

Problems with Internet Misuse & Abuse

The Internet is a communication tool used for business, education, entertainment. Think of the Internet as a mini-universe and many websites and apps are a mini-universe unto themselves (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, etc.). The result is an ever-present connectivity and influence. The Internet is not evil, but is used by evil men. Everything is available to your child, and your child is available to everyone. Without proper guidance and protection, young people are being exposed to the worst this world has to offer.

*“Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of **evil men**. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.” –Proverbs 4:14-16 (See also 1 John 2:15-17 and James 1:13-15)*

- Cheating
- Defamation of Others
- Reputation (permanent record)
- Bad Sources of Information
- Safety (manipulators, predators)
- Legal Issues (piracy, plagiarism, copyright violations)
- Gossip, Bullying, and General Negativity
- Hacking and Data Security
- Inappropriate Content (including pornography)
- Identity Theft
- Indulgence, Time Wasting, and Addiction
- Secrecy, Hidden Accounts, Apps

Parenting must be Informed & Engaged

BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Passionate Parenting
by Cary Schmidt

Too many children, even in “good” homes, are being left to themselves. Literally meaning – sent away, pushed away, or abandoned.

“The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.” –Proverbs 29:15 (See also 1 Samuel 2:22-25, 3:13)

We must be aware of the physical, mental, and emotional dangers and guard our children’s hearts and minds.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” –1 Peter 5:8 (See also Proverbs 4:23)

Like the strength of the herd against the lion’s attacks, a strong parent-child relationship is one of the best God-given protections any father or mother can provide for their child.

Even through the rigors and busyness of modern life, here are a few practical ways to win and protect your child's heart:

- Account for their whereabouts physically and digitally
- Give them a reasonable schedule and make adjustments when needed
- Challenge them to do their best
- Encourage them when they fail
- Teach them Truth
- Teach them again when they forget
- Train them in practical skills (searching, keywords, surfing, responding to popup, etc.)
- Discipline them properly & consistently
- Restrain them when they become out of order
- Read them wholesome material
- Laugh with them often and Play with them
- Love them unconditionally (Like them too)
- Lead by example

"My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways." –Proverbs 23:26

Protecting & Controlling

Internet Access

The Internet isn't going away, and more and more jobs depend on Internet-driven technologies. Somewhere between living "off-the-grid" and having packages delivered by drone is a place where we re-adjust to a new normal.

At the same time, who would drop their young teen off at a truck stop or co-ed college dorm on Friday night and say, "Don't forget there's school Monday morning." A wise parent realizes that unmonitored and unprotected Internet access is negligence and takes the necessary steps to preserve purity and godliness in their home.

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." –Romans 13:14

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." –2 Corinthians 2:11

Ways to Access the Internet

- Home Network
- Guest Network
- Your Neighbor's WiFi (signals can reach to several houses)
- Public WiFi – Library, Coffee Shops, Fast Food, Grocery & Retail shops all offer free WiFi
- Schools
- Mobile Hotspots – (from a phone or tablet)

Know and understand 'Parental Controls'

Most services providing TV and Internet have Parental Controls.

This tool allows you to filter content as 'age-appropriate'. Some will

Notes

BOOK RECOMMENDATION

Good Pictures,
Bad Pictures
by Kristen A. Jensen

allow you to set time limits. To be effective, they must be password protected. While giving a thin layer of protection, many of these tools fall short, so be aware of the work-a-rounds your child may “accidentally” exploit.

For most services, Parental Controls will need to be ‘turned on’ or ‘enabled’ and ‘set’ to the appropriate level.

Protecting your Home through your Internet Service Provider’s (ISP) website or through your Router/Firewall

- Home – Cox, Comcast/Xfinity, Verizon Fios, Times-Warner, etc.
- Mobile – Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, T-mobile, etc.
- Public WiFi / HotSpots – no control, see ‘Device Protection’
- Neighbor’s Guest WiFi* – no control, see Device Protection

There are many user-friendly and family-friendly routers that connect with an app to your phone. Login to your provider’s website or to your router. Parental Controls is usually under the ‘My Account’ or ‘My Services’ tab.

Protecting Devices through their operating system or through a Parental Control app

- Desktop/Laptop Computers
 - Tablets/iPods
 - Mobile Phones
 - Game Systems (Xbox, Play Station, Switch, etc.)
- Note – In my opinion, Apple mobile devices offer the most complete Parental Controls*

Parental Control / Monitoring Apps

- Software – (ex. Bark.us)
- Hardware – (ex. GryphonConnect.com)
- _____

Internet Filters

- CovenantEyes.com
- CleanInter.net
- _____

Make sure the control / monitoring services fits with your family’s needs base on devices used, age of children, etc.

Practical Advice

- Devices should only be used in public places – living room, family room, etc.
- Don’t let your kids know your passwords
- Don’t let your kids wear down Parental Controls through brute force attacks (aka nagging)
- Be aware that as technology changes protections change too.
- There is no digital replacement for a godly parent who is informed and engaged in their child’s life.

