



Family Insider—Watch Out For Wi-Fi

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“Few things are more satisfying than seeing your own children have teenagers of their own”
~ Doug Larson

Wi-Fi (wireless fidelity) means a faster hand-held-wireless-anyone-anytime-anywhere-all-the-time Internet. It could also mean an unchaperoned joy ride down the Information Superhighway.

An increasingly wide range of mobile devices is letting kids log onto the Net outside of the home and outside of parental control. Today’s wireless device may be a mobile phone, PDA, portable gaming system, or MP3 player.

Link that fact to all the Wi-Fi hotspots springing up everywhere, in libraries, in cafes, in airports and shopping malls. Many cities are setting up their own coverage making the entire town a hotspot. Many public networks are configured so users must register first before going online. But with private Wi-Fi signals already overlapping in many neighborhoods, kids can just tap into a neighbor’s unsecured router, bypassing any controls you have set on your own home wireless system.

Now tie in mobility and you have a formula that is making it more difficult than ever to know who your children are talking to, or worse, who is seeking contact with your children and what material they may send them.

The solution to protecting children online in this increasingly-connected world is a complex one. There is no silver bullet. However, there are some things that can help you and your kids become wiser Wi-Fi users.

First, do your homework. Look into the functions and capabilities a mobile device offers you before



you buy it. Find out if the portable device offers content communication software or if it asks your kids to spend money on downloads.

Second, keep up with the new technology and watch for new software changes that address Wi-Fi concerns. Of course, technology alone is not the answer, but it is a start.

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NAC Tracks

Now that you’ve read the “Family Insider,” i-SAFE’s National Assessment Center (NAC) wants you to sound off.

Are you buying your child an iPod Nano, Zune, MP3 or PlayStation Portable this holiday season?

Yes or No

Vote here

Ask An Expert—*Too Much of a Good Thing?*

Stanford University Psychiatrist Elias Aboujaoude uncovers 'Net addicts'

Stanford University's new nationwide study surveyed 2,500 adults in an attempt to discover "Internet addiction." They found that between six and 14% of computer users go overboard, spending hours glued to their screens checking e-mail, making blog entries, or visiting Web sites and chat rooms, often neglecting families, food, work, school, and sleep.

Psychiatrist Elias Aboujaoude, Stanford's team leader, looked for signs of compulsion. "We worry when people use virtual interactions as substitutes for real social interactions. Their real relationships suffer as a result," he said.

Q. What are the tell-tale signs?

A. Sneaking out of bed to go online once your partner is asleep; missing deadline after deadline at work because you can't keep away from visiting your favorite chat rooms. The clincher: when you cut back on computer use, you feel irritable, anxious or restless. These are red flags.

Q. How did you discover it was even a problem?

A. Over the last two to three years, more people have come in complaining saying "I spend way too much time online, but I can't help it." It sounds like a substance




abuse problem.

Internet overuse is an easy trap, Aboujaoude notes, because computers offer immediacy, a sense of connection, and anonymity.

Q. How widespread is the problem?

A. The survey suggests that it's not an isolated problem—it is relatively widespread. Gambling and pornography sites are just one part of the problem. Other sites – chat rooms, shopping venues and special-interest Web sites – are impulsively habit-forming.

"The Internet," Aboujaoude concluded, "can be both helpful and isolating. It becomes a problem when it isolates, substituting for a real social life." 

The Power of One—Sparking Internet Safety

Summit Academy Liaison Officer Brian Tyitye attended Detroit's Get Net Safe Tour. That's where he met i-SAFE's Professional Development Program (PDP) host David Leingang. That same September day before the event closed, he sat down with David to submit his first Implementation Plan (IP). Later, Officer Tyitye shared the news. An audience of over 70 were at his first parent night. Impressed, we asked him to submit a summary about the night. Here's what he wrote.

Dear Mr. Leingang

I want to share my experience of the parent night presentation I did at Summit Academy. Over 70 people showed up to the presentation! Prior to the presentation we sent the flier provided in your i-PARENT toolkit to the parents to advertise the event. We also used the school Web site and a large marquee out front where parents could view it

as they dropped off and picked up their kids.


The "Predator" video had a huge impact on them and was a great start to the presentation. I could feel the impact of the video when the audience became dead silent. After playing the video I made my full presentation.

