

# What do we do when our eight-year-old knows more than we do about cyberspace?

A lot of parents are asking this question! So this is a paraphrased version of what I found on [www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org)

- Make sure your children do not spend all of their time on the computer. People, not computers, should be their best friends.
- Keep the computer in a family room, kitchen or living room, not your child's bedroom so you can watch and see where they go when they are online.
- Teach them to never meet an online friend offline unless you are with them.
- Encourage discussions between you and your children about what they enjoy online.
- Make sure your children feel comfortable coming to you with questions and don't overreact if things go wrong.
- Teach them what information they can share with others and what they can't, like phone numbers, address, their full name, and school information.
- "Google" your children often and set alerts for your children's contact information. The alerts will e-mail you when any of the searched terms are spotted online. It's an early warning system for cyberbullying posts, and can help you spot ways in which your child may be exposed to strangers online. To learn how to "Google" them, visit [InternetSuperHeroes.org](http://InternetSuperHeroes.org)
- Warn them that people may not be what they seem to be and that people they chat with are not their friends, they are just people to chat with.
- Discuss these rules, get your children to agree to them, and post them near the computer. Print off the Internet Agreement at: <http://wiredkids.org/parents/parentingonline/agreement.html>
- Tell your children to not be a victim of cyberbullying by doing the following:
  - **Stop, Block and Tell!!** Don't respond to any cyberbullying message, block the person sending it to you and tell an adult.
  - **ThinkB4Uclick** Check what you are sending before you send it to make sure you are not being mean.
  - **R-E-S-P-E-C-T** Respect the feelings of others when emailing others on the computer.
  - **Keep Personal Information Private**
  - **Take 5!** Walk away from the computer for 5 minutes when something upsets you, so you don't do something that you will later regret.

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