isn’t being a good friend, so make sure that you - as your own best advocate - develops relationships with people who show they care, too.

- Have something to contribute!

Let's face it, we can't expect people to listen to us if we have nothing to say. Think about what the person you're talking to is saying and try to add to it. Something like, "That's so interesting! I had an experience like that on my last vacation..." or "Man, do I have a crazy story to tell you!" If coming up with topics is difficult (and we know it sometimes can be!), have some stories already planned to tell when you enter the conversation. Try to work it in somewhere it fits. If this approach doesn't sound like something that would work for you, then engage in others' stories. Let them know their joke is funny, express your feelings about it, or throw in a "WOW!" when it applies. And remember to let them talk as much as you do!

- Show them who you are.

And, no, that does not mean telling them your personal information! (Never! Never!) It means talking about the things you truly enjoy, sharing stories, and lending your voice.

Because anyone would be lucky to have a friend like you - give them a chance to "meet" you!

- Hang out on sites that interest you.

Jumping onto a platform about race cars or Barbie cos-play (or whatever you like) ensures that you and the other people on the site share at least one interest! This gives you a topic that everyone can talk and share opinions about. Find a community that loves dogs as much as you do or wants to talk about theatre. Even if you don't enjoy all the people on the site, at least you have a common passion.



Take out **WORKSHEET 50, "Making Friends Online."**

Draw a line from each question to the best answers on the right. (There can be more than one good answer for each, so feel free to draw more than one line!) Discuss why you think your answer is a good answer!

We can use these tips in chatrooms and even on gaming sites!

Because if someone is playing Minecraft with you, it means they like Minecraft like you - even if you have nothing else in common, you at least have that. And that's a great place to start.



Take out **WORKSHEET 51, "Chatrooms and Gaming Sites."**

These are excellent places to make new friends! Read the list of good and not-so-good ways to interact when visiting these sites. Discuss what makes them good and why the others are not a great idea.



Take turns pretending to be a new person in an online community. Practice introducing yourself, experiment with different responses to questions and comments, and try out a story or two.

So, what happens if we meet someone in a chatroom or on a gaming site and we want to get together in person?

Is it a good idea?

Should we go for it?

The short answer is: sure!

The long answer is: sure, but there are some things we have to do to make sure that we are safe!

Because even though we have gotten to “know” our online friends over time, we still don’t know that they are who they say they are. After all, people we meet on the internet are still strangers, right?

Here are some MUST-DOs for meeting internet acquaintances in person:

- Check with your caregiver before you say “yes.” Ensure that they approve of your plans!
- FaceTime, Skype, Zoom (or whatever video-chatting app you prefer) with them first!
Make sure that they keep their camera on so you can tell that they are the one talking to you!
- Meet in public! Never go to their home or meet them in a private place where others cannot see or hear you until you have spent a lot of time together in person.
- Do not invite them to your house - we do not want people we met on the internet to know where we live! A populated park or coffee shop is a good way to safely begin an in-person friendship.
- Bring someone else along. Introduce a friend, family member, or someone you trust to this new friend (they can help fill any awkward silences), or just ask your person to sit at a nearby table/bench and keep an eye on you.
- If you bring along a friend, let at least one trusted adult know where you will be. Better yet, share your location from your phone (for iPhone users, open a message to the contact you want to share your location with; click on their picture/circle at the top of the conversation; click “Share My Location.”)
- Do not accept a ride from this person - meet them there. We should never take rides from strangers, and people we meet on the internet are still strangers!
- Do not offer a ride to them - especially if you are driving alone. A good rule to remember is: the more people you have around you, the safer you will be. So don’t be alone in a car with them...



Take out **WORKSHEET 52, “Meet and Greet.”**

Review these rules and even hang the worksheet where you can see it! The better you know the rules, the easier it is to finally meet your online bestie!



Making friends online is great, but this wouldn't be a personal safety lesson if we didn't bring up, well, safety!

And making friends online can bring with it some risk, like *cyber-predators*. ("Cyber-WHAT?")

CYBER-PREDATORS are people who exploit (use) others online for their own gain.