I cautioned about cyber predators and the warning signs parents need to look out for. I explained what cyber bullying was and played the Ryan Halligan video. I could see the audience was touched by the story.

I finished up the presentation by cautioning them about identity theft, showing examples as I spoke.

Many parents were totally unaware of cyber bullying. So many are just not computer-savvy. They also said the videos helped them to see what could really happen.

Thank you again,

Officer Bryan Tyitye 

Did You Know?

New Technology: Single Sign-ons and Reputation Systems

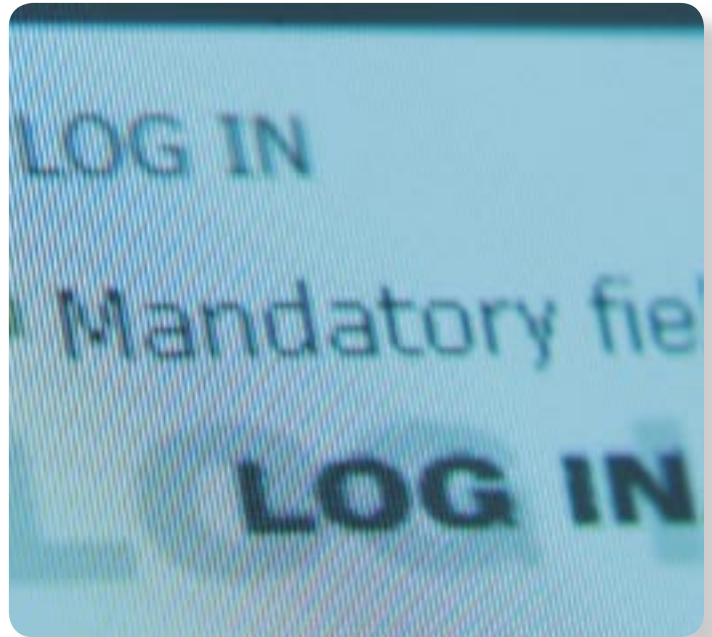
Wouldn't it be great to have just one sign-on for all your computer applications and Internet sites? If it were available, how would it work? What would it morph into? i-SAFE educates and empowers thousands of students, teachers, parents, and law enforcement professionals about what already exists online and how to access it safely. On the other side of the equation, though, Web technologists forge ahead, attempting to design easier, safer online access. So where would this count the most? One place it could have a huge impact is on social-networking sites.

The technologist's goal is for users, such as parents or students, to have the ability to control their single online profile across the board at different online networking locations. As it is now, people maintain separate files of their personal information in "silos," like MySpace.com, Facebook, Second Life, and other sites.


But if we could assure our safety online by using a master profile, each Web surfer could keep personal data in one place, updating it only there. A single sign-on would allow us to share our profile that becomes the key, not just to social-networking sites, but to financial institutions and health records, information and education, travel and entertainment and shopping.

A second dynamic comes into view: the key would work both ways. First you gain access to the Web and, in turn, your sign-on forms a repository for others' reactions to whatever you contribute or create online. Developing a reputation in social networking sites can come quickly enough, but what about developing a business reputation for buying and selling in online auctions, seeking employees or employment, publishing a book, or music, or video online?


A non-profit group called Veriyo, believes single sign-



ons are the next big thing and they just launched their "reputation system" at the Web 2.0 Summit in San Francisco. Their goal is to create a safer Internet by building trust through a "reputation management tool." People can rate each other. Ratings would be applied to bloggers, chatters, or instant messengers to indicate the degree of trust in their business reliability, online behavior, or special expertise on given topics.

Other Web users would come to identify you through the overall reputation your single sign-on profile carries with it. A reputation based on your profile could very well pick up a positive momentum of its own. Your name and profile might be used to promote new businesses or Web sites or even games you use often and like going to. Maybe a reputation system based on a single sign-on will make our online lives a little more enjoyable. 

In Your Neighborhood

Every day there are many i-SAFE events going on across the country. We've made it easy for you to get involved and help spread the message of Internet safety to your neighbors, co-workers, and your community. Simply check out our "Calendar of Events" at http://www.isafe.org/channels/sub.php?ch=ai&sub_id=3 to find an event near you. 

