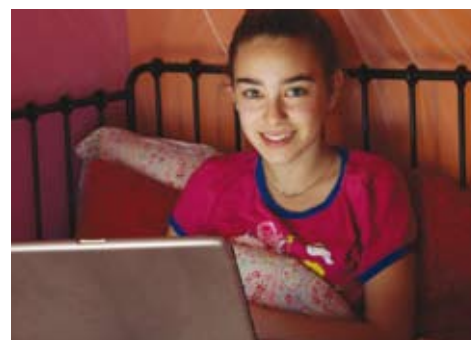


# SAFETY NET: protecting the online generation



Parents are urged to get cyber-savvy and talk to their teens about the potential risks of the internet. This includes online chat rooms and social networking sites.

While the web opens up a range of possibilities for children and teenagers, dangers are ever present, just as they are in the real world.

Increasing numbers of young people are getting themselves into trouble by chatting online. While talking to a stranger over the net can seem fun at first, it has the potential to escalate and make a young person feel very uncomfortable or threatened.

The Community Services Helpline has received reports about girls as young as 13 who have been exploited by online strangers. In a recent case, a 16-year-old girl was forced to perform sexual acts in front of a webcam which were then uploaded onto the internet by an older man.

Parents can talk to their children to reduce the risks, find out what they are doing online and discuss how to play it safe.

Become involved and talk to your children about their online experiences.

Learn about the different tools they are using, such as chat rooms, YouTube, Facebook, MySpace and Twitter.

It is also valuable to learn about the jargon they may use online. It may seem foreign at first, but it will help you to understand the world your teen is living in.

Parents seeking further advice on online safety can contact Parent Line on 1300 1300 52 – a NSW Government-funded 24-hour parenting advice service staffed by experienced counsellors.

## Tips for parents:

- Monitor your child's use of the internet.
- Know who your child is communicating with online and always supervise them in chat rooms.
- Cyber predators can target young people through gaming consoles and mobile phones with internet

capabilities. Always monitor your child's use of these.

- Never allow your child to meet up with new online friends without your supervision.
- Remind your child to never give out personal information online. This includes names, addresses, photos and video footage.
- A person can pretend to be whoever they want to be online. Remind your child that the people they meet may be pretending to be different to who they really are.
- When using social networking sites, make sure your child knows who to contact to report abuse or bullying – starting with you.
- A social networking page (such as Facebook or MySpace) is a public place. Remind your child to think twice before posting comments or uploading photos and information.

## Understanding “teen-glish”

Helping parents understand some common abbreviations used by teens in text messages and internet chat rooms

### A

- **AAK** alive and kicking
- **AFK** away from the keyboard

### B

- **b4** before
- **BBL** be back later
- **BBS** be back soon
- **b/f** boyfriend (also shown as **bf**, **B/F**, or **BF**)
- **BFN** bye for now
- **BRB** be right back
- **BTW** by the way

### C

- **CU** see you – also known as **cya**
- **CUL8R** see you later
- **CUOL** see you online
- **CYA** see ya

### D

- **DIKU** do I know you?

### E

- **EM** email
- **EZ** easy

### F

- **F2F** face to face
- **FOCL** falling off chair laughing

### G

- **GAL** get a life
- **g/f** girlfriend (also shown as **gf**, **G/F**, or **GF**)
- **GTR** got to run

### H

- **H&K** hugs and kisses
- **HAGD** have a good day
- **HB** hurry back
- **Huggles** hugs

### I

- **IDK** I don't know
- **ILU** or **ILY** I love you

### K

- **k, K, or kk** OK
- **KIT** keep in touch

### L

- **LMIRL** let's meet in real life
- **LOL** laughing out loud
- **LTNS** long time no see
- **LY** I love ya
- **LYL** love you lots

### N

- **NP** no problem
- **NT** no thanks

### O

- **OJ** or **OK** only joking or only kidding
- **OMG** oh my gosh

### P

- **P911** my parents are in the room
- **PIR** parents in room
- **PLZ** please
- **POS** parents are looking over my shoulder
- **POTS** parents over the shoulder
- **PPL** people

### Q

- **QT** cutie

### R

- **ROFL** rolling on floor, laughing

### S

- **SPST** same place, same time
- **SYL** see you later

### T

- **TC** take care
- **THX** thanks!
- **TTYL** talk to you later
- **TY** thank you
- **TYVM** thank you very much

### U

- **UW** you're welcome

### W

- **WEU** what's eating you?
- **WTGP?** want to go private? (go to a private chat room)