

## **Guidelines for Telecommunications Use at Home**

Exploring the rich resources available through the telecommunications of the Internet can be a wonderful educational experience for your child. However, there are a few risks for children who use online services. Teenagers are particularly at risk because they often use the computer unsupervised and because they are more likely than younger children to participate in online chats and discussions. The Internet is not governed by any entity, therefore there are no limits or checks on the kind of information that is accessible to Internet users.

The best way to assure that your children are having positive online experiences is to stay in touch with what they are doing.

Open communication with your children and getting online yourself will help you to understand the benefits of these systems and alert you to potential problem areas.

Consider the following guidelines:

- The computer used for online services should be in a public place. If the computer is in the child's bedroom, the door should be open when he/she is on line.
- Develop a set of rules and consequences. Write them in terms of what you want to have happen, rather than the negative you don't want to occur.
- Respect privacy. Do not open another user's mail.
- Discuss screen names. May your child use his/her real name or something else?
- Set reasonable time limits for use. Most services charge by the time used. Set a monthly budget for use.
- Use the parental control feature if available.
- Determine if your child may purchase online services or goods.
- If your child receives a message that is suggestive, obscene, threatening or makes him/her feel uncomfortable, forward a copy of the message to the service provider and ask for assistance.

The following rules are suggested by the National Center for Missing and Exploited children.

### **“My Rules for Online Safety”**

1. I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents’ work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parent’s permission.
2. I will tell my parent right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
3. I will never agree to get together with someone I “meet” online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will make sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
4. I will never send my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
5. I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do I will tell my parents right away so that they can contact the online service.
6. I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online, and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.

**Responsible Use Policy for Internet**  
**St. Thomas the Apostle School Students Grades Kindergarten through Five**

A copy of this policy must be signed by the student's parent/guardian and returned to the classroom teacher before they are permitted access to the Internet at St. Thomas the Apostle School, West Hartford, CT

**When I use the Computer lab and the Internet on any school computer...**

1. I will use the Internet only when a teacher gives me permission.
2. I will use the Internet only for learning or research approved by a teacher; I will only use the Internet sites that are approved by my teacher.
3. I will respect the privacy of other computer users and will not try to open anyone else's files, or access settings in the control panel (except to change the desktop).
4. I will always use appropriate language when writing or communicating in the technology lab and Internet.
5. I will not give my name, address, school or telephone number to anyone on the Internet (unless first given permission by my teacher).
6. If I am uncomfortable about an Internet site, or anything I see or read on the Internet, I will immediately tell my teacher.
7. I will not use the Internet in a way that could be disruptive to others; I will not do anything that will cause damage or harm.
8. I will not "pass off" any material that I have found on the Internet as my own (for instance, when doing research or writing a paper).
9. I understand that any conduct that is in conflict with these responsibilities is unethical and will result in termination of computer access, Internet use and possible disciplinary action.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

As a parent/guardian of this student, I have read the responsibilities for Internet Network Access.

1. I understand that Internet access is designed for educational purposes and that St. Thomas the Apostle School has taken all the available precautions to eliminate access to controversial material.
2. I understand that any conduct, by the above named student, that is in conflict with these responsibilities is unethical and such behavior will result in the termination of access and possible disciplinary action as indicated by the school code of conduct in the St. Thomas the Apostle School handbook.
3. I have reviewed these responsibilities with my child and I hereby give permission to St. Thomas the Apostle School to provide, when appropriate, computer Internet access.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_