



Protecting Children Online

Although screening software designed to block objectionable materials is improving and agencies such as the Attorney General's Office are engaging in more sophisticated enforcement, parents must still take an active role in protecting their children from pornographic materials and online predators. The following is a list of tips designed to help protect your child on the Internet:

- Place your home computer in a central location, such as a family room, to make it easier to monitor what your child is accessing;
- Log your child onto the Internet yourself and keep the password a secret;
- Ask your Internet Service Provider about blocking services that prevent your child from accessing bulletin boards and Web sites that you find objectionable;
- Look into stand-alone blocking or filtering software, which can be downloaded over the Internet or purchased inexpensively at retail software stores;
- Watch for computer files that end in -GIF, -GL, -TIF or -JPG, which are likely to be picture file
- Instruct your child not to provide any personal information about him/herself or other family members without your permission. Advise your child not to use his or her full name when online;
- Beware of special interest chat rooms and bulletin boards with suspicious sounding names. Warn your child about strangers who attempt to set up personal meetings;
- Encourage your child to tell you if he or she encounters anything online that makes him or her feel uncomfortable or frightened;
- Monitor your service bills or usage records to keep track of how much time your child is spending online;

If you are interested in learning about other problem areas related to the internet and what you can do to help protect your family, please go to the link below. You will find more information related to cyber bullying, social networking sites, identity theft, copy right infringement and laws that affect the internet.

www.oag.state.ny.us/bureaus/internet_bureau/internet_safety.html