

**THINK BEFORE  
YOU CLICK:  
Playing It Safe Online**

# THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK: PLAYING IT SAFE ONLINE

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### TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

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# THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK: PLAYING IT SAFE ONLINE

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According to research by the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 61 percent of teens between the ages of 13 and 17 have personal profiles on social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook. Additionally, 70 percent of teens report receiving messages from people they don't know, and 30 percent say they've considered meeting in the real world a person that they only know through online contact. In fact, 14 percent have actually done so. While exposure to pornography and sexual solicitations have declined, according to the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, other problems such as bullying and harassment are on the rise.

Incidents of teens meeting online predators in the real world represent a very small percentage of teens that use the Internet, and most know they are going to meet an adult who wants to have sex with them. In some rare cases, the consequences can also be deadly. Fortunately, intense press attention seems to have made many teens aware of this risk. Yet for uninformed teens, the phenomenon of seeking adult attention online continues to be worrisome. These are troubled teens who need professional counseling.

Teens most at risk for developing risky relationships online with predators are teens with problematic family situations—dysfunctional relationships with parents or guardians. These teens are looking for a stable, nurturing relationship with an adult. Sadly, this is the opposite of what they will most likely find.

By far the biggest problem that teens experience online is harassment, very often done by other teens they know in real life. The Internet provides a seemingly anonymous opportunity for teens to vent anger or torment others, often for entertainment. These teens do not always realize the hurt and harm that they cause. According to a study by the Center for Missing and Exploited Children ([www.netsmatrz.org](http://www.netsmatrz.org)), 44 percent of teens harassed online are victimized by teens they know in the real world, frequently from school. While they often believe their activities are untraceable, this is not the case. If victimized teens document the harassment (by saving messages and e-mail), their offenders can be tracked down. They may face suspension or other discipline at school, and if the harassment crosses over to a criminal level involving threats of bodily harm, the police can become involved.

It is important for teens—who are so Internet savvy in some ways and naïve in others—to understand the implications of their behavior online. ***Think Before You Click: Playing It Safe Online*** is designed to help educators work with their students on many of the social issues that occur during Internet use, from “flamers” to harassment, from bullies to predators. The program raises these issues in a teen-friendly format, providing sound advice about a whole new world where teens can have fun, do research, play games and learn, with little fear of harm because they know the risks and know how to protect themselves. Strategies for safe and responsible Internet use are provided in the form of 12 simple rules.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After watching the video *Think Before You Click: Playing It Safe Online* and participating in the class activities included in this Teacher's Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- understand that they will likely face certain risks on the Internet, and they should be prepared to deal with these risks.
- recognize that face-to-face communication with a friend is a much more effective way to solve a problem than using the Internet.
- recognize the negative consequences that can result from online bullying or harassment.
- understand that their online activities can be traced by the authorities.
- realize they can avoid online sexual predators, have fun and stay safe online.
- use the 12 simple rules presented in the program as a guide to Internet safety.

The program opens with teasers from the stories of some of the teens who are interviewed in the program. Twin sisters Jaclyn and Nicole describe how the Internet contributed to and escalated a dispute with friends; Gina says a girl she knew was tormented by other teens online; Newman describes being flamed by someone while playing a video game; Catrina tells how desperate she was when no one believed she hadn't emailed a dirty video to others; Adebukola recalls being threatened online with being stabbed; and Michael describes meeting an adult stranger in a park when he had been expecting to meet another teen.

Two teen narrators introduce the program, saying that they will explore a variety of Internet issues that teens need to consider—including how to avoid fights with friends, how to handle bullying and how to stay safe online. Twelve simple rules for safety will be presented, and viewers will hear from Special Agent Tim Wittman who works at the Federal Bureau of Investigation investigating and preventing crimes against children and teens on the Internet.

The narrators introduce the first story told by Nicole and Jaclyn, twins who had some problems with friends that escalated online. Jaclyn and Nicole and some friends were planning an end-of-the-year school party. They would invite their entire class, hire a DJ and celebrate a few birthdays as well as the end of the school year. Suddenly they learned that two of their friends went ahead and made arrangements for the party without including them. When they became angry, they left messages online. Soon the Internet became the venue for an escalating battle involving all kinds of other people who should never have been involved. Nasty messages were sent on both sides. Friendships were destroyed. The twins acknowledge that if the Internet had not been used as a means of communicating, they probably would have worked out their differences with their friends. But now the girls no longer speak to one another.

