

Junior High Guidance Counselor Gina Burrows recently attended a workshop at BOCES on Cyber bullying. The following was a handout on Internet use and your Children provided by the Camillus Police Department.

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

Set time aside to explore the internet with your child. Let your child take the lead if they are experienced. Keep your communication open with your children.

Explain that although a person is alone in a room using a computer, once they log on they are no longer alone. People skilled at using the computer can find out who you are and where you are. They can even tap into your information in your computer.

Teach your child about exploitation, hate literature, inappropriate language or any other issues that concern you so they know how to respond when they see the material. If your child receives threatening e-mails, IM's, or offensive material save it and contact that user's internet service provider and the local police.

Know your child's friends and their parents. If your child's friend has internet access at home, talk to the parents about rules they have established. Find out if the children are monitored while they are on-line. Know your child's passwords to their e-mail accounts, their screen name and passwords to instant message.

TELL YOUR CHILDREN

- Never to respond to messages that have bad words or threats or are just weird; and to let you know immediately if this happens.
- Never to give out their names, address, telephone, email address, IM screen name, password, school name or any other information that provides clues to who they are.
- Never send a picture of themselves or post a picture(s) on any website or to anyone they do not know.
- Never agree to meet anyone face to face with anyone they have met online.
- Never enter a chat room or blog area without checking it out for safety.
- Never enter an area that requires you to pay first without asking you first.

CONTROL ACCESS

- Choose an internet service that offers parental control features.
- **Purchase blocking software (Spectorprobe.com) and design your own safety system.**
- Monitor what your children are doing on-line and monitor the time they spend on-line.
- If a child becomes uneasy or defensive when you walk into the room or when you linger, this could be a sign that he or she is up to something unusual or even forbidden.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

- MySpace.com: social networking
- Xanga.com: blogging, or personal diaries
- Classface.com: social networking
- Teenchat.com: live chat room
- Photobucket.com: photos with diaries

INSTRUCTIONS ON: HOW TO REMOVE A MYSPACE PROFILE

- Go to the home page of the person's profile
- Click onto account settings
- Click on change account settings
- Click on cancel account
- Click on cancel my account button
- You will then receive an email notice about your cancellation. Then follow the instructions in the email to cancel. A pop up will then verify your cancellation.