

Keep your child safe online

5 practical tips on how to keep your child safe when using the internet

Every day there are new media reports about another ‘almost kidnapping’ or worse, the actual taking of a child – all believed to be linked to human trafficking. Unfortunately, even in the safe confines of home, a child is at risk from online predators.



1. Set your default search engine as www.google.co.za and click 'Search Preferences' on the right side of the search bar. Select 'Use strict filtering' under the SafeSearch heading and click on 'Save Preferences'. This will filter out any adult content that may, under normal circumstances, accidentally appear when a child searches for something

2. Discuss and demonstrate the difference between advertising and educational or entertaining content and make sure your child can recognize it. Following an advertising link can sometimes lead to undesirable websites.

3. If your child wishes to join ‘chatrooms’, find a kid-friendly one and accompany them on their first few sessions. Make sure they never give out any personal information or have a one-on-one chat with anyone they don't know. The more you find out and understand as a parent, the more equipped you are to educate and respond appropriately.

4. Check the Internet browsing history often. If you find undesirable pages have been visited, discuss them with your child in an open and understanding way so they don't feel guilty; yet understand that you are able to see what they've viewed. Make sure they know how to click the “Back” button if they ever see content which makes them uncomfortable.

5. Install a product such as McAfee Family Protection and set up all of the features to match your child's age and the restrictions you think are appropriate.

This article can be viewed from http://www.parent24.com/Preschool_2-6/health_safety/Keep-your-child-safe-online-20100115 or on the Childline SA website.