The narrators tell viewers that it's harder to communicate effectively online because you can't see the other person and can't always tell when someone is angry, upset or just kidding around. It's best to solve problems in person, face-to-face. It's also best not to involve others who have nothing to do with the problem. The first two rules are presented:

**Rule 1:** Always solve problems face-to-face with the specific person you're having the problem with.

**Rule 2:** Assume that any Internet message you send can be read by anyone and everyone.

The narrators introduce cyber-bullying now, saying that sometimes friends bully friends, and sometimes they pick on someone they hardly know, someone weaker who can't defend herself. Gina tells the story of a girl she knew who was unpopular and who others tormented online. They teased her mercilessly and eventually the girl committed suicide. It was never discovered who had bullied her and no one got in trouble.

The narrators call this suicide a tragedy that should never have happened. Most teens know bullying is wrong and won't participate in it. They advise teens who are bullied that they need to realize it isn't their fault. They need to talk to a trusted adult at home or at school. Teens who witness bullying are advised to speak out against it.

**Rule 3:** If you're ever bullied online, talk to an adult. Speak up against bullying when you see it.

Catrina appears next, recalling how her profile page was hacked and the hacker sent a dirty video to all her friends. A good friend confronted her about it and didn't believe that Katrina hadn't sent it. Katrina told her mom about it and her mom contacted the site. Special Agent Tim Wittman of the FBI advises teens that whenever they have a problem like Katrina's, they need to talk to a trusted adult at home or at school. The site needs to be contacted but often won't take a complaint from a teen.

Catrina believed the hacker was a total stranger who happened to see her page, which she had not made private. At school Katrina was subjected to ridicule from classmates and was sent to explain the situation to the principal because the school had received complaints from some parents whose teens had received the video. Katrina was able to explain what happened and the site put out a bulletin warning about hackers' activities. Eventually those who received the dirty video understood what had happened. The narrators further warn viewers to be skeptical if they receive a weird message from a friend because a hacker could be involved. Viewers are advised to file a complaint with the site.

The narrators introduce the next segment on playing video games online. Newman tells how a flamer taunted him while playing a game. The flamer started out by being friendly and asked Newman for personal information. Newman told him his ethnicity (Afghani) and where he lives. The flamer then totally changed and started insulting and threatening him. Newman had to leave the game. Newman also had bad experiences on his social networking site when others taunted him about being a terrorist. His brother showed him how to use the settings to make his page private.

The narrators advise the viewers to keep their page private and not share their passwords. If someone tries to make you feel bad for not sharing your password, the narrators advise the viewers not to fall for it.

**Rule 4:** Keep your webpage private and don't share your password.

**Rule 5:** Don't give out your ASL (age, sex, location) or any other personal information to someone you met online.

In the next segment, the narrators explain to viewers that posting photos online can cause problems because you have no control over who views them, copies them or uses them. Special Agent Wittman says there are cases where sexual predators have used photos posted by unknowing teens to pose as a teen and chat with others. He points out that young people are finding they're being denied internships, jobs and even scholarships or college admission because of inappropriate photos they or friends posted online. The narrators advise teens to think about how photos can be doctored, and how, if they post an inappropriate photo of themselves online, someone could show it around in the future to people (like a boyfriend's or girlfriend's parents). When you post something online, you lose control over it.

**Rule 6:** Never post anything online that you don't want the whole world to have access to forever!

The narrators introduce the next segment: online threats. There can be very serious consequences to physically threatening another person online. It's illegal, and it's wrong. Adebukola appears onscreen, describing how she was threatened by a group of girls who didn't like her. A friend told Adie that her name was on the page of one of these girls. When she went to check it out, she saw her name with a threat: "Adie, you will regret you ever F'd with me." Soon the message became even more explicit—a threat that Adie would be stabbed when she went back to school. She and her mother reported the incident to the school and to the police. They filed criminal charges and as a result, the girls were placed on probation and must stay away from Adie. As this segment ends, the narrators emphasize how serious it is to make a threat online: the police could be called or the teen could be prosecuted or suspended from school.

