

Internet Safety



Session Title: **Internet Safety - Teacher Lesson Plan
For Middle and High School Students
(Lesson Format I & II)**

Time: 45-60 minutes

Materials/Equipment Needed: TV / DVD Player / DVD*

Handouts: All documents/handouts are available on the NCAE website, ready to be downloaded and printed. Be sure to include these:

- Applications Glossary
- Important Information for Students about Predators
- What Would You Do In This Situation?
- How Would You Solve This Problem?
- Chat Rooms Can Be Fun!
- Internet Safety Contract
- Rules Are Not Just for Kids!
- It's MySpace
- What Did I Learn?

Read → Your job is to reinforce the rules of internet safety. Most children learn these rules in school, but we can never assume that they know them or that they use them. Every day parents are sending their children into the violent world of the internet unprepared. Our focus on all of the good that comes from the internet has to be sidetracked. The 6:00 news broadcasts are full of stories about predators meeting teens online and then arranging to meet them in person—and not to chat!

As children approach the age to get their driver's license, we start to teach them how to drive safely. They are required by law to take driver's education as a part of their school curriculum. We sit at home and worry when they make that first trip out alone at night. We set rules about where they can go and what time they have to be home. Too many parents forget or don't realize that there is a place we allow our children to go where they are in constant danger. We neglect setting guidelines and teaching them rules that may one day save their lives. That place is the internet.

The key to protecting children from online predators is education. Many kids will never tell their parents about talking to strangers online because they are afraid they will be blamed for doing something wrong. It takes time and patience to sit with children to be sure they know the rules about internet safety, and to be sure they are only talking to friends they know in person when they are in chat rooms or in any other form of instant messaging. Predators are experts at deceiving their prey. They have tremendous patience and will spend hours or perhaps even months "grooming" a child to gain their confidence. Children may never think of this person as a stranger. After all, they have been talking online for months. At this point, it would not be hard to arrange a face-to-face meeting.

The following plan is offered as **only a suggested format** to lead a lesson about safety on the internet. Pick and choose or add your own ideas - **adapt it to meet the needs of your audience**. It is very important that you stress to students that internet safety rules are for everyone using the internet, and not just for kids! They may be more willing to accept these rules if they understand that the same rules apply to adults. Give them a chance to **tell you** the rules of staying safe on the internet and why that particular rule is important. Numerous other documents/handouts in addition to those included in this workshop are available on the website.

SAMPLE FORMAT
LESSON I
(For **Middle** and **High School** Students)

1. Introduce yourself to the group using a false name. (For example, my name is Sassy.) If they know you, this will certainly get their attention. At the end of the session, tell them your real name emphasizing that you were not honest with them in giving them your name. This will reinforce the fact that on the internet everyone is not always honest and there is no way to know with whom you are communicating on the internet.
2. Begin by telling them you are here today to talk about internet safety. Ask how many have their own computer or use their family computer at home.
3. Ask where the computer is located at home. Tell them it's good to have the computer in a common area of the home - like the kitchen. Ask how many go into chat rooms, blog areas, MySpace or other websites like that.
4. Ask them to listen very carefully to the DVD. Most of these things you probably already know, but you may learn a lot of new things, too. Try to remember these rules about internet safety so you can teach your younger brothers and sisters how to stay safe while using the internet.
5. After playing the DVD, ask them to tell you some of the rules of internet safety. After they list each rule, ask them why this rule is necessary. Ask if they learned anything new. Remind them that going into a chat room and talking online with someone they don't know is like going to the park alone at night. It is very dangerous. **Ask:** "Can you tell me why?" [Pass out "**Rules Are Not Just for Kids!**" handout.]
6. **Say:** Almost 100% of the time, when an adult seeks out a teen or child to chat with online, they have one purpose in mind—to meet that boy or girl to hurt them or to engage in sex.
7. **Ask:** "Did you know that you need to tell your parents or guardian about all adults that you talk with online or even email?" This means teachers, friends, and even family members. We want to trust everyone we know, but you need help from your parents to know whom you can trust.
8. [Pass out the "**It's MySpace**" handout.] **Ask:** "Who can tell me what MySpace is? MySpace is a website for young people ages 14 and up that allows them to create and maintain their own website. Does anyone here have their own website? What kinds of things do you have on your website? Do you have your picture on your website? Do your parents know what is on your website? Did you know that putting something on your website makes it available for everyone everywhere to see? It is not private and it is there forever. Did you know that someone could make changes to your picture

without your knowing? This could get you into a lot of trouble.

