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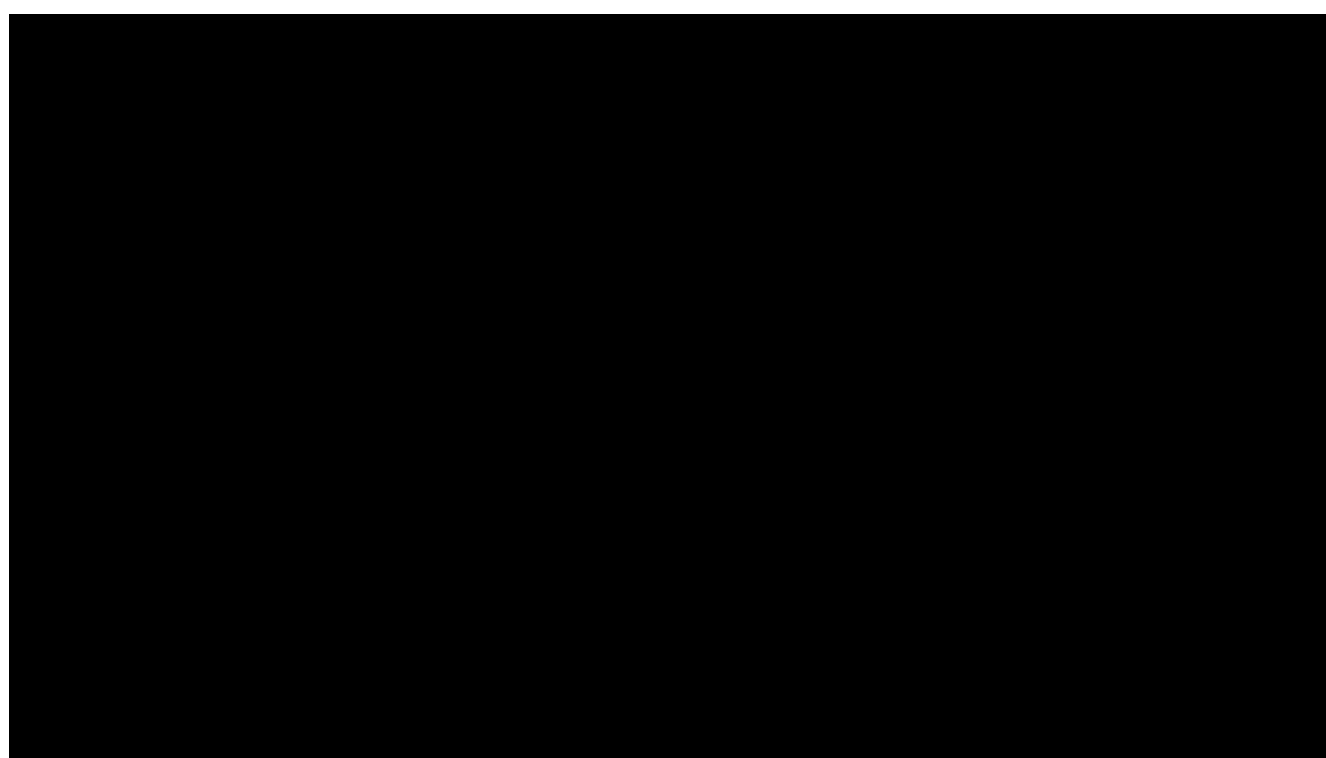
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Internet Safety Tips



- ◆ **Any child or teen can become the victim of an Internet predator.** Predators do not discriminate based on gender, ethnicity, education, socioeconomic status, income, or religion. It can happen. It does happen. It is happening.
- ◆ Teach your child or teen to **never share private or identifying information**, such as his or her name, address, school, etc., with a person online that is not known or trusted in real life. A predator can use this information to groom and/or locate your child or teen.
- ◆ **Strengthen the privacy settings on all social networking sites** and ensure that these settings remain unchanged after updates. Social networking sites often publish posts as “public” based on the default settings.
- ◆ **Disable Geotagging on all mobile devices**, as it has the ability to automatically pinpoint and disclose your child’s or teen’s location. This option can usually be found under “Settings” on most devices. You can also contact your service provider or device manufacturer.
- ◆ **Discuss the dangers of “checking in.”** Various applications allow your child or teen to share his or her exact current location on social media sites.
- ◆ Remind your child or teen to **choose an online handle, username, or screen name carefully**. Much can be inferred from how your child or teen represents himself or herself online, which can prompt a predator’s initial contact.
- ◆ **Monitor your child’s or teen’s activity on the computer and on all mobile devices.** This includes desktops, laptops, tablet computers, cell phones, and all handheld and video game devices with online connectivity. There are numerous parental monitoring options available online or through your service provider. Please, do not feel that you are “spying” on your child or teen. You are the parent. This is your responsibility.
- ◆ **Know the passwords on all devices** used by your child or teen. Check them regularly.
- ◆ **If you suspect your child or teen is being cyberbullied:** be supportive, get the facts, and if necessary, contact the school or law enforcement. Conversely, **teach your child or teen that there are negative consequences for those who cyberbully.**

- ◆ **Many children and teens engage in sexting.** This is the sharing of explicit texts/photos between phones or other devices. Sending and/or receiving nude pictures of minors is considered child pornography. As a result, there may be both emotional and legal consequences for both you and your child or teen.
- ◆ **Educate yourself** on the mobile applications that your child or teen is using. Ask for an explanation and a demonstration.
- ◆ **Maintain loving, open, and respectful lines of communication** with your child or teen while setting enforceable rules for online safety. **Assure your child or teen that he or she can always come to you for help** in an uncomfortable or potentially dangerous situation.

*** If you feel that your child or teen is being groomed, harassed, threatened, or exploited online, you should immediately report this activity to your local law enforcement and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children’s Cybertipline (<http://www.missingkids.com/cybertipline>).***



(<http://www.facebook.com/aliciaproject>)



(<http://www.missingkids.com/cybertipline/>)

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