**Rule 7:** Never make a threat over the Internet, even as a joke.

**Rule 8:** Print out any threats you receive and show them to a trusted adult.

The narrators introduce the segment on sexual predators by saying that talking to unknown people online can be risky because predators use the Internet to find teens they can abuse. Predators start out saying they want to be friends with a teen. The narrators advise teens not to confide personal problems to strangers online because they could be chatting with a predator. Special Agent Wittman describes how predators operate. They usually do not pretend to be someone else. They present themselves as an older person who wants to be a friend. They seek teens who are lonely and vulnerable, or teens who have problems getting along with their parents. They compliment the teen on his/her taste in music or movies. They criticize the teen's parents and other friends in order to isolate the teen and break down the teen's natural support group. Special Agent Wittman tells viewers that the biggest single red flag that someone is a predator is a big age difference between the predator and the teen. Friendships between people with a big age difference are rare, and teens should be careful when communicating with an older person.

Michael tells how he met someone online who said he was the brother of one of Michael's online friends. They agreed to meet in a park and go to the brother's house to play video games. When Michael arrived in the park, he was confronted by an adult male who said he was the brother. But Michael knew this adult was too old to be the friend's brother. He worried about how to extricate himself from the situation. Fortunately, another friend came along and Michael was able to leave the park safely.

Eight red flags are presented as warning signs that someone could be an online predator including a large age difference, excessive compliments (trying hard to be friends) and criticizing parents or friends. Predators will also commonly offer modeling or acting jobs, gifts or money.

**Rule 9:** If someone says something that makes you uncomfortable, sign off. Block them. File a complaint with the site.

In the next segment, the narrators explain that chat rooms can be very dangerous places to hang out. Predators go there to learn about you from what you say there and use it to develop a relationship. An example shows a boy chatting with a predator about baseball. The predator compliments the boy, and then suggests they "go private." Special Agent Wittman suggests that online chatting creates a false sense of being friends with the other participants. Boundaries get broken down and teens are often more vulnerable than they realize. He thinks chat rooms are the most dangerous area of the Internet. The narrator recommends that teens stick to social networking sites where they can chat with friends and family they already know. The narrators add that you should meet someone in a public place only with friends or a parent nearby; never leave this public place with someone you met online.

**Rule 10:** Never meet anyone in the real world that you met online without having a safety plan approved by your parents.

**Rule 11:** Avoid chat rooms and never go private with someone you met in a chat room.

The narrators remind viewers that relationships change. People we trust today may not be the same people we'll trust tomorrow. Gina talks about how her boyfriend began stalking her online, demanding to know who she was talking with and where she was going. The narrators tell teens that using technology to control someone else is a type of relationship abuse, and it should not be tolerated.

Next, the narrators explain that while webcams can be fun, they can also be risky. Special Agent Wittman tells viewers that there is some evidence that hackers can take control of your webcam if it is left on. He advises teens to always keep their webcams unplugged when they're not using them.

**Rule 12:** Keep your webcam unplugged when not in use. Never use a webcam with someone you don't know.

The final segment offers words of advice to sum up what viewers have learned. Catrina tells viewers she always keeps her profile page private now so strangers can't see it or hack into it. She is more cautious now and doesn't talk to people she doesn't know. Christian advises teens to make sure they know who it is that they're talking to because there are lots of predators out there. Newman advises teens to avoid chatting with strangers when playing online video games. He says "just play the game and ignore all chat invites... just have fun." Special Agent Wittman tells viewers that the best way to stay safe online is to use the Internet for chatting with friends and family and limit contact with unknown individuals. If a teen is contacted by a suspicious person, "trust your instincts" and tell an adult you trust.

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# STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pre/Post Test

Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. TRUE or FALSE: It's easier to communicate with someone on the Internet than in person. \_\_\_\_\_
2. TRUE or FALSE: The messages I send can be read only by the person I send them to. \_\_\_\_\_
3. TRUE or FALSE: Teens who bully others online often pick on kids they know. \_\_\_\_\_
4. TRUE or FALSE: Teens who were victimized by bullies online have been known to commit suicide. \_\_\_\_\_
5. TRUE or FALSE: Flamers don't mean any harm online. \_\_\_\_\_
6. TRUE or FALSE: Chatting with strangers online can be dangerous. \_\_\_\_\_
7. TRUE or FALSE: Hackers are able to hack into my web page even if I keep it private. \_\_\_\_\_
8. TRUE or FALSE: If a message has a friend's address you can be sure it was sent by that person. \_\_\_\_\_
9. TRUE or FALSE: Threats over the Internet are not taken seriously by police. \_\_\_\_\_
10. TRUE or FALSE: It's safe to meet online friends in the real world alone. \_\_\_\_\_
11. TRUE or FALSE: It's okay to spy on your boyfriend or girlfriend when they're online. \_\_\_\_\_
12. TRUE or FALSE: A stranger could turn on or control my webcam without my knowing it. \_\_\_\_\_

