Internet Security

May 24, 2007

Editor: Lori Thompson,

Ready Springs School

"Sex offenders [online predators] rely on parents staying unaware!"

FBI Special Agent James Harris, Jr. Online Crime and Project Safe Childhood

6 in 10 children online receive messages from strangers. More than half write back. – FBI Nevada County would be 1083 students

1 in 5 youth receives an online sexual solicitation in a one year period. (2001) Nevada County would be 520 students

29% of children freely give personal information online when asked. (2002)

Router= A communication device designed to send out data by the most efficient route possible.

How to Become an Online-Aware Parent

The internet can be a wonderful tool as long as everyone plays by the rules. But not everyone on the internet wants to be helpful and kind. Online predators will spend *months* – six months or longer – grooming a child/youth to build up trust where the child/youth will comply with any request. But you have the home-court advantage to defeat that every day.

• **Talk to your kids, regularly (not just once) about** *What* **they do online and** *Who* **they talk to online.** Ask questions (and then confirm to make sure they are telling you the truth!) Let me them know you'll be checking. Sit down with them and have them show you how they surf the net. **TTYL F2F** (see page 2)

• **Remind your kids frequently that anyone they don't know off-line is a stranger.** This is the hardest thing for kids to remember! Tell your child *Never Ever* give out their name, address, phone number, pictures or other personal information to *Anyone* online.

Bill Gates Limits His Kids' Computer Time

Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, and his wife Melinda limit their ten-year old daughter and her younger brother to 45 minutes computer time per day during the week and only one hour on weekends. That includes games and anything other than actual homework. He also uses monitoring software to track their online contacts. When his son asked if he was going to have limits like this his whole life, Gates replied, "No, when you move away you can set your own screen limits."

• **Take computers out of kids' rooms.** Put them in public areas (family room) with the screen facing the room. There is safety in numbers. A child spending unlimited time online, surfing aimlessly, is asking for trouble. Set time limits.

• **Choose your child's screen name, email address or instant message name wisely.** Don't reveal ages, sex, hobbies and NOT suggestive or sexy names. Predators pursue those names.

• **Ask to see their MySpace (or other social network) profile page**. . . tomorrow! It gives them a chance to remove everything that isn't appropriate or safe. . .and becomes a lesson in what not to post. Talk it over, don't explode.

• **It's not an invasion of privacy if strangers can see it.** The diary in their drawer is between them and the paper; their MySpace is between them and 700 million people online! **Don't be KPC**

• **Get to know the people your kids consistently chat with online.** Most predators who want to exploit your child pretend to be children or teens on line. You may be able to spot an adult posing as a teenager or young child better than your kids. Monitoring software allows you to review your child's internet usage.

". . .It's very appropriate for a parent to get a sense of what they [their children] are seeing out there and be able to have conversations about it," Bill Gates on monitoring computer use.