9. **Ask:** Do any of you ever go to Krispy Kreme or Dunkin Doughnuts or Baskin Robbins? Why do you go there? Because it is the best place to get doughnuts or ice cream. Well, predators go to chat rooms [Pass out ***“Chatrooms Can Be Fun”*** hand out] and places like MySpace to look for girls and boys they can meet—that is the best place to find young people!
10. Tell them you want them to help you identify a celebrity. Make a game out of it. For example: give them clues about a movie actor or musician or sports team member they would all know. They will soon be able to guess who that person is. Tell them that identifying that person is the same way a predator identifies them—by fitting all the pieces of the puzzle together.
11. **Say:** When you are in a chat room, you are imagining the other person to be a cute guy or girl when you may actually be talking to some 40-year old man patiently working on finding out who you are and where you are! All he needs are simple little facts like your school’s colors or that your school’s football team has a game on Friday afternoon (Use an event that would be familiar to them. For example, your middle school’s football team is going to stomp a neighboring team next week.)
12. Explain that from that little bit of information and other things you have told him without even realizing it, you were giving out clues he can use to find you. He is working on a puzzle, putting together the pieces that will lead him to you. You may have told him that Language Arts is your favorite subject and that Ms. English makes it a lot of fun. Or that Mr. Adams is a really hard Social Studies teacher. Those are pieces of the puzzle.
13. **Say:** Soon, he is your best friend and wants to meet you. Never agree to meet anyone you only know online. Some days you may feel very lonely, and feel like no one cares about you. You may feel like you need a friend. Predators will take advantage of these situations and become that friend. Many times when a predator is asked how he found a victim—his answer is that the victim found him.
14. **Very Important!** Ask how many have ever been approached by someone they believed to be a predator? Give any who raise their hands a chance to talk about it. **Whether they tell their story or not, follow through with this child before they leave the class.** Most kids never share their story and it can follow them into adulthood causing many psychological problems. Help them understand that reporting these incidents may save the life of another young person. [Pass out the ***“What Would You Do In This Situation?”*** handout.]
15. Remind them: If your parents have told you not to go into chat rooms or places like MySpace or if they have set other rules for you that you think are too strict, it is not because they are trying to make life hard for you. It is simply because they want to protect you.

16. **Ask:** Okay, so what do you think a predator looks like? Ask them to describe how they think he looks - a beard, dark glasses, a mean expression, etc. Tell them that is not necessarily the case - that in reality they look like an average person - a minister, a teacher, a policeman - that they blend in with everyone else. Asking you to keep your relationship with them a secret is a dead giveaway that they are not who they seem to be. [Pass out the **“Important Information for Students About Predators”** handout.]
17. **Say:** Now, before we leave, I want to tell you something. Do you remember my name? When we started I told you my name is _____. I was not honest with you. I am really _____. That’s how easy it is to believe a lie.
18. Remember, a predator may tell you he is around your age and you may feel very flattered that he is has taken an interest in you. But, he may really be a 40-year old man searching for his next victim. And, he may be making plans to lead you into a dangerous situation.
18. **Say:** Many kids think it is cool to pretend to be older than they are if they talk to a stranger on the internet. They forget that the other person may be pretending, too. On the internet, it is not a game. It is extremely dangerous. It can lead to your being scarred for life or worse. Learn the rules about internet safety. They are on the sheet you were given—put them where you can see them. [Pass out the **“Internet Safety Contract”** handout.]
19. [Pass out the **“Applications Glossary”** handout.]
20. Remind them: The internet can be a wonderful and fun place to be! Part of growing up is making good decisions and wise choices. Make internet safety one of your wise choices. [Pass out the **“What Did I Learn?”** handout and allow fifteen minutes for completion before collecting.]

SAMPLE FORMAT
LESSON II
(For Middle and High School Students)

Most young people think rules were invented to keep them from having fun. Let students teach each other. Help them develop a feeling of responsibility for the safety of their friends who use chat rooms. This could be one of the most effective weapons we have in fighting online predation.

Possible class activity:

- Divide the class into two groups
- Use this guide as an assignment for one of the groups. Group One is to teach Group Two using ideas from Lesson I or develop their own ideas using the DVD, *Safety on the Internet*
- While Group One prepares their script, have Group Two complete the **“How Would You Solve This Problem?”** worksheet.
- Before they begin, review Group One’s proposed material to be sure their facts ARE promoting online safety. After Group One finishes teaching their class, have Group Two write a detailed evaluation to the class using the “What Did I Learn?” handout.. While they are working on this, Group One should complete the **“How Would You Solve This Problem?”** handout.

Review with them again the importance of following **Safety on the Internet** rules. This website, http://www.cyberwise.ca/epic/site/cyby-cybj.nsf/en/h_us00095e.html, offers real life stories to illustrate the seriousness of talking with strangers online. Doing all of the above may take more than one session. Learning and following the rules about internet safety is the key to preventing kids from falling into the hands of online predators. Stress the fact that you are preparing them to teach **Safety on the Internet** to other teens, siblings, etc. This is crime prevention!

One very important thing to remember is that this may be a one-shot deal for many of these kids. You may be the only one who ever tries to teach them how dangerous communicating with strangers online can be. Don’t let this opportunity slip through your fingers without driving that point home to them. Include in your lecture information from the **“Important Information for Kids about Predators”** handout.