*The Answer Key to this activity appears on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Answer Key

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1. TRUE or FALSE: It's easier to communicate with someone on the Internet than in person.         | FALSE |
| 2. TRUE or FALSE: The messages I send can be read only by the person I send them to.              | FALSE |
| 3. TRUE or FALSE: Teens who bully others online often pick on kids they know.                     | TRUE  |
| 4. TRUE or FALSE: Teens who were victimized by bullies online have been known to commit suicide.  | TRUE  |
| 5. TRUE or FALSE: Flamers don't mean any harm online.   | FALSE |
| 6. TRUE or FALSE: Chatting with strangers online can be dangerous.                                | TRUE  |
| 7. TRUE or FALSE: Hackers are able to hack into my web page even if I keep it private.            | TRUE  |
| 8. TRUE or FALSE: If a message has a friend's address you can be sure it was sent by that person. | FALSE |
| 9. TRUE or FALSE: Threats over the Internet are not taken seriously by police.                    | FALSE |
| 10. TRUE or FALSE: It's safe to meet online friends in the real world alone.                      | FALSE |
| 11. TRUE or FALSE: It's okay to spy on your boyfriend or girlfriend when they're online.          | FALSE |
| 12. TRUE or FALSE: A stranger could turn on or control my webcam without my knowing it.           | TRUE  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Communication experts tell us that factors such as tone of voice, facial expression and body language all have an important role in conveying meaning. However, with electronic communication, we can't see or hear the person who is sending the message. That means there is always a possibility for misunderstanding. As a result, sometimes teens can get into fights online over problems they may have easily solved if they were face-to-face.

**PART ONE:** Read the following messages and try to decide what the intent of the sender is. Is the sender happy or upset? Pleased or angry? Worried or calm? Serious or joking? Decide the sender's emotional state and write it in the space provided. Also, explain how the meaning of the message can be different depending on the intent behind the words.

SENDER WRITES...	SENDER'S INTENT IS...
Hey grl, why r u being so mean to me? U didn't share yr pizza today & now I'm starving!	
If u don't vote for me, I will kick your teensy butt!	
U traitor! U told my mom I have a boyfriend and now she wants to know who he is!	
Don't ever talk to me again, lizard-face.	
U better not laugh at me 2morrow when I give my report or else.	
It's L8er than u think!	
I really h8te yr guts for letting that moron borrow your iPod instead of me.	
What's wrong w/ u today?!	
R u kidding? U really like that song? Eww. U have no taste.	

Did you have any trouble deciding what mood the sender is in? Why? Compare your answers with those of your classmates. Did you all read the messages in the same way, or are there different interpretations?

*This activity is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART TWO:** Sometimes you can solve this problem by using emoticons—little graphics or symbols that convey an emotion. The most popular emoticons are the smiling faces that people use to say “don’t take what I just wrote too seriously.” The colon represents the eyes, the dash represents the nose, and the right or left parenthesis represents the mouth. For instance:

- :-) = smiling
- ;-) = winking
- :-( = frowning / sad
- :-D = laughing

In the chart below, draw an emoticon that describes the emotion that you think the sender is feeling.

<b>SENDER WRITES...</b>	<b>SENDER’S INTENT IS...</b>
Hey grl, why r u being so mean to me? U didn’t share yr pizza today & now I’m starving!	
If u don’t vote for me, I will kick your teensy butt!	
U traitor! U told my mom I have a boyfriend and now she wants to know who he is!	
Don’t ever talk to me again, lizard-face.	
U better not laugh at me 2morrow when I give my report or else.	
It’s L8er than u think!	
I really h8te yr guts for letting that moron borrow your iPod instead of me.	
What’s wrong w/ u today?!	
R u kidding? U really like that song? Eww. U have no taste.	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Most people are enthusiastic about how the Internet allows us to easily share our opinions, ideas and information with others—from the comfort of our own home or classroom! But there can be problems. Research indicates that people are more likely to say mean things and use foul language on the Internet than they are in the real world. \*

Have you ever written anything while online that you would not have said to the person face-to-face? On the back of this sheet, write a paragraph explaining who you were talking to and what you were talking about. If you used bad language, don't repeat it here but describe in general terms what you did.

