

Using Internet Responsibly

“That the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:17

Dear Students,

Many of you are spending a great chunk of time on the Internet. In some ways, Internet has become a great boon owing to the fact, that all of us are connected online and are able to socially sustain ourselves because of this technology. **This technology has also helped the economy to continue to move ahead, in a crisis like COVID 19.**

Internet being a global computer network provides us a variety of information and communication facilities. It connects us to vast information. Therefore, we need to follow some precautions just as in life we always follow some precautions, like for instance:

If you see a stranger on the street, you immediately think of “**Stranger Danger**”. **The simple rules we follow in Stranger Danger is:**

1-To Say ‘No’

2-Get away

3-Tell someone

At home, we follow the rule of Never open the door to a stranger.

Similar kind of rules applies to the usage of Internet. We need to tell a parent or adult if someone you don’t know i.e. a stranger, tries to talk to you online.

When we go on the Internet, it is like a place where *everyone’s face is hidden.*

Unless you know your friend (online name), you don’t know if you’re talking to your friend or someone you don’t know. Any stranger can pretend to be a friend and you have no way of knowing who they are because they are behind the mask of the computer. It is therefore crucial to take a few precautions for the safe use of Internet. Few tips are listed below that will enable you to stay safe:

1- You must make sure that you visit *Appropriate Websites*

Take help of parents, guardians or teachers to find out the appropriate websites for you to visit. While browsing if you feel funny or uncomfortable with what you see – tell an adult immediately.

2-Make sure of *Appropriate Email and Messages*

Do not open email from strangers and make sure that you do not open email with attachments from people you do not know. Do not give your email address (unless approved)

It is important for us to understand “Which Appropriate Information to Give Out”

Appropriate information ***can be certain likes and dislikes*** .For example, “*I like blue colour or Pizza*” **but at no cost should we give out personal information details like:**

| | | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Name | Where you live – city or address | Telephone Number | Birthdate | Height | Weight |
| Photo | Parent’s name | School etc.. | | | |

3-Ensure that you use Internet for a limited time. Follow a schedule.

4-Avoid playing Video games, Cards or any other games for a long time.

It is better to take a break and read a good storybook of your choice or play instruments or listen to music.

Many of you must be on the social media. The social media of Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram needs to be used when we have the wisdom to understand things better about life and people. If you are on the social media, take note of a few important things:

- Think before you post anything.
- Respect other people online and avoid gossips.
- Don't feed cyberbullies. Block the sender, ignore the mean messages and file a report to the website or police.
- Use the Privacy Settings.
- Monitor what others post about you.
- Keep adults in the loop. Tell them if you have added a new friend, or visited a new website or saw something suspicious.
- Use your voice for something good-use social media to do something fruitful for you or for a good cause.

One needs to always remember that anything in excess plays havoc in one's life. Few of the disadvantages that excessive, unproductive use of Internet can have are listed below:-

- According to researchers, our concentration levels are decreasing with the overwhelming usage of Internet as we are concentrating on a lot of things at the same time.
- Our memory power is reducing. With the growing usage of Internet, we are not using our minds as much as we did when there was no Internet. We used to store a lot of information in our minds and we used to do simple math without using our phones etc.
- The present generation has way too many distractions because of Internet.
- Lack of security because hackers can easily theft data or can manipulate it.
- Face to face communication has reduced.
- Everyone can express their own views. But lots of misleading information too is available on the Internet. Children and youth can easily be misled by that.
- Through Internet, viruses and malware spread easily and total data can get corrupted.
- Many waste their precious time on Internet.
- Gossips spread easily.
- Internet addiction which has become the world's biggest problem, can easily happen to you if you are wasting most of your time in unfruitful activities.

Stay safe and use the Internet responsibly. Fruitful and productive use of Internet can be a great blessing for you and benefit you to a large extent.

So we hope that you will make a good use of the Internet and prove to be a responsible person.

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