What does this mean?

It means that there are some people who will contact you or become your friend only so they can get something from you, like money.

These people are very sneaky because they tend to seem like the best people - the best friends - in the world! They will say the nicest things to you, maybe send you gifts, tell you their secrets, and "love bomb," meaning always hang around, compliment, and show interest in you to excess.

However, cyber-predators eventually let us know who they are. They begin to ask for favors, for money, or for bank or credit card information; they sometimes pretend that they are in trouble and need the money to get them out of trouble; they press us to tell them our secrets like passwords and things that no one else should know; they threaten to take their love or friendship away if we don't give them what they want; and - most of all - they tell us to keep it all a secret.

So, here's another important, important, important rule to follow when it comes to friends from the internet:

IF SOMEONE ON THE INTERNET ASKS US TO KEEP A SECRET, THAT MEANS WE SHOULD TELL OUR TRUSTED ADULT THAT SECRET!

Once again (because *repetition helps us remember things!*):

IF SOMEONE ON THE INTERNET ASKS US TO KEEP A SECRET, THAT MEANS WE SHOULD TELL OUR TRUSTED ADULT THAT SECRET!

Now let's sing it to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" (come on, no one's listening!):

IF SOMEONE ON THE INTERNET ASKS US TO KEEP A SECRET, THAT MEANS WE SHOULD TELL OUR TRUSTED ADULT THAT SECRET!

That was probably not our best performance, but we get an A for effort!

Remember when we said, “**PEOPLE WE MEET ON THE INTERNET ARE STILL STRANGERS?**”
Some of the people we were really talking about are cyber-predators!
Because we don’t know that they are who they say they are... and cyber-predators never are.

For instance:

They may say they’re a teenage girl, but they are really a grown man.

They may say they went to school with you years ago, but they actually live in a different country!

They may say they have \$1million that they will give you if you first lend them \$100, but in true life they will never pay you back!

They may say they love you and that if you loved them, you would do this for them.

Don’t believe them. (Love means never pressuring the other person!)

So, until we actually know them face to face, in person, honest to goodness, for a loooong time, we have to act as if they are (say it with me) A STRANGER.

Which means, don’t send them money. Don’t tell them secrets. Don’t give them passwords or private information. Don’t send them pictures or turn on your camera.

It’s fine to chat and game and have a laugh and enjoy yourself, but they are not your real friend until you can *truly* know who they are.

And if you’re not sure, ask your trusted adult!

They never steer us wrong.



Take out **WORKSHEET 53, “Cyber-Predators.”**

Read through the list of behaviors that might mean your cyber-buddy is a predator and put a check ✓ in each box to show you understand what to look for.



Take turns pretending to be a new person in an online community again; sometimes be yourself, sometimes act like a cyber-predator. What is different about the way you behave as each character? How easy it is to spot when your partner is the cyber-predator?

BONUS: Come up with different ways to say “no” when the cyber-predator asks for money, passwords, or for you to keep your friendship a secret.

All of this information is not to scare you - the internet really is a great place to meet new people!
We just want you to be aware of the few people out there who may not be safe.
For all the rest: have a fun time with your new group of friends!



Gage Skidmore

Rob McElhenney not only stars in the hilarious comedy “It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia,” but was also diagnosed with several “neurodevelopmental disorders and learning disabilities” at the age of 46! He publicly announced this determination on Twitter so others with IDD won’t “feel alone.” His talent, wit, and outspoken approach to life prove that everyone is different in their own way... and everyone can be successful at whatever they want to do!

What if we’ve been chatting with someone for a long time - a few weeks, a few months - and we really, really trust that they are who they say they are. Unless you are planning to meet them in person (in which case, you should follow our handy list of rules on page 13!), the only thing left to do is to trust your gut!

Remember, trusting your gut means following your intuition, listening to the little “voice” in your head that tells you what to think, and paying attention to the signs our body gives us.

We can often tell when someone is untrustworthy and when they can be trusted.

How can we tell?

Because our gut tells us so. And it’s important to practice trusting our gut so we can get really, really good at it and recognize what we are feeling when we are feeling it!



