

15 Online Rules

- 1.** Personal information stays personal. Teach kids not to share passwords or give up information.
- 2.** Make sure your child doesn't spend all of his or her time on the computer.
- 3.** For younger kids (pre 7th grade) try to keep the computer in a shared family space. For older kids who need to work in their own space make sure you pop your head in often and see what they're up to.
- 4.** Learn about computers so you can enjoy them together with your kids.
- 5.** Talk to your kids about where they go online and ask them to show you things.
- 6.** Make sure that your children feel comfortable coming to you in the event that there's an online problem. If they worry that you'll take away their computers or blame them for causing trouble they won't come to you until it's too late.
- 7.** Keep kids out of chat rooms or IRC's unless they are monitored.
- 8.** Have them sign an acceptable use policy and let them know they'll lose computer privileges in they abuse rules.
- 9.** Help them find a balance between computing and other activities.
- 10.** Know their online friends, buddies, and who they email. Know the sites they frequent.
- 11.** Warn them that things said on the Internet take on a life of their own and travel very quickly.
- 12.** Warn them not to take on roles and personae like " I'm a 12 year old boy named Billy " when they're not.
- 13.** Warn them to be suspicious of people they don't know who lure them into a conversation and ask too many details.
- 14.** Own the master account with your online service. As the master account holder you can use the parental control tools that are part of most services.
- 15.** Know what they do at their friends' houses, especially on the Internet .