

Youth Internet Safety: Handing Out Information

No matter what a person posts in their profile or chats, you don't REALLY know who that person is or what they are like. People saying they're your friend could be lying about who they are. They could be adults paid by marketing companies to pretend they're kids in order to convince you a product is cool. They could be people your age. Or they could also be sexual predators trying to lure you into a situation where you'll be hurt. You don't know, so be cautious.

- 1) *Don't give your contact information to anyone you don't know in real life. This includes your phone number, home address, e-mail address, and instant message names.*
- 2) *Never post any contact information on a web site profile or in any form inviting you to play a game, enter a contest, or buy something.*
- 3) *Don't list the city you live in or the school you go to on any profiles you create about yourself.*

Practice until you are comfortable saying no to anything you feel is inappropriate. **Report any time you've been sexually solicited or harassed.** Go to www.missingkids.com and click on the CyberTipline.

You have to remember, no matter how fun or cool something you post on a web site or blog may be, that **internet posts are PUBLIC and PERMANENT**. It will always be floating around somewhere on the web. Any potential employer willing to pay you a decent wage will do a web search before you're hired. How do you think they will treat you if they see you've advertised yourself in a raunchy, sexual way?

Whatever you post on the web will follow you for a lifetime. Your parents and teachers will be able to see it just as easily as your friends. And the government is already in the business of tracking information on people—they're watching, too.

Finally, understand the internet is a business driven by advertising. **Web sites make money by collecting information about you** that is used to manipulate you to buy stuff. They also drop cookies and spyware on your computer to track the sites you visit and the people you talk to. **Web sites sell your personal information to anyone**, including convicted sex offenders.

