

Online & Social Media Safety

There are risks at EVERY age for Girls AND Boys. The best protection for your child/children is:

1. **Spend quality time together**—‘unplug’, put your phones down
2. **Explore electronic devices and apps and their capabilities before you buy them:**
 - a. Will it allow unknown persons to communicate with my child?
 - b. Will it allow kids to make purchases without parental involvement?
 - c. What is a vault app? Are you able to view all the content in it? There may be hidden areas.
3. **Monitor your child’s devices:**
 - a. You have the right to monitor your child’s electronic devices to keep them safe; just as you have always monitored their activity to keep them safe.
 - b. Install filtering and monitoring software. *Police have recommended apps such as ‘Bark’ or ‘Life 360’*
 - c. Help your child make a strong password and change it regularly
 - d. Check the browsing history
 - e. Help them set up privacy settings & set controls on the device itself (limit loading new apps, purchasing something in the app store, check for an option to turn off the chat feature) Built in security features: i.e., Google has ‘SafeSearch’ option, Facebook.com /safety
 - f. Look at their apps—get more information about the app by googling it, download the app to your phone.
 - g. Have your child use their device in the common area of the home so you can monitor their activity.
 - h. Explore game contents before purchase. Play the game with your child.
 - i. Who are they chatting with in chat rooms?
4. **Active and ongoing age-appropriate conversations with your child about:**
 - a. Ground rules: Establish clear guidelines *and* consequences, sites they can visit, apps they can download, when they can have access to electronics (i.e., all electronics out of their room at night, at least one hour ‘unplugged’

each day, no electronics during meal time, etc.)

- b. Online privacy. NEVER give out personal information. (Passwords, home address, location, home/cell phone number, avoid using your last name if possible).
NEVER give out personal information on a pop-up that wants to give you a free gift, money or prize.
- c. Cyberbullying is never OK, report to someone. Also, it’s never OK to be a bystander of cyberbullying.
- d. Gaming. Who do you talk to when you play games? How appropriate is the content? How many hours are you playing per day?
- e. Cell phones—may be lost or stolen making all content available to someone else.
- f. Social media and apps.
 - Dating websites—warning—the person you communicate with may not be the person you are seeing online.
 - Friend list—Do not add anyone to your friend list that you don’t know off-line.

What kind of pictures do you post?

 - Sexting (nude or sexually explicit photos). NEVER post revealing photos. Once they are sent to someone, you have no control over where they go or what they are used for. The consequences can be blackmail, humiliation, bullying, school discipline, or police involvement. It is illegal to send, receive or distribute nude or sexually explicit photos of *anyone* under 18 years of age.
 - Viewing inappropriate conduct or content. Research is showing it is often harmful to the brain—discuss the harm associated with viewing porn and excessive violence. Also discuss use of hate speech, offensive language, and posting pictures of risky or illegal activities (i.e., drug or alcohol use).
- g. Child enticement, sexual exploitation, solicitation and sextortion (nonphysical form of coercion, typically online contact, is used to blackmail a child to acquire sexual content from them (i.e., photos) or engage in sex with a child to obtain money from a child).

Sextortion is being used by predators more and more to unsuspecting children.

- h. Do not trust everyone you meet online. Predators often change their birthdates and profile pictures to make it appear they are someone you will be attracted to. NEVER agree to meet offline without an adult present. Meet in a public place and do not leave with the person.
- i. Teach your child how to make responsible choices when they encounter one of these problems.
- j. Parents/guardians—stay up to date with technology or have someone help you.

Predators online (cyber predators) can lead to Human Trafficking

One form of human trafficking is sex trafficking. It is a form of modern-day slavery, in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion. It is in every county in Wisconsin and across the world. It is becoming a leading criminal activity in America. Estimates report that every 2 minutes in America, a child is trafficked.

Signs of human trafficking:

1. Your child receives gifts through the mail—bus ticket, cell phone, webcam
2. Your child is calling unknown numbers
3. Your child is rejecting family and friends to spend time online
4. Your child is getting upset when they can't get online
5. Your child minimizes the screen or turns off monitors on their device when you enter the room.

What should you do if something does happen?

All inappropriate or exploitive behavior (including cyberbullying) or online enticement needs to be addressed and reported. Report to:

1. School liaison officer or police department
2. School administrators
3. **www.cybertipline.org** (Developed by National Center for Missing and Exploited Children)
4. Website—each website has its own tools to report issues
5. Cellphone provider

Internet Safety Resources:

- **NetSmartz** (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children) parent resources. Tips and discussion questions to have with your child, age appropriate safety videos, power points, etc. **www.netsmartz.org** *Highly Recommended.*
- **Common Sense Media.** Reviews for movies, games, apps, TV shows & books. **www.commonsensemedia.org**
- **Connect Safely.** Tips and advice. Has sample family contracts or pledges. **www.connectsafely.org**
- **Entertainment Software Rating Board** Game ratings and content. **www.esrb.org**
- **Facebook for Parents.** Safety info for parents. **www.facebookforparents.org**
- **Internet Safety 101.** Find Resources and Cyber Crimes info. **www.internetsafety101.org**
- **Internet Matters.** Step by step instructions to set controls on popular devices. **www.internetmatters.org/parentalcontrols**
- **Google's Safety Corner** **www.google.com/safetycenter/families/start**
- **Stop Cyberbullying** **www.stopcyberbullying.org**



5-stones Beaver Dam

MISSION STATEMENT: 5-stones fights the giant of sex trafficking through AWARENESS, PREVENTION, EDUCATION, NETWORKING, and COLLABORATION, partnering with other organizations and our community to bring safety through knowledge and action.