Take out **WORKSHEET 54, “Trust Your Gut.”** Our body lets us know when something is or isn’t right. Learn to listen to what it’s telling us!

Draw a line from the body cue to the body part where it happens! Then discuss which feelings signal trust (good) and which signal distrust (bad). Are some both? What could each feeling mean? And can you remember a time when you felt that feeling? Discuss!

On
your own

When walking down the street or sitting in public, notice the people around you, the buildings, the wind. Being present in “the now” helps us develop intuition!

Section 4: Social media ★

One of the most entertaining activities we can do online is join in on social media. Sites like Facebook and WhatsApp help us stay in touch with people we care about, Twitter (X) and Instagram allow us to post our thoughts and photos, and TikTok gives us a place to do ridiculous dances for the world to see.

Safely participating on social media is easy without taking away from the fun!

It only requires following a few guidelines...

1. At the very least, every social media account should be made private! (Remember that word? It usually means “just for you,” but in this case it means “only the people you *accept* to view your account.” So strangers or people you may not trust cannot find your account and begin scrolling through your posts; everyone must send in a request and you have to either accept or not accept!

Making Facebook private:

Open Facebook on your computer, laptop, tablet, or phone.

Open the Account Settings, then follow the path Settings & Privacy > Settings > Privacy.

Under Your Activity, find Who Can See Your Future Posts, and select Edit.

Set it to Friends or Only me.

Next select Profile and Tagging from the panel on the left side of your screen. Here you can control who posts messages to your timeline, and who can see what you and other users post on your timeline.

Then move on to the Blocking section from the panel on the left. Here you can completely deny access to your profile for certain users by putting them into the Block users list. Alternatively, you can put them into the Restricted list and restrict their access and allow them to only see the public posts and public information on your profile.

When you're finished tweaking your privacy settings on Facebook, go back to the Profile and Tagging section. Scroll down and select View as to see what your profile looks like to other users who aren't on your Facebook friends list.

Making Instagram private:

Open Instagram and go to your profile page.

Select the three horizontal lines in the upper-right corner of the screen to open the Menu.

Select Settings.

From the Settings menu, select Privacy.

Under Account privacy, toggle the Private account switch on.

Making Snapchat private:

Open Snapchat and navigate to your profile page.


Select the icon  in the upper-right corner of the screen to open your account settings.

Scroll down until you see the Manage Who Can section.

Select Manage Who Can Contact Me and set it to My Friends instead of Everyone.

Then go back, select Manage Who Can View My Story, and set it to Friends Only or Custom if you want to handpick who's allowed to see your Snapchat Stories.

2. Once in a while you will receive a friend request (someone who wants to follow you) from someone you don't know. While it's best to say "no" to these requests, we understand that many people want a lot of followers - that's part of the fun. In this case, look up the person who sent in the request and search through their "friends" list. It may be ok to accept people you don't know if they are already friends with your family members or close friends. But ask your trusted adult first! They may have advice that's even better than ours!

Sometimes people receive friend requests from "famous" singers or actors. And that seems really exciting! But unless they have the verified check mark  after their name, they are not who they say they are! So, be sure never to accept those requests! And never, ever send them money or private information - they are definitely cyber-predators!

3. Then there's location-sharing - that's when you can post, or "check in," where you are on your social media so all of your followers/friends can see! ...Which means anyone can find out where you are. So, in a word, don't do it. The only people who have to know where you are would be the people you know and love. Strangers should never know where to find us (it's none of their business!). And your social media "friends" are often not the people you love.

So, if your social media platform ever requests to access your location, do not accept! And never "check in" to let everyone know where you are - that is personal information!



Take out **WORKSHEET 55, "Protect Your Social Media and it Will Protect You!"** Hang this list of our handy tips for staying safe while still having fun.

There is one more rule that can be very helpful when navigating your social media presence...

4. Be careful when posting pictures, comments, or captions. Sometimes we post things that seem important or funny in the moment, but that we regret later on.

And because **THE INTERNET IS FOREVER**, once you post, it's out there for anyone and everyone to see! ...Forever!

