INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR STUDENTS

The Internet is an integral part of our curriculum, replete with resources and rich learning opportunities, providing our students with access to knowledge and connections to a global community. However, there are dangers associated with an environment that is uncontrolled, making available misinformation, inappropriate materials, and situations where personal safety can be compromised. Here in Uniondale we are committed to instituting safeguards and teachable moments to address concerns that stem from the Wild West nature of the Internet. We teach responsible Internet use, strategies to conduct research and discern true information from false, and alert students to their own online responsibilities. To that end, we offer the following tips and practice the outlined precautions for Internet safety:

Follow the guidelines presented in Uniondale's Acceptable Use Policy, available on each school's website by clicking on "user policy" at the bottom of the page.

Computer labs, libraries and classrooms are supervised by district personnel.

We teach responsible and effective use of the Internet by emphasizing research practices where students understand the importance of evaluating the validity of online content.

We filter access to the Internet through a service that monitors the appropriateness of websites.

FOLLOW THE RULES—IT'S THE LAW!
- *Don't* threaten people over the Internet or phone.
- *Don't* send graphic photos to people under the age of 18.
- *Don't* harass or bully anyone.
- *Don't* use other people's credit cards.
- *Don't* download music or images without permission.
- *Don't* use someone else's identity without permission, including logging onto someone else's account.

SECURITY
- Do not give out your name, address, phone #, photo, birthday or social security number.
- Protect your password from others, even your friends.
- Beware of free offers and surveys.
- Use extreme caution when writing your profile.

- Kids and teens should not make online purchases.
- Use caution when using filesharing programs.
- Enable firewalls.
- Use Virus Checkers.
- Install Security updates from your Internet Service Provider (ISP).
- Use hard-to-guess passwords.
- Don't choose a screen name that includes part of your real name or may be considered provocative.
- Don't open an e-mail attachment from someone you don't know.
- If you become aware of dangerous behavior or online threats, print the screen and tell an adult without delay!

INSTANT MESSAGING and E-MAIL
- *Be aware,* Instant Messaging is never 100% secure.
- Instant Messaging provides an easy way for a stranger to contact you or find out vital information about you.
- Set IM privacy settings on your IM account.
- Allow only people you know on your "buddy list."
- If you receive an IM from someone not on your "buddy list" or from a stranger, block them from contacting you.
- Be sure not to provide any personal information about you or your family in your "buddy info" or profile.
- Don't share a picture of yourself with someone you encounter online.
- Never write to someone who makes you feel uncomfortable or frightened.
- Never say you are alone.

STRANGERS
- Online "friends" are still strangers.
- Don't arrange meetings with someone you meet online.
- People on the Internet may have many identities.
- Let a responsible adult know if you feel threatened or harassed by a stranger or by someone you know.

POSTING PRECAUTIONS
- Colleges, universities and prospective employers do check profiles and postings on social networking sites. Don't post anything that you wouldn't want someone to see.
- Don't answer chat room questions, even with lies.
- Never provide information about yourself that would allow someone to find you offline.

THE INTERNET IN YOUR LIFE
- There's a time and place for Internet activity—and it shouldn't be every waking minute! Maintain balance in your life and be sure to have a real world social life and engaging activities.
- There are many good people in the world—but beware of those who are not. Use good sense in all your online activities.
- Don't violate copyright laws. Be respectful of creators of music, movies, games, software and other media by making legitimate purchases (with the assistance of a parent!).
- Be kind and thoughtful. Conduct yourself online in a way that would make your parents proud.

Contact a responsible adult *immediately* regarding
any unusual e-mail, IM or phone contact!

Sources:
Boise City Independent School District. "Safety and Ethics in Cyberspace." Web.   9 Aug. 2009.
    http://www.boiseschools.org/cybersafe/students.html.

FBI Kids. "Internet Safety." *Internet Safety*. Web. 9 Aug. 2009. http://www.fbi.gov/kids/k5th/safety2.htm.

ISafe. "Internet Safety Tips for Students and Parents." Web. 9 Aug. 2009.
    http://kids.yahoo.com/parents/online-safety.

Town of Hull, Commonwealth of Massachusetts. "Internet Safety Tips for Students," Web. 9 Aug. 2009.
    http://www.town.hull.ma.us/Public_Documents/HullMA_HighSchClass/Scribner/Internet%20Safety%20
    Tips%20for%20Students.

Additional Resources:
http://workbench.wikispaces.com/Internet_Safety

Questions? Contact Janice Friedman, Director of Library Media Services and Instructional Integration,
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