Make sure your essay answers these questions:

- How did you feel about yourself after?
- How did you feel about the other person?
- Did anything happen as a result of what you said?
- Have you decided to behave differently? Explain.
- Why do you think people sometimes say hurtful or brash things online that they wouldn't say in a face-to-face conversation?

\* Source: Michigan State University <http://www.msu.edu/user/trescami/thesis.htm>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

One way to avoid conflict online is to learn how to use "I messages" when you are writing to someone else. An "I message" helps keep the focus on how YOU feel or what YOU think or want—instead of pointing fingers or blaming another person. Use the following example as a model for how to turn a blaming message into an "I message."

Example:

*"You make me so mad... Why did you tell Lucy I said she was dumb?"*

Rewritten with an "I message":

*"I'm upset that you told Lucy what I said about her...  
It makes me feel like I can't tell you things."*

Try rewriting each of these email texts so they are turned into "I messages."

1. Mike (to Steve): "You jerk... You can't even make a basket... We lost thanks to you."

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2. Jasmine (to Liz): "You should've told me you weren't coming to my party, you rat."

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3. Jake (to Morgan): "You didn't call me last night, and you said you would."

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4. Allie (to Sari): "You broke my iPod! Now you have to pay for it."

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5. Jackie (to his brother): "Stay out of my room, twerp. I know you were in here."

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

For this activity, your class will work in teams to share information with the other students in your school and, if necessary, change your peers' views about bullying. You will need copies of these fact sheets:

*Bullying Facts*

*Types of Cyber-Bullying*

*The Bully, The Bystander and the Target*

First you need to decide if bullying is a problem at your school. Work together to create a questionnaire to distribute to students at your school. Use as much information from the fact sheets as you think is useful. Questions should ask students if they have ever been bullied or harassed, if they have witnessed bullying (including cyber-bullying), and what they think can be done about bullying.

Collect questionnaires from students who respond. Based on the responses you get from the questionnaires, your class should be able to decide if bullying is a problem in your school, and perhaps even determine if there are special types of bullying that need to be addressed.

Next, get permission from your principal to hold a Bullying Awareness Day at your school. Plan to hold an assembly where you and your classmates can give presentations about different types of bullying—including cyber-bullying. Some ideas for presentations include:

- statistics on cyber-bullying
- impact of cyber-bullying on teens
- roles teens take (bully/bystander/target)
- what teens should do if they've been bullied online
- what the role of the adults at school should be

Use the space below to come up with additional ideas for presentations that will help your peers learn more about how to handle bullying.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

There are some people on the Internet who just want to cause trouble. Flamers enjoy making other people feel bad by insulting them, calling them names and treating them badly. Hackers try to get into your personal files, including any networking pages you have, and use them for their own purposes, causing serious problems. People who are targeted by a flamer can block them, ignore them or make a firm but polite response to show that the flamer isn't succeeding. The worst thing you can do is respond angrily or in an upset manner. That would only satisfy the flamer.

Below are examples of flamers trying to cause trouble. Write a polite but firm response to the flamer to show that he or she is not succeeding in making you angry. Make sure not to use sarcasm, as this will only encourage the flamer to continue. After making such a response, you should block this person if he or she continues to be rude.

1. Flamer: "That's the dumbest idea I ever heard....where r u from, mars???? Only an idiot could think that."

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2. Flamer: "ur brain must be the size of a pea...typical stupid stuff from u, as usual."

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3. Flamer: "im gonna get u and make u sorry u were born...u feeble minded moron."

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As you can see, flamers are rude to the extreme. Hackers are harder to deal with because they're sneaky. You usually don't know you are being hacked until after it happens. As Catrina decided in the video program, it's best to keep your page private. If anyone does something to your page, or sends messages out pretending they're from you, be sure to file a complaint with the site manager and change your password immediately.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY 8A  
CYBER-THREATS

Some teens don't realize that making threats to hurt someone else is against the law. But the fact is that the police can become involved when threats are made via the Internet, and the person responsible can be tracked down. Teens have had to go to court, and some have been prosecuted. In other cases, teens have been suspended from their schools. In the video program, we learned that the girls who threatened Adie had to go to court and ended up on probation. It's important for teens to understand that making a threat to physically hurt someone else over the Internet is not a joke. There can be serious consequences.

