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IT/Cyber Security Guidelines

In the modern world flooded with information technology, it is imperative that we be aware of the safety guidelines and regulations too. Being a cyber awaked citizen is extremely important. In a recent circular, CBSE says, “We are living in the 21st century with various digital gadgets, connected to the entire world through the Internet. From social media to online banking and financial transactions, maintaining digital records to online shopping and online classes, every thread of our lives are available on the internet. Through the connected world, we can easily pass on all information instantly, allowing us to work in collaboration and get desired information for personal and professional growth. Further, over a period of time and with the impact of COVID-19, this connected world and computer/Smartphone devices have become a lifeline for all of us. However, these network connections leave our devices more vulnerable to damage and our information vulnerable to theft. Hackers and other nefarious characters can tunnel and gain access to our information and use it for their own purposes. Cyber and network security helps to solve this problem. In essence, everyone needs Cyber Security to safeguard his/her data and vital information.”

In this context, internet safety is very important and it is every one’s responsibility. It’s all about being able to have fun online – to be able to chat with your friends, to post a video that you’ve made or a song that you’ve written, to be free to find out more about information you’re interested in and check out the latest trends - without being bullied, making others bullied, annoyed or scammed, or having your ideas stolen including identity theft.

Internet safety is a lot more than just about ensuring that your computer has the latest anti-virus and firewall software installed. It’s about being smart about how you handle yourself online and savvy about how you deal with other people (especially strangers who you meet online), and not falling prey to an online scammer who takes advantage of your ignorance

Remain safe online

Most of us are ‘connected’ via our laptops, mobile phones, tablets or personal computer. The potential for the internet to be a valuable and a fun

resource for entertainment, making friends, keeping in touch and learning is huge. But if you use the internet without safety awareness, you could be at risk of illegal activity or abuse - be it bullying, fraud or something more serious. Unlike seeing someone face to face, on the net, people aren't the same as they are first seen.

The way you learn about safety when you leave the house, the same way it is important to learn how to stay safe online. These are skills that will stay with you for life time.

Some important Rules to follow when you are online

- Don't give out personal information such as your address or phone number.
- Don't send pictures of yourself to anyone.
- Don't open emails or attachments from people you don't know.
- Don't become online 'friends' with people you don't know.
- Never arrange to meet someone in person whom you've met online.

If anything you see or read online worries you, tell someone/inform your parents about it.

Do follow these guidelines/steps before using the internet.

Using a Safe Web Browser

Internet is a way to stay connected with friends and family. For many Students, it's also a way to stay current on news, research information, shop online and download books, online applications etc. Internet has also become a popular method for banking, paying bills and completing and submitting applications and forms.

Using web browser to do things online is easy, but there can be some hidden dangers to you and your computer. These risks can include exposure of sensitive personal information and infection by malware, which includes viruses, spyware, and adware. Safe browsing means being aware of these online threats and taking the necessary precautions to avoid them.

It only takes a little bit of effort, a few tools, and some basic information to be safe as you browse the internet. Follow these guidelines to protect your personal information and your computer online.

- Install and maintain up to date anti-virus software on your computer or device.
- Keep your internet browser up-to-date.
- Be alert to unusual computer activity or problems.
- Install and maintain a firewall on your computer.
- Use a modern browser with features such as a pop-up blocker.
- Avoid storing sensitive material indefinitely on your computer.
- Change your passwords often.
- Beware of links sent via instant messaging and e-mail attachments.

Making online ‘friends’

We all know it's not healthy to spend hours and hours in front of a computer screen. But another problem with social networking is the pressure you can feel to make sure you have lots of ‘friends’. But here are some things to remember:

- Friendships made online are made by clicking a button rather than talking to people and sharing experiences.
- Being online ‘friend’ with someone is much less meaningful than face to face friendship.
- You can easily fall out with an online ‘friend’ because of a misunderstood comment.
- It is far easier, and healthier, to sort out arguments and problems when you can talk to someone face to face
- Although you might know someone who likes to boast about how many ‘friends’ they've got on their social networking site, remember that real friendships aren't made by computers.

Few tips to stay safe on social networking sites

- Make sure you're old enough to join.
- Maybe use a made up name or nickname on your profile.
- Do not make friends you don't already know personally.
- Maybe use an email address that does not include your name.
- Use the strongest privacy setting when you set up your profile. This means that only your friends will be able to view your information.
- Pictures and videos can be shared very carefully when uploading- even if you only share it with friends; it can easily be spread much further.

- Be very careful about sharing content online - especially if it isn't yours to share. Illegal downloads definitely should be avoided.

Ensuring Smartphone Security

We no longer rely on our phones for just calling friends or family. With modern smart phones we can do a wide range of tasks; everything from browsing the Internet and paying your bills to checking your bank statement and accessing work emails. Because smart phones are so advanced many of the security issues we're exposed to through our computers now exist on our smart phones.

Do take care of the following aspects-

- When choosing a mobile device, consider its security features and ensure they are enabled.
- Install and maintain an Anti-Virus application on your smart device.
- Do not follow links sent in suspicious email or text messages.
- Carefully consider what information you want to store on the device.
- Be cautious when selecting and installing applications.
- Avoid joining unknown Wi-Fi networks and using unsecured Wi-Fi hotspots.
- Disable interfaces that are not in use, such as Bluetooth, infrared, or Wi-Fi.
- Delete all information stored in a device prior to discarding it.

Most importantly ***be safe and take care of other's safety too***. In case of any issues, do not hesitate to bring them to the notice of your parents, teachers or an elder whom you trust. Be careful while attending your online classes/being online.

DO NOT BULLY/MAKE FUN OF OTHERS, ONLINE.

Cyber ignorance is no more a bliss.

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