



**A Message From  
Illinois Attorney General  
Kwame Raoul**

With the integration of digital devices into kids' daily lives, parents, guardians and mentors play an important role in safeguarding children online.

Whether children are using social media apps, online gaming or other platforms that allow connectivity, adults can help prevent risky behaviors or encounters by incorporating the following steps into their parenting routine:

- Utilize all available parental controls
- Review content on the device
- Have regular conversations about online behavior

By providing guidance and boundaries for children, you can expand a child's online skills and confidence while keeping them safe and increasing your own awareness of their online time.

Kwame Raoul  
Attorney General

Additional online safety resources are available from NetSmartz411® at [www.NetSmartz411.org](http://www.NetSmartz411.org) or 1-888-NETS411 (638-7411).

For more information, please contact our office:

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Individuals with hearing or speech disabilities can reach us by using the 7-1-1 relay service.

[www.ebully411.com](http://www.ebully411.com)  
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# Keeping Kids Safer Online

Minimizing Risks While  
Developing Online Skills



## Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force



# Keeping Kids Safer on the Internet: Tips for Parents and Guardians

Allowing kids to go online without supervision or ground rules is like allowing them to explore a major metropolitan area by themselves. The Internet, like a city, offers an enormous array of entertainment and educational resources, but also presents some risks. Kids need help navigating this world. Here's how parents and guardians can help:



## Where Do Kids Connect?

In general, kids:

- Connect to the Internet from a computer at home, at school, or at a library or a friend's home.
- Connect from anywhere using laptops, cell phones, tablets and other wireless devices.
- Compete against and chat with players around the world using Internet-enabled gaming systems.
- Exchange messages, photos and videos via the Internet at any time.



## Ways to Enhance Kids' Online Skills

- Begin a dialogue with your kids about Internet use.
- Consider rating, blocking, monitoring and filtering applications.
- Make Internet use a family activity while encouraging critical thinking.
- Encourage your kids to come to you when they encounter problems online.
- Set reasonable rules including time limits.



## Learn more about the laws and potential consequences of inappropriate online activity by youth:

**Electronic Dissemination of Indecent Visual Depictions Between Minors (Sexting)** refers to sending sexual images and sometimes sexual texts via electronic devices. ([705 ILCS 405/3-40](#))

**Cyberbullying** occurs when an individual or group engages in the abuse of power and/or control to purposefully inflict harm on another via electronic means. Cyberbullying incidents for which schools can assign discipline are no longer limited to those occurring during the school day, at school-sponsored activities or on school-issued devices. ([105 ILCS 5/27-23.7](#))



## More Tips to Minimize Risks

- Instruct your kids to use privacy settings.
- Remind kids only to add people they know in real life to their accounts.
- Encourage kids to choose appropriate screen names or nicknames.
- Talk to your kids about creating strong passwords and not sharing them.
- Visit social networking sites with your kids, and exchange ideas about appropriate sites for them.
- Ask your kids about the people they communicate with online.
- Remind kids not to give out personal information or meet anyone in person without your prior knowledge and consent.
- Encourage your kids to think, "Is this message harmful, dangerous, hurtful or rude?" before posting or sending.
- Teach your kids not to respond to any rude or harassing remarks or messages that make them feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.
- Encourage your kids to come to you with questions or concerns about online content.

## Youth Corner

### Think About Online Safety

- ? Are my accounts set to private?
- ? How do I know my online friends? Is this family, friend, acquaintance or stranger?
- ? How do the qualities of my real-life friends compare to my online friends?
- ? Do my posts contain private information?
- ? What are the consequences of what I post?
- ? Would I want a parent, guardian, grandparent, or trusted adult to see my post?
- ? How will online content affect my future, education, employment, military involvement, or relationships?
- ? Is my online content hurtful, rude, dangerous, or harmful?

