



CyberAngels

A program of Guardian Angels
keeping it safe

Children and Social Networking

Many children have discovered that Myspace, Facebook, LiveJournal, and many other social networking sites are a great way to communicate with friends all over the globe. They are able to post messages, photos, and list all their favorite things about themselves. Most of these services require that users are at least 14 years of age; so many children have to "adjust" their birthdates in order to create an account. What children don't always understand is how public this information really is. When they realize that both parents and teachers alike can access the same information their friends can, they are often shocked.

As parents, the best way to keep your children safe is to remind them that having an online "personality" does not make them anonymous. Information posted is public to the entire globe.

Topics to discuss with your child

- Assume everyone has access to your site - and always will
- Think carefully before posting personal information or photos
- Assume there are predators looking at everything you write and post

Additional Resources

CERT: [Staying safe on social network sites](#)

CERT: [Guidelines for publishing information online](#)

FTC: [Social networking sites: Safety tips for tweens and teens](#)

ABC News [What parents should know about Facebook and Myspace](#)

Safe Families: [Online Safety on MySpace and Other Social Networking Sites](#)