

CompuChild Chatter

School will soon be out for the summer. Some CompuChild classes will suspend for the summer and will begin again in the last week of August. Other students will continue as usual through the summer. And still others will enjoy special activities as they attend CompuChild computer camp at their centers before resuming normal class at the end of August. Stay tuned for more information at your school! And have a wonderful summer ☺

How do we introduce children to the Internet?

CompuChild USA

We know that many children (even young ones) discover the Internet at home, but this is one topic we don't cover in CompuChild class. We don't have an Internet connection when we're in class, so it's impossible to show the students how it works and how to be safe.

There are many sites online where parents can go to read about online safety. Here are some good ones:

<http://www.safekids.com/>
<http://www.safeteens.com/>
<http://www.wiredkids.org/>
<http://www.blogsafety.com/>
<http://www.netsmartz.org/>
<http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm>

Basically, these sites offer the same advice:

1. Keep the computer in a public place in your home.. It's easier for you to help, and to monitor.
2. Establish rules for using the Net: when, how long, and where they can surf.
3. Surf together. Young children should never be online alone, and as they mature, they can earn more freedom.
4. Encourage your child to share his or her online experiences with you.
5. Know how to use parental controls for your software, and what they can and cannot do.

6. Instruct your child not to provide personal information without discussing it with you first and obtaining permission. Read the site privacy policy.
7. Ensure that your instant messaging (IM) programs are set to allow buddies only to see them. Know who their buddies are. Instruct your child not to respond to email or IMs that make them uncomfortable.
8. When your child is old enough, help him or her choose a user ID. There is good advice on how to create a username on this page: <http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/parents/chooseid.html>
9. Instruct your child never to give out a password, and never meet an online friend without a parent.

These common-sense rules can go a long way to helping children have safe online adventures!



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Please call (841.5268 or 935.1802) or email me (ngardner@compuchild.com) with questions or concerns.

These are some questions to ask your CompuChild:

- Should we touch the shiny side of a CD?
- Can you show me a cursor?

What exciting places can we visit together on the Internet?

Most of us know that, for our children, there are some scary and inappropriate places on the Internet. Many children already know about www.disney.com or www.nickelodeon.com, but we don't always want them focusing their Internet experience on television content. There are some wonderful places to visit together where both parents and children can learn amazing things. Some sites offer both free and by-subscription-only content.

Here are some examples:

- Visit this site to play with some of your child's favorite characters from public television: <http://pbskids.org/>
- These sites have both free content, and content that's by subscription only: <http://www.brainpop.com/> - this is part free, part subscription only, and <http://www.alfy.com/about/What.asp> is a web portal designed for kids as young as 3. You can find out about the ALFY people on this page, and it has links to other activities.
- If you have a child who creates music, pictures, or stories, this is a good place to share. This site even has a strictly protected kids' messaging center for kids 13 and under that allows children to find pen-pals around the world. You can explore it here: <http://www.kids-space.org/>
- The Association of Library Service for Children maintains this site of links to great websites for kids of all ages: <http://www.ala.org/gwstemplate.cfm?section=greatwebsites&template=/cfapps/gws/default.cfm>
- There are kid-safe browsers designed specifically for young children so that they have a protected and safe internet experience. Some of them require a subscription or purchase, but not all. Two of them are <http://www.kidrocket.org/> (free), and kiddonet (at <http://www.kiddonet.com/>) offers junior (3-7) and older children (7-12) versions (part free).