



## Future Technology *continued from page 1*

Technology has become a key player in education. There are numerous multimedia and educational software programs that teach students facts and concepts in exciting, engaging ways. Educational games are top sellers for classroom and home use. E-learning is a frequently used alternative, or supplement, to classroom instruction.

Properly used technology can promote positive social interaction, teaching students to work together while researching topics, creating presentations, and communicating in a global society. Therefore the Internet is a great place to seek information on social or political issues, making our children more socially and politically aware. When used in moderation, and in conjunction with real-life socialization, the Internet often helps shy children, or those with low self-esteem, gain social confidence.

The world we live in and the way we conduct business and lead our lives is changing. Technological tools help students prepare for the future. Applications for college, jobs, and scholarships are now available online. Test prep Web sites and sites offering advice on preparing for college or the workforce abound. Students who are not taught business applications and skills to navigate responsibly in a technological world will be at a great disadvantage when thrust into the digital world as young adults.

You CAN help your child succeed in a technological world! The most important thing you can do to prepare your child for success is to be involved.


- Be positive about technology, and learn as much as you can about using computers, software, and the Internet.
- Communicate with teachers regularly concerning your children's progress and how they are using technology in the classroom.
- Provide your child with materials and software to enhance his or her education.
- Become part of your child's online world, and help him or her learn how to use the Internet to find information.
- Set time limits for computer use, and encourage physical activity.
- Encourage your child to continue social interactions in his or her physical world. Online communication is OK, but it is no substitute for real-life friends and social skills.
- Teach your child about the dangers online and appropriate and safe online behavior and communication.

Log on to i-SAFE's Web site at [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org) to become part of an i-PARENT Board, and educate your family and others about Internet safety. Encourage your children to learn more about Internet safety through the i-SAFE i-MENTOR Training Network at <http://xblock.isafe.org/imtn.php> 

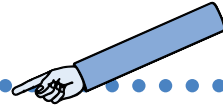
## NAC Corner

As the new school year begins, there are many Internet safety-related issues for you to consider addressing. For example: Has your school established rules for students who go online on school grounds? In a survey of 15,865 middle- and high-school students conducted during the past year, approximately 73% indicated that they had signed a computer-usage agreement at school. Such agreements, which are also known as acceptable-use policies (AUPs), specify the terms and conditions of Internet use. Online access privileges, rules of online behavior, and penalties for wrongful actions are typically described. Computer usage agreements, unlike blocking and filtering software, help to teach children responsible online behavior and educate parents about their children's Internet use. They also help to educate students about the potential risks of

computer-based communication, protect the school networking equipment and software from damage, and reduce the risk of lawsuits against teachers, schools, and providers.

Students also frequently need guidance in understanding and respecting intellectual-property rights. During the 2005-06 school year, an i-SAFE survey of more than 13,000 middle-school students found that 38% had "cut and pasted" information from the Internet directly into their schoolwork, and yet many did not give credit to the author of the copied text or to the owner of the site where the material had been found. Of course, there are considerably more Internet safety-related issues to be addressed as another school year dawns, but whichever the issue, i-SAFE training is always available to assist your school. 

## Internet Safety Tip



### Helping Kids Tell Fact From Opinion on the Internet


Today's kids have the same ideas about the Internet that their parents may have had about TV: "If I saw it on the TV, it must be true." Traditionally broadcast or printed resources have had editors, proofreaders, and fact checkers to eliminate mistakes, lies, and inaccurate information. But the Internet has no gatekeepers when it comes to checking the validity of information posted online. Users, especially children, need to develop critical-thinking skills to judge the accuracy of online information. Here are a few tips for helping kids recognize bias, propaganda, and stereotyping on the Web.

1) Ask your kids about the information they find online. For example: What is the purpose of the site? To entertain? To sell? Does a company or a person sponsor the site? Is the Internet the best place to find the information for which they are searching?

2) Encourage kids to use a variety of information resources, not just the Internet. Visit a library to research books, magazines, and newspapers.


3) Teach kids techniques to search the Internet more effectively. Encourage them to use a variety of search engines rather than just settling for one site. This will greatly improve their ability to obtain quality information.

4) Discuss hatred and racism with your kids. Software filters can help block some of this type of material, but your kids should learn about racism so they can recognize hateful content when they encounter it.

5) Teach kids how the Internet works and that Web sites can be established with no questions asked. Train them to use a wide variety of information resources and to check, question, and verify everything they see online. 