Read the following messages and decide if you think the person sending it could be arrested for breaking the law. Write an explanation for your conclusions. In class, discuss whether you think the police might investigate a complaint about online threats.

1. "u better not come to school 2morrow."

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2. "if u show up at school im gonna smack u 2 the ground."

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3. "no1 likes u anymore cuz u stink."

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*This activity is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

4. “ur gonna get stabbed 2morrow so watch ur back.”

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5. “i know where u live...don’t go 2 sleep 2nite or u won’t ever wake up.”

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6. “ur a big fat stinkin pig u deserve to get wuts comin to you.”

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7. “im gonna make sure no one is gonna talk 2 u ever again if u don’t shut up now.”

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

There are approximately 500,000 registered sex offenders in this country. Many of them use the Internet in order to find teens they can establish online “friendships” with—but their ultimate goal is to abuse or molest the teen, NOT to be friends.

It can be very difficult for a teen to know whether the person he or she is chatting with is just another teen or an adult predator. Experts say there are some red flags that warn us if someone might be a predator. Based on what you have learned in the program, decide which of the following messages may have been sent by a predator and explain why you think so. You can refresh your memory with the *Online Predators* fact sheet.

Which messages do you think might have been sent by possible predators? Why?

1. “hey beautiful... whats up? U r great at picking movies... ur 10 best are the same as mine!!!! Is that a coincidence or what?”	
2. “ur page is pretty nice... i like the colors.”	
3. “i think ur friends r just mean... i don’t think they care about you as much as i do.”	
4. “with ur looks i can get u a modeling job 4sure.”	
5. “i have some baseball cards to trade if ur interested.”	
6. “ur mom sounds like a real witch... i would never ground u just 4 failing a course!”	
7. “im sending u a little surprise by snail mail... u should get it in a day or 2.”	
8. “i like to play tennis a lot... do u?”	

*The Answer Key to this activity appears on the next page.*

## Answer Key

1. *“hey beautiful... whats up? U r great at picking movies... ur 10 best are the same as mine!!!! Is that a coincidence or what?”* This message shows a possible red flag that it is from a predator. Predators typically try to flatter you and make you think that you both share the same interests and taste.
2. *“ur page is pretty nice... i like the colors.”* This comment is not overly flattering and would usually not be considered a red flag warning of a possible predator.
3. *“i think ur friends r just mean... i don’t think they care about you as much as i do.”* This message could warn of a predator if it is from someone you met online. Predators try to isolate the teen from friends and family, and make negative comments about their friends to accomplish it.
4. *“with ur looks I can get u a modeling job 4sure.”* This message is a red flag warning of a possible predator because predators often promise modeling and acting jobs, money or other material favors.
5. *“I have some baseball cards to trade if ur interested.”* This message is borderline. If it comes from an online stranger, it could be from a predator. But it is also the kind of message you might get from anyone with a similar interest. Teens need to pay attention if someone approaches them claiming to share an interest in something. Predators do this to start a conversation and create a friendship online.
6. *“ur mom sounds like a real witch... I would never ground u just 4 failing a course!”* This is a definite warning sign of a predator because the sender is old enough to be the teen’s parent. Predators are usually more than a few years older than the teen. They will criticize a parent to isolate the teen from the parent, who is the teen’s natural protector (even if they don’t get along well).
7. *“im sending u a little surprise by snail mail... u should get it in a day or 2.”* If this message is from someone you met online, it is a red flag and warning sign it could be a from predator. Predators often send the teen gifts as a way to make friends and establish trust.
8. *“i like to play tennis a lot... do u?”* This message could be from a predator if it was sent by someone you met online who is trying to make friends with you. But it also could just be a message from a someone with an interest in tennis.

**Note:** It is important to understand that any single message by itself probably won’t prove that someone is a predator. Teens need to learn to make good judgments about people online, just like in the real world. If someone you meet online makes you uncomfortable in any way, pay attention to your instincts—they’re usually right. Block the person, or sign off.

