The Leader in e-Safety Education

Terms of Use

Clicking on the "Agree and Print" button (below) means that I agree that:

- i-SAFE© lessons may NOT be shared with other educators (e.g., faculty or staff) in any school or district which is not currently covered by your school's or district's Subscription and License Agreement.
- i-SAFE© lessons may NOT be duplicated for any reason except for your classroom use.
- i-SAFE© lesson hand-outs may be printed for students ONLY for your current classroom use.

Duplication, sale, resale and any other form of unauthorized use of i-SAFE copyrighted materials is prohibited and, therefore, a violation of law.

(I understand and agree to above Terms of Use)

Agree and Print

LESSON PLAN—Safeguards in Social Networking for School-Age Children: Identifying Safe Sites

Recommended grade levels 3-5

Lesson Guide

This lesson explores the latest developments in social networking sites for elementary-age children. Students will age-appropriately learn about legal safeguards for youth online and will recognize basic techniques that the safest sites use to provide safe online experiences.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Age-appropriately understand what "COPPA" stands for.
- Be able to recognize social networking sites that offer personal safety features.
- Be able to recognize social networking sites that do not offer valid personal safety features.
- Be able to share information with parents about what they have learned.

Materials

One or more copies of the Choosing a Safe Site with Savvy Quiz activity page.

Concept Basics

Review basics of online communication concepts: The nature of the Internet encourages people to be social online through communication such as e-mail, instant messaging, blogging, sharing pictures, etc. The term for online activities that enable user sharing or user input is "Web 2.0."

Define and Discuss

Have students define the term "social networking." Answers may include the listing of sites like Facebook which have minimum age requirements of 13.

Ask students to list social networking Web sites that are for children under age 13.

Answers may include game sites such as Club Penguin, which actually describes itself as a MMOG (massively multiplayer online game).

Reinforce: When we talk about "social networking" we are talking about Web sites that primarily allow people (users) to share information (including pictures, video, etc.) about themselves with other people. The "exchange" (giving back and forth) of information is "networking." In this case, "social" means interaction with a group.

Introduce the point: There are very few social networking Web sites for young children that have lasted. The main problem has been in protecting the personal information of children who sign up on the sites.

©2014-2015 i-SAFE Inc.

Provide an age-appropriate definition of COPPA: Basically, COPPA is a law that says Web sites cannot collect or use personal information about any child under the age of 13 without a "verifiable" parent's consent. That means, a Web site cannot ask any child under 13 to provide their name or other personal identifying information like phone number, address, or e-mail address in order to use the Web site, unless there is some way for his or her parent to give permission.
Reference: View the Act at ***http://www.coppa.org/coppa.htm***

Tell students that COPPA sets many rules for Web sites to follow. One of the important ones is that if a Web site collects information such as full name, address, phone number, etc., it MUST provide a notice on the site about what information is collected from children and how it uses that information.

COPPA also allows parents to review their child's online profiles and blog pages.

Discuss

Note: You may want to list student answers on the board.

- Have students give their ideas as to why this is an important law.
- Have students give reasons why it is important for parents to give permission for their child's personal information to be collected (saved) on a Web site.
  Answers should include: It is a parent's job (responsibility) to help keep their children safe offline and online; parents need to know what their children like to do on the Internet; Parents can make a decision about what kinds of Web sites their children are visiting.
- Have students discuss why it is important to look for safety features on a Web site and know how the site works BEFORE actually signing up with personal information. Make sure answers include:
  - Some sites allow only a defined community of users to access posted content; others allow anyone and everyone to view postings.
  - You want to make sure that your information will not be used in a bad way, such as to be sold to advertisers or to be made public on the Internet without permission.

Introduce Positive Safety Indicators

Use the following reference information to provide an example, or example information, of how a "safe" Web site presents itself to the public. Reinforce to students that a safe site will demonstrate any or all of the following features:

- Clear notice of intended user age groups.
- Parent e-mail verification in order to sign up.
- Notice of COPPA compliance in gathering personal information. Information about COPPA compliance is often found in the site's privacy policy. (Note: some non-profit sites are not required to be COPPA compliant, but conform to other regulations).
- Clear information about how personal information will be used by the Web site.
- Clear information about how the site works and what the site offers in terms of real-time communication tools, and how these tools are managed.
- Positive reputation indicated through research (information about the site's reputation is easily found through common search tools such as Google, bing, ask.com, yahoo, etc.).

©2014-2015 i-SAFE Inc.

Activity – Choosing a Safe Site with Savvy

(1) After students have learned about positive safety indicators for interactive Web sites, have them brainstorm a list of initial safety features that youth should look for when choosing a social networking site to join. Choose a student to record the list either on paper or on the board.

(2) Divide the class into two groups. Pass out copies of the quiz to each group or to each individual. Have the students label their copies, either "Quiz 1" or "Quiz 2" depending on which group they are in.

(3) Provide instructions. The quiz has several pre-made true/false questions to get the groups started. Have students in each group use what they have learned to create at least four more questions to add to their quiz. They can use any format such as true/false, multiple choice or fill-in. Remind students that the point of the quiz is for students taking it to demonstrate that they know what to look for in choosing a safe social networking site to join. Once completed, there will be two different quizzes—Quiz 1 and Quiz 2.

(4) Once the quizzes are complete, meet with each group to review the new questions.

(5) Each group will exchange quizzes. Use a method of choice to distribute the completed quizzes. One option is simply to write the new questions on the board for each group. Quizzes can be completed individually or as a group to enable discussion.

Wrap Up

Have students discuss what they have learned. Have them identify information learned that they should share with their parents and other family members.

Answers to pre-made quiz questions:

1. **False** – A COPPA compliant Web site can ask for information from users under age 13, but the site cannot ask for personal identifying information unless there is some way for the parent to give permission. Additionally, a compliant Web site MUST provide a notice on the site about what information is collected from children and how it uses such information.
2. **False** – A safe Web site, worthy of consideration for joining, should be very clear about the age group or groups the site material is for.
3. **True** – Any youth wanting to join a Web site should get as much information about the site as possible before presenting it to parents. This action may also demonstrate to the parent that the child is savyy enough to join a reputable site.

©2014-2015 i-SAFE Inc.

Choosing a Safe Site with Savvy Quiz

(Quiz Number)

1. A Web site that shows a notice saying it is "COPPA compliant" can never ask for personal information from children under the age of 13.

   True or False?

2. A Web site that does not show what ages it is for is probably safe for children, as well as adults, to sign up for.

   True or False?

3. You want to join a social networking site that is clearly for your age group. Before talking to your parents about it, it is wise to do an online search for any bad or negative comments about the site and then share the results with your parents.

   True or False?

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

©2014-2015 i-SAFE Inc.