Most Valuable Mentor – November 2006

Dylan Virginia

It's a fact. Art can educate and motivate. Just ask our Most Valuable Mentor, Dylan, from Virginia. He is the grand prizewinner of the i-SAFE National Bumper Sticker contest. Dylan's design was chosen from more than 1,300 entries. It grabs your attention with a cartoon drawing and the warning to "keep personal data private." Dylan says he owes his inspiration to his dad.

"I get all my talent from Dad. He taught me everything I know about cartooning. He's also a middle school art teacher."

Dylan says designing his bumper sticker was more than just sitting down and drawing. He had to think first about some of the problems associated with being online and then translate those thoughts into art.

"The first thing I thought about was how frightening the Internet can be sometimes. So I drew that frightening thing popping out of the computer and scaring the kid. Then I had to get the picture on the bumper sticker-size paper. Then I colored it and added the i-SAFE logo. The whole thing took about three days."

Dylan's bumper sticker warns against revealing personal information online. It's an important message. Being online is the same as being in public even though using the Internet at home may feel private and secure. Sometime you can reveal personal information on a profile page without even realizing it. Simple things, like the name of your school, the sports team you play for, where you hang out, what you like to do, can reveal personal information that should be kept pri-




vate. Think of the Internet as a giant billboard in Cyberspace that everyone can see anytime and anyplace. Dylan says that's the idea behind his design.


"Online predators can take advantage of kids who are trusting of everyone. Talk to an adult if you are not sure about an Internet site or conversation. If it doesn't feel right, it probably isn't."

Good advice, he also has some for young artists.

"I suggest practicing drawing in your free time. Practice really does make perfect."

Dylan would like to become a professional artist some day and design his own comic strip. We'd say he is well on his way! 




Webkinz World – www.webkinz.com is the newest and hottest craze in stuffed animal / Internet interactive toys for kids 5-13 years old. Each purchase of a Webkinz plush pet includes a secret code which enables the child to interact in the online Webkinz World. When kids visit Webkinz World they can take part in contests, fun educational games, and chatting in a constructed phrase-based programmed chat world, so no personal information can be shared. 

i-SAFE at the New York Convention

New York passed legislation mandating Internet safety education for children. The latest effort to empower students by promoting safe online habits, New York teachers will develop curriculum to teach more than a million students in New York schools.

The New York State PTA Convention in Rochester, New York on November 10-12, also recognized the need for Internet safety education. It offered i-SAFE an opportunity to educate parents and parent advocates about staying safe online.

During the convention i-SAFE conducted a Parent Training to prepare PTA leaders to conduct i-PARENT programs to help start Internet safety education in their local schools. The New York PTA also adopted a resolution concerning cyber safety. The members resolved to educate parents, students, other educators, school staff, and communities, to strive to heighten parent technological awareness and the use of cyber safety strategies. By taking these steps they ensure the safety of children and youth and encourage responsible and ethical use of online resources.

The New York State PTA goes the second mile by initiating collaboration with new partners. Forming a state-wide common effort, they intend to advocate for the protection of children and youth in the cyber world. In short, the New York State PTA is stepping up to protect children and youth who use the Internet, wireless, and other electronic communications to make sure that New York's children receive needed support to gain new online skills. 



Team Up With i-SAFE

i-SAFE has reached over 2.2 million students with Internet safety information. By providing free materials, programs, and educational videos, students are learning how to make positive choices while using Internet technology. In order to bring our programs and materials to your community and your home, we rely upon donations. To donate, e-mail donations@isafe.org or go to www.isafe.org/donations.

We Value Your Input

Do you have a question? Please e-mail us at editor@isafe.org with questions, comments, or contributions. If snail mail is your preference, write to: i-SAFE Editor, 5900 Pasteur Ct., Ste. 100, Carlsbad, CA 92008

The series of i-SAFE newsletters also includes the *i-EDUCATOR Times* and *Kewl Timez* (for students). We encourage you to read the others and ask you to use the main article to initiate discussion and action with your students and your community.

About i-SAFE

Founded in 1998 and active in all 50 states, i-SAFE Inc. is the leader in Internet safety education. i-SAFE is a nonprofit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower students, parents, seniors, and community members to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experiences. i-SAFE provides knowledge that enables them to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior, and to respond appropriately. This is accomplished through dynamic K through 12 curriculum and community-outreach programs to students, parents, law enforcement, and community leaders. i-SAFE is the only Internet safety foundation to effectively combine these elements. www.isafe.org

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