# FACT SHEETS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE 12 RULES OF  
CYBER-SAFETY**

- Rule 1: Always solve problems face-to-face with the person you're having the problem with.
- Rule 2: Assume that the messages you send can be read by anyone and everyone.
- Rule 3: If you're ever bullied online, talk to an adult. Speak up against bullying when you see it.
- Rule 4: Keep your webpage private and don't share your password.
- Rule 5: Don't give out your ASL (age, sex, location) or any other personal information to someone you met online.
- Rule 6: Never post anything online that you don't want the whole world to see and have access to forever!
- Rule 7: Never make a threat over the Internet, even as a joke.
- Rule 8: Print out any threats you receive or see online and show them to a trusted adult.
- Rule 9: If someone says something to make you uncomfortable, sign off. Block them. File a complaint with the site.
- Rule 10: Never meet anyone in the real world that you first met online without having a safety plan approved by your parents.
- Rule 11: Avoid chat rooms and never go private with someone you met in a chat room.
- Rule 12: Keep your webcam unplugged when you're not using it. Never use a webcam with someone you don't know.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNICATION AND  
THE INTERNET

- It's more difficult to communicate online than it is in person face-to-face.
- Online messages do not show the sender's emotional state or intention because there is no facial expression, tone of voice or body language.
- Miscommunications online can result in serious problems.
- Misunderstandings online can result in fights that spill over into school and destroy friendships.
- People are more likely to say mean things online.
- People are more likely to use bad language online.
- Flamers deliberately try to upset other people.
- Disagreements tend to escalate on the Internet.
- The more people that get involved in a disagreement online, the worse the outcome.
- Problems and misunderstandings between people can be more readily solved when the Internet is not involved.
- Any message you send can be read by other people even if you don't send it to them.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

When you are chatting with someone online, remember that:

1. the other person can't see you.
2. you can't see the other person.
3. the other person can't hear you.
4. you can't hear the other person.
5. the other person might read something into what you write that you don't intend.
6. you might read something into a message that the sender didn't intend.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. 42 percent of middle school-aged kids have been bullied online, according to government-supported research.
2. 53 percent of middle school-aged kids admit saying mean or hurtful things to another person online, according to government-supported research.
3. Most teens don't tell anyone they have been bullied.
4. Teens have committed suicide as a result of being bullied both online and in school.
5. More girls engage in online bullying than boys.
6. Being bullied can cause a teen to feel depressed, and can negatively impact a teen's social life and schoolwork.
7. If you are bullied online (or in person), you need to tell a trusted adult. Save or print out the messages and file a complaint with the site or with your Internet provider.
8. Bullying messages should be downloaded and saved in order to keep a record of what is happening.
9. Bullies can be disciplined at school, even if the bullying occurs on the Internet when school is closed.
10. Bullies can lose their membership in online networking sites.
11. Victims of bullying are not at fault. No one deserves to be treated badly.
12. Teens who speak out against bullying when they see it online are effective at preventing bullying because bullies need encouragement and back down when confronted.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cyber-bullying can take many forms. It can be:

1. **Stalking:** This occurs when someone tries to spy on another person, often a girlfriend or boyfriend, by reading their e-mail and other messages, and by sending them constant messages via computer, phone or via PDA devices demanding to keep in constant contact.
2. Pretending to be someone else, using his or her screen name and sending out obnoxious, nasty or pornographic messages that others will assume were sent by the targeted person.
3. Sharing messages that were intended to be private in order to expose or hurt the sender in some way.
4. Creating cruel websites to target and humiliate another person.
5. Nasty e-mails or IMs (instant messages): Bullies sometimes enlist their friends to send hurtful messages to their target.
6. Nasty cell phone messages: Both voicemail and text messages are used by bullies to keep harassing the victim.

REMEMBER:

Law enforcement authorities can track back via "cyber-footprints" and identify the sender of any nasty or threatening messages.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE BULLY, THE BYSTANDER  
AND THE TARGET**

The online world of cyber-bullying consists of three roles that people may get caught up in. You might not always play the same role.

**Bullying:** any act, whether physical or verbal, the purpose of which is to exclude, diminish, control or in any way harm another person.

## Bullies

Bullies usually target people they see as weaker than themselves. This can be physical but on the Internet it tends to be social, psychological and emotional. Targets are most often people who are not in the “in-crowd” but are trying to be. Bullies are seeking power and control at the expense of other people’s feelings. They want the respect and admiration of peers but they are afraid to seek it with more positive efforts.

Bullies...

- call another person names.
- make nasty comments about someone else.
- try to get others to pick on someone else.
- try to exclude someone else from the group.
- criticize someone else’s clothes, hair or appearance.
- create mock websites that focus on teasing another person.
- join in with bullying activities that are instigated by another.

