15 Internet Safety Tips
for parents

1. Teach children to **"Crash and Tell"** (immediately turn the computer off and tell a parent or teacher if they see something that makes them feel uncomfortable or confused). Role play how to "crash and tell."

2. **Check your browser's history** often (google how to do this for your browser. It is usually very easy)..

3. Don't allow children to spend **long periods of time** on devices, especially at night. Have a **docking station** for all electronics, so they stay out of bedrooms. **Place the computer in an open, supervised area** of your home, not in your child's bedroom.

4. **"Lock" your screen** when children are playing on your phone to prevent them from wandering where they shouldn't. ("Guided Access" for iPhones, "Interaction Control" for Samsung, and "Screen Pinning" for Android. There are also many apps available that will do this.)

5. Encourage respect for others and **stamp out cyberbullying.** Teach children to be polite online, never yelling at (writing in all capital letters) or harassing others, and never posting or sharing anything negative or embarrassing. Remind them that what they post or text stays "out there" forever, even if it's deleted.

6. Teach children about **addiction**, and how to use their **"thinking brain"** over their "feeling brain." An EXCELLENT resource is the book "Good Pictures, Bad Pictures" by Kristen A Jenson and Gail Poyner.

7. **Filter and closely manage each device,** realizing filters aren't foolproof and that your child still needs supervision. See handout included in this packet for reviews of filter options, parental control networks, apps, and routers with built in controls. These devices allow parents to set device time limits, device "bedtimes," configure internet and app filters, track web usage, and pause the home's internet.

8. **Remind them that people online aren't always who they say they are** and to never arrange to meet someone in person that they met online. Get to know their internet friends.

9. **Teach children NEVER to give out personal information online** without permission**,** including their name, address, email address, family members' names, school's name or mascot, age, or photos**.**

10. Carefully monitor **gaming** websites (and consoles!). Many are infested with pornography and predators.

11. **Disable the internet**. There are plenty of fun things to do on devices without access to the web. (Google "how to disable the internet on {your device here}.") Additionally, many devices, like Kindle Fires, allow for separate "users." For example, you could create a "reading" log in with no password (always accessible to the child), and a "gaming" or "internet" log in with a password only you know. Many of these devices also allow for time limits and specified hours of usage.

12. **Beware of free apps** for kids, as many contain pop up ads for violent or inappropriate games.

13. **Delay social media for as long as possible.** 13 is the required age for most social media sites, but *risk taking is high and impulse control is low* in an adolescent's brain. Studies show that too much social media too early can lead to addiction, low self esteem, anxiety, and depression. (And once your kids are on social media, it's best to allow access from a family computer and not their own device. Know their passwords and check in often, and ideally, join the same   sites to follow your child, their friends, and get to know the platform.

14. **Check their devices often.** Periodically change the passwords to security settings. Read their texts, look at their pictures (with some devices, it is possible to have their pictures and texts sent directly to your phone or computer). Remember, your child is a CHILD, and does not yet have the developed frontal cortex to always make wise and safe decisions. Monitoring their electronic behavior can help you identify red flags and teach correct principles. This is not spying. This is training.

15. **TALK TALK TALK** to your child about the internet often. Ask them what they've seen online at home, school, or a friend's house. Be calm and non-accusing as they share. Maintain a good relationship so you can talk about these issues. Let them know they are not in trouble if they see pornography, and they will not be punished for coming to talk to you. Help children feel good about themselves, and keep the avenues of communication open so they will be open with you.

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Parents, sign if you have read these tips.

Student Name _____ _____

Parent Signature _____

2 TICKETS!