## Tech Tip—Online Video Gaming

**Q:** *My son has recently gotten into online computer gaming—not the gambling kind but role-playing games that he says thousands of other kids play, as well. I know that he text chats with other players, and he even has a headphone mic that he uses on some games to communicate with teammates. I don't think he is doing anything wrong (the computer is in the family room, and we've talked with him about online dangers). Does online gaming have any specific risk of which we should be aware?*

**A:** Online video games aren't just for kids anymore. It is a multi-billion dollar business. No longer are you limited to just playing with your friends in the same room; you can play with others from around the world. While most online gamers are between 16 and 25, it is more and more common to see online games in the pre-teen ages. While most are online just to have fun and play games with people who have similar interests, that fun could be an open invitation for a predator to chat with your child, a warning that most online gaming companies try to downplay. While online games do not pose as many dangers as blogs or chat rooms, they do offer an avenue to interact and talk with strangers. You really don't know who is on the other end of your child's conversation. Caution your son about giving out personal information while playing online, and don't allow him to meet with his online friends without your knowledge. Following these simple steps will help to avoid online pitfalls. 



## Did You Know—Controversial Advertising Gimmick Targets Young Kids

To reach kids and teens to promote Disneyland's 50th anniversary, Walt Disney Co. will use one of the hottest—and most controversial—gimmicks in the media business: “advergaming”

Advergaming is when companies put advertising messages in Web-based or video games. Sometimes the entire game amounts to a virtual commercial for a TV show or product. Other times advertisers sponsor games or buy ad space integrated into them.

The online arcades put up by advertisers including Disney, Viacom's Nickelodeon, and even the U.S. Army rival titles from the \$10 billion video game industry in entertainment value and high-tech expertise.

As part of an 18-month global campaign that kicks off May 5, 2007, Disney will roll out an interactive, multiplayer game called “Virtual Magic Kingdom.” It aims to provide a virtual visit to Disney's five global resorts and 11 theme parks to anyone with an Internet connection. The target: “tweens” ages 8 to 12 and young teens. Visitors will be able to play free online games based on real attractions, such as the Haunted Mansion and Jungle Cruise. They'll also be able to chat, create their own avatars, or graphic icons representing real-life Web surfers in Cyberspace, and earn virtual points that can be redeemed for T-shirts and other goodies at the actual parks.

The goal is to influence kids to urge their parents to visit a Disney park during the anniversary promotion, which

also includes the opening of Hong Kong Disneyland on Sept. 12, 2007.

“We hope it becomes a real hangout for preteens and teens,” said Jay Rasulo, president of Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.

Je Logsdon, managing director at investment bank Harris Nesbitt, said Disney's strategy “is clearly a clever way to engage with a key part of their target market. Kids 10 years old and younger have really grown up with the Internet.”

Forrest Research predicts that advergaming will grow into a \$1 billion business this year. As marketers try to target kids and elusive Gen Y consumers, Madison Avenue is waking up to the fact that web-wise younger consumers like video games—and disdain pop-ups, banner ads, and other less subtle forms of online advertising. Rather than getting a kid's attention for just 30 seconds with a TV commercial, advergaming can capture them for minutes or hours.

“If a kid likes a game, they'll play it 15 times,” said Tim Spengler, executive vice president of Initiative, a media services company. “Companies are asking ‘What's my game strategy?’”

But companies wanting to create successful advergaming have to be careful about the quality of the game experience, said Michael Goodman, senior analyst at the Yankee Group. “The key is to remember that it's a game first and an ad second. If it's a good game, consumers will recognize they're being sold. But they won't care.”

## Do Your Part With Art

Get your kids involved with iSAFE by encouraging them to join our National Bumper Sticker Design Contest! Unleash their creativity on a bumper sticker uniquely designed with a snappy Internet safety message, and help us spread the message of safe and responsible Internet use. For more information and to register, send your kids to <http://xblock.isafe.org/contests.php>.



## Did You Know—Getting Even With “Griefers”

A lot of playgrounds have bullies—even the virtual ones. If you or your children play online games, you’ve probably met them. Also known as “griefers” or “cheesers,” these bullies get their jollies from messing up online multiplayer game sites like Halo 2, Everquest, or The Sims Online. Griefers scam, cheat, abuse, and often victimize the weakest and newest players in the online game community. Whether it’s stealing health potions or blocking passage to important areas, griefers spoil the fun and frustrate the heck out of everybody. So how do you deal with them? Here are some useful tips that every gamer—no matter what age group—should know about handling cyber bullies.

1) **Pay them no mind.** Griefers want to get a rise out of you. That’s why they do what they do. So, more often than not, the easiest way to get rid of them is simply by ignoring them. Many will eventually get bored and go away.

2) **Give it a rest.** By nature, griefers are a fickle bunch. Sometimes the best way to rid yourself of their unwanted attention is by simply quitting the game or switching to another one. If a cyber bully’s favorite victim seems to have moved on, frequently they do, too.


