



CyberAngels

A program of Guardian Angels
keeping it safe

Is Your Child Ready to Chat?

"Chatting" on the Internet has become a popular way for people to talk (chat) in a group (room) who share similar interests and/or age groups.

There are two types of chat rooms online - moderated and un-moderated. We don't recommend children be allowed access to un-moderated chat rooms, and only to moderated chat rooms if they have been thoroughly vetted by you. Since the educational value of chat rooms is very low, and the risk to children's privacy and security is very high, this is not a recommended "allowable activity" except in very controlled conditions.

Be Proactive

- Use an [Internet Safety Agreement](#) to outline family rules
- Learn '[net lingo](#)' so you can understand what your child is typing.
- Know your child's passwords
- Consider a [parental control software](#) program

Topics to discuss with your child:

- Warn them that people may not be what they seem to be.
- Teach your child to not talk to strangers. Lurking in chat rooms is a favorite way for pedophiles to meet children.
- Good etiquette should be used on the Internet as in person. People chatting should refrain from making any comments they would not use in "everyday life".
- Tell them to never give their real name, address, school, parents' names, friends' names, parents' workplaces, e-mail address or any telephone number to anyone.