This is why we created the "Proud Grandpa" rule!

This rule is simple: don't post any photo, comment or caption that you wouldn't want your grandpa to see (or your teacher, your boss, your best friend's family...).

If you find it embarrassing to think that your grandpa might see it, then it's too embarrassing for the world to see! (Yes, we keep our social media private, but anyone can take a screenshot of our posts and send them out into the World Wide Web!).



Take out **WORKSHEET 56, "The Proud Grandpa Rule."** Circle all the pictures that would be OK to post. Discuss why they are OK! Then discuss why the other posts would be inappropriate and would shock grandpa if he saw them.

BONUS: Discuss what you think makes a photo or post inappropriate. Is it the way people are dressed? Is it their behavior? What kinds of photos and posts are always appropriate?

Go through your phone, tablet, or laptop together and look at the posts of the people you are following or public posts that anyone can see. Are all the photos and comments appropriate enough to make grandpa proud? Can you find any that are inappropriate? Discuss why you think they are OK!

On
your own

Section 4: Cyberbullying ★

Sometimes people we don't know think it's fun to be mean.

Sometimes people we do know feel safer typing something nasty online rather than saying it out loud. These are just two reasons why the internet can be a place for *cyberbullying*.

CYBERBULLYING is posting or sharing harmful or mean content about someone else on the internet, social media, apps, texts, video games, or digital devices.

This includes mean comments, profanity, threats to one's safety, sharing nude or inappropriate photos, threatening to share inappropriate or embarrassing photos, actually sharing the photos and refusing to take them down, spreading rumors, impersonating someone else, and/or engaging in cruel or hurtful behavior in groups online.

Just like in person, cyberbullying hurts. And in New Jersey, it is a crime.

How do we know if something we see is cyberbullying? It has to do with *intent*.

INTENT means that something was planned or done for a purpose, such as to harm or threaten someone. People who intend to embarrass someone, plan to hurt someone, or set out to harm someone online is participating in cyberbullying.

Someone who posts a photo they think you will find funny but apologizes and takes it down immediately when asked did not have intent and, therefore, was not cyberbullying.



Take out **WORKSHEET 57, "Is it Bullying?"** Trace the path from the bull to the bullfighter (he *intends* to hurt the bull!) by following the arrows with your finger or a pencil. Notice the examples that are not bullying and the ones that are.

BONUS: Have your teacher/caregiver read the examples and the outcomes (choosing "no" or "yes" at random) and see if you can figure out without looking if each is an example of bullying or not.

Cyberbullying feels awful, but there are ways to handle it.



Take out **WORKSHEET 58, "How to Push Back on the Bull(ying)."** Review the steps you can take if you find yourself in a bullying situation. Discuss why each tip is important!

BONUS: Quiz yourself on T.H.I.N.K. so you don't accidentally act like a bully! We know you're nicer than that!

Caregivers and trusted adults should also check in often on how their student is doing. Being aware of their online activity and following them on social media will help you navigate the 'net safely, together!

Glossary

ACTIVE LISTENING is paying attention to what another person says, responding to what they say, thinking about what they say, and remembering what they have said. It is really paying attention!

CYBER-PREDATORS are people who exploit (use) others online for their own gain.

CYBERBULLYING is posting or sharing harmful or mean content about someone else on the internet, social media, apps, texts, video games, or digital devices.

GUT is another way of saying “intuition,” the feeling your body gives you that lets you know if something is not right.

INTENT means that something was planned or done for a purpose..

MALWARE is software designed to disrupt, damage, or gain unauthorized access to a computer system. Basically, it wants to mess up your computer. Sometimes called a “virus.”

NETIQUETTE is the appropriate way to behave online.

PERSONAL means having to do with one's private life, relationships, and emotions rather than matters connected with one's public or professional career.

PHISHING means tricking you into telling personal information.

SELF-ADVOCATE is someone who speaks up for themselves and their interests.

TRUSTWORTHY means being able to be relied on to be safe.

UNTRUSTWORTHY means unsafe, not to be relied on!