Information Security for Parents

Keeping your family safe isn't the same as it used to be when it comes to today's world of information. Make sure to follow these safety tips to keep your family secure.

After you read this, make sure to talk with your children about these security tips to ensure that they can learn how to protect their information too.

Watch What you Click

Emails, calls, and texts can promise great deals, or threaten some kind of consiquence but they are often trying to infect your devices or steal your information.

Watch out for phishing scams with the following tips:

- Hover over links in emails before clicking to check if they look suspicious.
- Ask yourself if you are expecting this kind of call or message.
- Think twice before sending money or sharing any kind of sensitive information.
- Don't open suspicious attactments, especially if you weren't expecting them.

Take Cyberbullying Seriously

Connected devices can open your child up to all kinds of communications, good and bad. Make sure to have conversations with your children about cyberbullying. You don't always know who is behind messages on the internet, but cyberbullying can escalate to isolate and destroy a child's sense of safety.

It is not your child's responsibiliy to stop themselves from being cyberbullied. Many cyberbullies use sophistocated technologies and are seasoned in harrassing and manipulating their victims. Step in and take action to keep your child safe.

- Report cyberbullying to the child's school administrators.
- Report threats, assaults, harrassment or sexual exploitation to the RCMP
- Save the evidence of the cyberbullying through screenshots

If you find your child is engaged in cyberbullying, make sure they understand it is wrong. Cyberbullying is not a a joke and it is not acceptable.

Keep Devices Secure and Up to Date

Make sure that all your devices are password protected and up-to-date with the latest updates. Home networks can connect us is many ways, but make sure that they don't make your vulnerable.

- Make sure your home WiFi is password-protected with WPA2 encryption.
- Keep a password on any device that can connect wirelessly: (media systems, consoles, "smart"devices)
- Schedule regular updates on your phones, tablets, and computers. Update software and OS.
- Configure the security settings of game consoles. Be mindful of integrate cameras and microphones.
- Run regular anti-malware scans on your devices to check for infection.

Watch What you Share

Social media thrives on shared information, but watch what you share. It might seem cute to share every detail of your child online, but it can come with some serious consequences. , Online photos and information can be used to steal your child's identity or target your child with cyberbullying. Keep privacy in mind when you share photos and information.

Embarrassing photos and silly things might seem funny, but your child can't meaningfully consent to that. When your children become adults, they'll have everything that is posted associate with their name. Schools, employers and governments might all have access to that information.

Teach your children about online privacy and security by having frequent conversations and modelling good privacy and security. Children learn through modelling so the way you treat their information will shape how they treat their own information.

Resources

RCMP - Bullying and Cyberbullying
http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/cycp-cpcj/bull-inti/index-eng.htm

Get Cyber Safe - Digital Citizenship: Guide for Parents
https://www.getcybersafe.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/cmpgns/cmpgn-06/gd-prnts-en.aspx

Canadian Teacher's Federation – Cyberbullying
https://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/Pages/Issues/Cyberbullying-resources.aspx

Caring for Kids - Social media: What parents should know
https://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/social_media