

Safely surfing the Internet



The internet mirrors the world society. People of other countries may consider children property or an adult at age 14. It is crucial that parents monitor their child's computer activities.

- Do not allow children to complete on-line profiles. Pedophiles can obtain addresses and phone numbers within minutes using member profiles and other internet services
- Keep computers in a common area of the home where children can be monitored
- Check computer history to find out sites your child has visited. Use web address line, windows history line, and internet temp files.
- Avoid commercial "chat" services. "Real time" chat rooms are not regulated.
- Use extreme caution meeting an on-line friend. Always meet in a public place and with an adult present.
- Limit time on the computer
- Talk to your kids about computer and internet safety.

More Internet Safety

- If you post a message online use a nickname that does not tell much about you
- Never open files, e-mails, or web sites sent by strangers. Delete them immediately!
- Never correspond to anyone on the internet who makes you feel uncomfortable

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement,
SAFE Task Force 858-268-5400

Child Abuse Hotline 858-560-2191

Cyberkids www.cyberkids.com

Department of Justice Kids page
www.usdoj.gov/kidspage/index.html

FBI Kids Page
ww.fbi.gov/kids/k5th/kidsk5th

Megan's Law website
www.meganlaw.ca.gov

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
1-800-843-5678
<http://www.missingkids.com>

La Mesa Police Department
619-667-1400
www.cityoflamesa.com

La Mesa Police Department
Presents:

Child Safety, A Parents' Guide



- ***How to better protect your children from sex offenders***
- ***Internet Safety***
- ***Safety in public***
- ***Giving your children the tools they need to stay alert and prevent attacks***

"Working in Partnership
with our Community"



Keeping our Children Safe

It seems there are many more issues a parent must be concerned about now, more than any other time in the past. Improved media technology, increased awareness, and encouraged reporting, have made us aware of all types of crimes, but especially crimes against children. The good news is that with education, awareness, and open communication, we can help protect our children and keep them safe. Let's explore some of our safety steps.

Pedophiles are attracted to areas where children frequent. So any time your child is in an area such as public parks, or walking to and from school, be sure an adult is with them and able to keep visual contact with them at all times. Discuss options with your child. Many parents avoid talking to their children because they do not want to scare them. The reality is we talk to them about other scary things—what to do in a fire, how and when to call 9-1-1. As calmly as possible we need to talk to them about abductions and sexual abuse. They need to feel comfortable talking to you about this issue and they need to know they have ways to stay safe.

- Become informed—not paranoid.
- Report any suspicious persons to Law Enforcement.
- Trust your instincts. If someone makes you feel uncomfortable—get away!
- Know where your children are and make sure they “check-in” if they will be late or change plans.
- Know the people your child spends time with.
- Listen to your children, especially if they tell you they do not want to spend time with someone.
- Be involved with your child's activities. Attend their meetings. If someone makes you uncomfortable bring it to the attention of the sponsoring agency.
- 90% of child molestations are committed by someone the child knows. When you educate your child make sure to include inappropriate touching and uncomfortable feelings they get not only from a stranger, but also from someone they know.
- Screen babysitters and caregivers thoroughly. After they have been screened, show up unexpectedly. Ask your children how the experience went and listen to their response.
- Use outings to the park and mall as training for how to use a payphone, what they should do if they can't find mom or dad, locating adults who might be able to help them, and making sure they ask for someone they know to accompany them to the restroom.
- Notice when someone shows a great deal of attention to your child and offers them gifts. Take the time to talk to your child and find out why this person is being so friendly.
- Evaluate any change in behavior.
- **Above all, encourage open communication and become an active listener!**

Megan's Law

Megan's Law is a means to track and publish photographs and addresses of convicted sexual offenders. Remember this is a great tool but it is limited to those individuals who have been convicted of a sexual crime. There are pedophiles who have not been convicted yet. Good sense and caution should be used with all new acquaintances and friends.

Convicted sexual offenders can be viewed on-line by visiting the Megan's Law web site at www.meganslaw.ca.gov. This web site also has a lot of helpful information for you and your child.

Information you obtain from the website is for your use only, to keep your family safe. Information cannot be used for purposes of credit, housing, benefits, privileges, employment or any other use except to protect a person at risk.

How do I avoid being overprotective?

When a parent is overprotective it often instills fear and a sense of helplessness in the child. Communication and education is much more productive. Teach your child the safe options they have in all situations. Be cautious but don't allow yourself to become paranoid.

If I suspect someone of abusing my child what should I do?

You should refer all suspicions of abuse to Law Enforcement. Your role should be, to believe and support your child.