## Bystanders

The role of the bystander can be varied and complex. Most bystanders don’t really approve of bullying but are unsure of what to do. Often they fear becoming the bully’s next target and so they play it safe and stay silent. Some bystanders support the bully by laughing, encouraging or eventually participating in the attacks in order to mollify the instigating bully. Bullying becomes a dynamic ongoing enterprise. If bullies did not have this support, many would never bully in the first place because bullies are not usually very courageous. They want power but they won’t risk disapproval of their peers.

*This fact sheet is continued on the next page.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE BULLY, THE BYSTANDER  
AND THE TARGET**

Bystanders...

- watch passively while someone else is criticized.
- keep silent when a popular teen excludes someone from the group.
- say nothing when several teens gang up on a weaker teen.
- laugh when someone says mean things about another teen.
- feel badly when another teen is humiliated but they do not know what to do.
- feel afraid that the bully will turn his or her attention on them if they dare to say anything.

## Targets

Targets are often teens who are seeking acceptance by the popular crowd. Some teens who are targeted will retaliate and might even become bullies themselves. The bully who attacked becomes the target. This is one reason why it's never a good idea to retaliate. It allows the bully who started everything to go to the authorities and accuse the original victim.

Targets...

- find themselves being criticized and laughed at by others.
- believe that others have tried to exclude them from a group.
- feel angry and are tempted to retaliate.

Note: On the Internet, girls outnumber boys as bullies. In the real world, boys tend to outnumber girls as bullies. Psychological and emotional bullying can be even more harmful than physical bullying.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sexual predators don't usually lie about their identity.

Sexual predators usually present themselves as an older person who wants to be a friend.

The biggest sign that someone is a sexual predator is that the person is more than a few years older than you.

Females can be sexual predators, though most are men.

Sexual predators try very hard to act like they want to be your special or best friend.

Sexual predators will compliment you for all kinds of things: your taste in movies or music, how smart you are, etc. Vulnerable or lonely teens will be drawn to the predator because of the praise.

Teens most at risk of being targeted by a sexual predator are teens with poor relationships with parents/guardians.

Sexual predators will criticize a teen's friends and family in an effort to isolate the teen from their normal protectors and support.

Teens who meet sexual predators in the real world usually know they're meeting an adult who is interested in sex.

Sexual predators present themselves as a nice person at first. They usually won't say or do anything to upset or offend the teen.

The predator spends lots of time and is very patient at getting the teen to believe he (or she) is a good friend and would never hurt them.

Sexual predators often send the teen small gifts such as stuffed animals or CDs.

Sexual predators often make promises to the teen to give them money or gifts.

Sexual predators often promise they can get the teen an acting or modeling job.

Sexual predators try to break down the teen's normal barriers to eventually get the teen to talk about personal issues and sex.

Sexual predators sometimes kill their victim.

*\* This list is based on information widely referenced in Internet safety literature, including the books listed in the bibliography (Fact Sheet 9).*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggested websites:

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)

[www.netsmartz.org](http://www.netsmartz.org)

[www.ISafe.org](http://www.ISafe.org)

[www.onguardonline.gov](http://www.onguardonline.gov)

[www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com)

[www.kidsmart.org](http://www.kidsmart.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

HUMAN RELATIONS MEDIA

OTHER PRODUCTS

## OTHER PROGRAMS FOR GRADES 5-9 FROM HUMAN RELATIONS MEDIA

<i>Caution: Teenager Under Construction</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Becoming an Organized Student</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Developing Self-Confidence</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Curriculum in a Box: Succeeding in Middle School</i>	10-part video/print/DVD curriculum
<i>Standing Tall: Learning Assertiveness Skills</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Five Life Strategies for Successful Teens</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Drama Queens and Tough Guys: Helping Teens Handle Emotions</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Making Good Choices: Keys to Good Decisions</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Coping with an Emotional Crisis</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>How Rude: 10 Rules of Common Courtesy</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>The Power Trip: Bullying in School</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Connect the Dots: How School Skills Become Work Skills</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>In Search of Character (10-part series)</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>The Real Character/Real People Series (7-part series)</i>	video/print or DVD/print
<i>Surviving Peer Pressure: You Can Do It</i>	video/print or DVD/print

**Visit our website for detailed descriptions of the above programs.**

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