

# Online Safety Tips for Christian Parents

- Pray for and with your child about this important part of his/her life.
- Be involved in your child's life and make sure he/she knows you are there for him/her if online problems occur.
- Partner with other parents to share information and concerns.
- Spend time with your child on the Internet. If you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with using the computer or Internet, let your child teach you.
- Learn as much as you can on your own about the Internet and the sites your child visits. Use the history feature of your browser.
- Keep Internet-enabled computers in a non-private space in your home, and consider filtering, but remember that your child can also access the Internet at a friend's home, a public library, or via his/her cell phone.
- Set reasonable time limits on Internet use. If your child consistently has 3-4 hours of Internet "homework" a night, you should be suspicious.
- Warn your child that he/she should never agree to meet in person someone he/she has only met online without your knowledge or permission.
- Let your child know you will be monitoring his/her online communications. Don't be afraid to ask for passwords and myspace/facebook addresses.
- If you see things you're not comfortable with on your child's email or myspace/facebook accounts, talk to your child, but try not to overreact.
- Be very sure you let your child know that the reason for your concern is your love for him/her.
- Discuss with your child why he/she should not post identifying information or provocative pictures or anything they wouldn't want a college admissions department or prospective employer to see.
- Emphasize that once information is posted on the Internet, you lose control over it. That information can be copied and used by others and may stay online for years to come.
- As your child matures and shows responsibility, allow increasing levels of freedom online, but make sure he/she knows you are still interested and involved.
- Remember that as a parent, you are morally, legally, and financially responsible for your child. You have a right to know who his/her friends are, online and off.