

MENTAL HEALTH MEMO

INTERNET SAFETY AND CYBERBULLYING



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WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Internet safety is the practice of following actionable guidelines, understanding modern technology, and protecting your digital devices so you can defend against dangerous parts of the online world. Some risks include:

- cyberbullying (bullying using digital technology)
- invasion of privacy
- identity theft
- your child seeing offensive images and messages
- the presence of strangers who may be there to 'groom' other members

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

Teaching your children about the online risks they may face and how to avoid or report threats is one of the most important steps you can take to ensure their safety online.

An open conversation can help them feel comfortable talking with you about uncomfortable things they may later encounter online. It will also help you better understand how your children use the internet.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Supervise young children's use of the internet, including periodically checking their profiles and posts.
- Keep electronic devices in open, common areas of the home and consider setting time limits for their use.
- Review games, apps, and social media sites before they are downloaded or used by children.
- Make it clear if you will be monitoring their online activity, tracking their browsing history and keeping a copy of their passwords.
 - Spying on your children's online activity without telling them first can undermine their trust in you.

CYBERBULLYING

If you notice warning signs that a child may be involved in cyberbullying, take steps to investigate that child's digital behavior. Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and adults should take the same approach to address it: support the child being bullied, address the bullying behavior of a participant, and show children that cyberbullying is taken seriously.