3) **Survey the scene.** Many online games attract a regular crowd. Hang out and participate in a few rounds with your child. That will help you become acquainted with the game and its players. Once you’ve got that down, it’s relatively easy to pick out the players to avoid.

4) **Go easy.** Never act out of anger or use griefers’ own strategies against them. Why stoop to their level? That could prompt an even bigger blow-up and, worse yet, label you as a griefer.

6) **Don’t get personal.** If given access to you or your child’s name, phone number, or e-mail address, harassment may spill over into the real world. Guard yourself by using handles (online nicknames) and passwords unique to each game, and always keep personal information concealed.

7) **Consider your options.** Many games allow you to restrict communication only to those on your exclusive, preprogrammed friends list. Others offer opportunities for turning off features (friendly fire options, permanent knockouts, etc.) that can be exploited by griefers.

8) **No trash talking.** Many games encourage making fun of opponents. Take a pass on those games. If you or your child are out there calling people names or making jokes at others’ expense, chances are that sooner or later, someone will be offended.

9) **Finally, you and your child have full control over which games you play.** Select those that are well supervised and have strict rules or enforceable codes of conduct. Many game publishers are starting to employ full-time staffers to deal with griefers for fear of permanently losing customers. If someone starts causing problems, there is someone to turn to. 



Does your child need help with homework but does not want to surf all over the Web to find a good educational link?

Check out BJ Pinchbeck’s Homework Helper Web site: <http://school.discovery.com/homeworkhelp/bjpinchbeck/>

## In Your Neighborhood

Everyday there are many iSAFE events going on across the country. We’ve made it easy for you to get involved and help spread the message of Internet safety to your peers and your community. Simply check our “Calendar of Events” at [http://www.isafe.org/channels/sub.php?ch=ai&sub\\_id=3](http://www.isafe.org/channels/sub.php?ch=ai&sub_id=3) to find an event near you.



## New i-SAFE Spokesperson

Miss Virginia Adrianna Sgarlata has taken up the cause of youth safety and joined with i-SAFE as its newest national spokesperson. The platform for her reign focuses on bullying, cyber bullying, and Internet safety.

"We are excited to have Adrianna join us in helping to prevent children from falling victim to Internet bullying and other online threats," said i-SAFE president and CEO Teri Schroeder. "Her dedication to the cause has already made a big difference in her community. Through our program, we look forward to having her make an even greater impact among children, parents, and the community nationwide."

Adrianna will spend the next year speaking at schools and community events, and will be an advocate for bringing Internet safety education to the classroom. She will also appear in i-SAFE Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to further the mission she shares with i-SAFE of raising awareness among children, parents, educators, and communities about online dangers like cyber bullying.

Welcome Miss Virginia!



## Team Up With i-SAFE

Currently, i-SAFE has reached more than two million students with Internet safety information. By providing free materials, programs, and educational videos, students are learning how to make positive choices when challenged with today's technology. Not only are students learning to protect themselves against predators, they are also learning how to make decisions regarding intellectual property, identity theft, and more.

i-SAFE strives to provide your family with the most current information regarding the issues youth face today on the Internet. In order to bring our programs and materials to your community and your home, we rely upon donations.

We would be grateful if you, or perhaps someone you know, could assist i-SAFE in educating as many children as possible. Since i-SAFE is a 501(c)(3) corporation, your donations are fully tax deductible.

To donate, e-mail [donations@isafe.org](mailto:donations@isafe.org) or go to [www.isafe.org/donations](http://www.isafe.org/donations).

The series of i-SAFE newsletters also includes the *i-EDUCATOR Times* and *Kewl Timez* (for students). We encourage you to read the others and ask you to use the main article to initiate discussion and action with your students and your community.

## About i-SAFE

Founded in 1998 and active in all 50 states, i-SAFE Inc. is the leader in Internet safety education. i-SAFE is a nonprofit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower students, parents, seniors, and community members to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experiences. i-SAFE provides knowledge that will enable them to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior, and to respond appropriately. This is accomplished through dynamic K through 12 curriculum and community-outreach programs to students, parents, law enforcement, and community leaders. i-SAFE is the only Internet safety foundation to combine these elements. [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org)

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## We Value Your Input

Do you have a question or a comment about an article? Perhaps you have a story you wish to share with other readers. Do you know somebody whose story will inspire others to get involved? Whatever the case, we would like to know. Please e-mail us at [editor@isafe.org](mailto:editor@isafe.org) with questions, comments, or contributions. If snail mail is your preference, send written correspondence to:

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