



TOP 10 tips

SMARTER SURFING STARTS HERE™

[Qwest is committed to helping families surf safer and smarter on the Internet.]

- 1 Develop guidelines for your family's use of technology and the Internet. For example, create some technology-free time, place the family computer in a common room and keep track of where other wireless devices (such as cell phones and laptops) are kept and how they are used.
- 2 Want to understand what your kids are doing online? Let them show you their favorite sites and consider creating your own profile through their preferred social network to learn more about the ways young people connect online.
- 3 Ask your children to teach you about how they use technology to communicate with their friends and access information online. Talk to your kids about risks associated with certain online activities. If they are allowed to upload photos, watch videos, or share music online, have them show you how they do it.
- 4 Know whom your child communicates with online. Approach these relationships with as much interest and concern as you would any of their offline relationships. Talk to your children about the risks involved with befriending people online whom they have never met in person.
- 5 Set boundaries about what type of information is appropriate for children to share online. Explain that information shared via the Internet lasts forever and could have real world consequences.
- 6 Talk with your children about how to respond to anything encountered online that is inappropriate or makes them feel scared, uncomfortable or confused. File reports of inappropriate or illegal interaction at www.cybertipline.com.
- 7 If your child is interested in playing an online game or participating in a virtual world, try it yourself first to determine if the activity is appropriate for your family.
- 8 Teach your children to explore and question information they find on the Internet. Ask them to thoughtfully consider the validity and source of online information.
- 9 To protect you and your computer, use software for spyware, spam and viruses. As an Internet Service Provider, Qwest offers tips on safeguarding your technology at www.qwest.com/internet/help/security/index.html.
- 10 For more helpful information, tips, advice and a guide to "Understanding a Child's Virtual World," please visit www.incredibleinternet.com/index.php/do/parent_guide.

The solution to online safety is education, supervision, and communication. You can stay informed by visiting www.IncredibleInternet.com/onlinesafety.

▶ Social Networking

An online social network is a virtual community that connects friends, family, colleagues, and people with like interests. Along with the benefits of connecting online, there are also potential risks that parents, guardians and kids should be aware of.

- Revealing too much information online can make children targets of bullies and predators as well as cost them educational and employment opportunities. It can also put a child at risk for reputation damage and spread of false information. Talk to your children about what information is appropriate to share, and the consequences of sharing too much.
- Dr. Linda Young, a counseling psychologist and IncredibleInternet.com contributor, provides information to help parents and guardians understand a child's virtual world. Download her free parent guide at http://www.incredibleinternet.com/index.php/do/parent_guide.

▶ Software to Help Make Surfing Safer

Qwest's www.IncredibleInternet.com offers information on where to find software tools that can help make your family's Internet experience safer.

- Parental control software can help parents and guardians control and monitor the Web sites and content that children view while online.
- Parental control software is easy to use and can be configured to limit the amount of time your child spends online.
- Firewall, anti-virus and anti-spyware software help protect your computer from a variety of online threats. If you have Qwest Broadband with MSN Premium or Windows Live, these features are built right in.

▶ Cyberbullying

Online abuse by or against your child or his or her peers can be brutal, and parents and guardians need to know who is at risk, who is responsible, and how to cope if their child is cyberbullied.

- Cyberbullying occurs when the Internet or cell phones, or both, are used to spread information or send photos with the intent to hurt or embarrass someone.
- Consider how your children interact with their peers in real life and think about how that could impact their interactions online.
- Encourage your children to tell you about such incidents so you can help them deal with the situation.
- Take notice if your child suddenly avoids his or her computer or cell phone, withdraws from family and friends, or loses interest in school activities. Such behavior may indicate that your child is a victim of cyberbullying. In extreme cases, cyberbullying has pushed teens to suicide.

▶ NetSmartz411

As a leader in online safety education, the Qwest Foundation has funded NetSmartz411, a service provided by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® to provide parents and guardians with direct access to experts about their online safety concerns.

- Raise your family's Internet safety awareness with expert advice from NetSmartz411.org and the NetSmartz 411 Call Center, two free educational resources from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.
- Please visit www.NetSmartz411.org or call **1-888-NETS-411** to have your Internet safety questions answered by an online safety expert.