

## **FBI Advice Regarding Internet Use by Children**

- Children have been taught about “Good Touch” and “Bad Touch.” Apply these same rules and feelings to the Internet. If an IM (Instant Message) feels bad, treat it as bad: Say NO (don’t respond), Run Away (turn off the monitor), and Tell an Adult You Trust (tell a parent and let them see the Internet response; let them notify the necessary authority).
- Spend time with your children online. Let Internet use become an activity you share with your children. Model correct use and have fun together on the Internet.
- Place the computer (with or without Internet access) in a common room like a den or family room. Children do not need to have computers in their bedrooms. The computer needs to be in a place where you have regular access to it and its users.
- Utilize passwords, filtering, and software. Learn about the different products: use *Consumer Report*, ask others, do some serious research and don’t rely only on the recommendations of the company who produces the software.
- Let your children know that you have the right and obligation to access their email. Therefore, you will need to know their usernames and passwords. You are doing this to protect them from predators; you are not doing it because you do not trust them.
- Clarify what it is they are allowed to do on the computer and Internet. Know what the school allows them to do on the Internet and what is permitted at their friends’ homes. Stress the rules that are used in your home. The same rules apply at someone else’s home.
- Emphasize the importance of saying “No” and the right to say “No.”
- Remind children that they should never arrange any face-to-face meetings with people they meet on the Internet. They should never send pictures to people they meet on the Internet. They should never divulge identifying information to people they meet on the Internet. And they should never respond to romantic messages sent to them on the Internet.

**In a word, be VILIGANT, parents.**