



Internet Safety Guideline : Parent-to-parent talk

Safety tips to protect your kids online

By Eva Chen, a Mom & CEO Trend Micro, Inc.

More than twenty years ago, I co-founded Trend Micro, an Internet content security technology company. My son and daughter were born in the early days of the startup, and I've done my best to raise my children, and my company. That's why parental control software is so important to me, why I, as CEO, have invested in products to protect kids online.

The surveys and research statistics out there should be a call to action for parents. Just 55 percent of parents are using Internet filters. Yet more than 40 percent of kids ages 10-17 have seen Internet pornography. And close to three-quarters of teens have created content for the Internet, sharing information with strangers through Web pages and their blogs.

That's why I wanted to share Internet security tips for families that I've found useful over the years, for myself, my customers, and most of all for my kids...

Set rules. Tell your kids they must use their computer in a common area, where you can monitor them. Limit their time on the Internet.

- Some computer security software programs, such as Trend Micro's, allow you to set time limits (beginning and end times) for specific people.

Use technology. Use the parental control feature of your computer security software. This allows you to block access to many categories of sites.

- Some security software allows you to set this only when your kids are using the computer, but not when you are using it.

Talk about it. Agree to the websites they can visit. Review the safety and security policies of these sites, especially if they require someone to provide personal information (like an email address or home phone number) and make sure you know how that information will be used.

- Use a website reputation service, such as Trend Micro's, to check if it is secure.

Be proactive. If you're not sure if your child is old enough to visit a certain site, go to Common Sense Media, which provides reviews and ratings of Web sites. Check the browser history of your home computers to see what sites your kids have visited. If you need better security, Trend Micro's parental filtering software is easy-to-use and affordable. You can try it for free.