

INTERNET / CYBER SAFETY
A Presentation by the Castle Rock Police Department

Remember the acronym "**PROTECT**":

P: protect your personal information - if you put your school's mascot, or a picture of your school uniform even, a predator can find you where you go to school. As an example, if you play on a basketball team, a predator may be able to figure out how to find you by looking at school practice schedules.

They may also be able to identify what your interests are and strike up a conversation that you may want to be involved in. Look at the safety and privacy policies on the various sites and use the most secure settings. Realize that many predators are very intelligent and can get past even these security settings.

Could your profile effect your ability to get into a college or get a job?

Employers and colleges check these things. The decision you make today can effect the rest of your life, and it could be a negative impact.

R: Report threatening behavior - if anyone threatens you online with violence or other harm, report it to a trusted adult. If your intuition tells you something's wrong, it probably is. Trust your intuition.

O: Only people you know - if you don't know them, don't talk to them.

Never agree to meet with someone you don't know.

T: Terminate the communications - stop the conversation if someone seems "creepy." Let them know you will contact the authorities. Completely get off the computer and shut it down.

E: Exit the site - if it doesn't feel right, exit the site completely and shut down so your location cannot be located by a predator.

C: Contact your ISP (Internet Service Provider - Comcast, Qwest, etc.) - ISPs want to know - they have ways to investigate. Identify the user's i.d. and report it.

T: Tell a Parent, or trusted adult - tell someone if there is something they say that makes you uncomfortable.

Close to home:

- **Do internet predators exist in Douglas County?** Absolutely. There were 64 predators arrested in Douglas County in 2009 alone. Some notable examples of individuals arrested in Douglas County:

- A 43-year-old sales agent (able to speak very effectively and influence people) that victimized a 13-year-old.
- A 30-year-old rocket scientist (very intelligent) that victimized a 14-year-old.
- A 28-year-old whose occupation is in Information Technology (able to pull information from your computer that others may not be able to) that victimized a 13-year-old.
- 1 in 5 kids on the internet have been contacted by a predator, and they may not have realized it. If you don't know who they are, don't talk to them!
- Predators may be in a foreign country, or they may be right around the corner.
- They may be interested in hurting you physically, or they may be interested in stealing your identity or your family's property.

Most common computer-related laws broken in Douglas County

- Identity Theft (18-5-902)
- Internet Luring of a Child (18-3-306) - may not be the "dirty old man" - may be a polished-looking CEO of a company with a wife and children.
- Internet Sexual Exploitation of a Child (18-3-405.4) asks child to expose self or exposes self to child. May "groom" the child to be a friend or to behave in a way that makes them give in.- -- May use family against you. May say, "If you don't comply, I know where your family member goes to school . . . "
- Promotion of Obscenity to a Minor (18-7-102) sends something to a minor. If you keep it and don't turn it over, you may be subject to discipline.
- Harassment (18-9-111) sends something inappropriate to another. Texting is the new form of bullying. When you text, you are creating a legal document. Deleting messages from your phone does not delete it. Records can be obtained from the service provider.

How Predators Groom Their Victims:

- They act like your best friend in order to get in contact with you.
- Some e-mails can be sent that extract information from your computer that is private, even your computer's address and your personal information.

Instant Messaging, Texting, Sexting:

- Cyber bullying via text message could lead to harassment charges
- Inappropriate pictures? Would your parents, family, friends, coach, teacher, or anyone else you respect approve of what you're sending?
- Inappropriate material or text on your profile or phone, could be copied and released to people you did not intend to see it.
- Is texting consuming your life, do you call or have face to face contact anymore?
- If you send an explicit photo (sexting), it can have serious consequences. Even if you forward an explicit photo, you are committing a crime, and if you're convicted, you will become a registered sex offender.
- Erasing something off your phone does not delete the evidence. It still remains on the servers of your carrier.
- Kids can use someone else's phone to send something that shouldn't have been sent. You are responsible for your phone.
- Can you live with what you're writing? Would you be embarrassed if others saw it?

A Castle Rock Example:

This happened in Castle Rock Middle School - the girls were having a sleepover.

Guys found out girls were having a sleep over. Played a game like truth or dare and dared them to do certain things, exchanging pictures. The guy that got the pictures showed the pictures to others. Girl got a lot of attention from the boys, and it escalated into obscene photos being taken and sent around the school.

Pictures ended up out in California, and the recipient's older cousin wanted them.

Because digital photos retain information about the source of the photo, it has been possible to track the source and all the destinations of the photograph. The last reports show that the most revealing photo is still being traded by pedophiles on the black market.

An Experiment

NCMEC (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children) did an experiment.

Put photo of young girl, fully clothed, on the internet. It quickly received 36,000 hits around the world.

Texting Addiction

If texting is consuming your life, step away. A local example is a girl at Mesa Middle School. Her mom said her 7th grader had over 4800 texts in one month.

What would you do?

A friend forwards an e-mail attachment to your e-mails saying they lost access to your profile and want all your information again. Do you forward it? It could be sent from someone that you don't know.

If you receive an inappropriate message, report it. Talk to a trusted adult.

Someone you have been chatting with is asking you to send an inappropriate picture. Just say no.

Online Gambling

When you first start, it's all about the game.

Programs are set up to let you win when you're playing for free.

Once real money is at stake, you lose.

Kids have taken their parents' credit card and spent money on gambling sites, losing a lot of money.

MySpace, Facebook

People can hijack your page. A real-life example: Foul language about another girl was published on one girl's page without her knowledge.

On IM, someone started asking personal questions. A real-life example: when she denied him access, he threatened to mess up her computer.

Bullying on line - embarrassment, fear, hurt the same as if being done in person.

Another real-life example:

A young man just broke up from a relationship; he was hanging out with another friend. They decided to mess with his ex-girlfriend on e-mail, but the friend got carried away and made threats to her. It wasn't fun at all after that - if talking with her in person, it wouldn't have happened. Got in trouble at school and with parents

More Real-life examples:

Friend that lived in L.A. was IM'd by girl in Alaska. Saw info and pictures on line - she said he was "hot" and she asked if he would send pictures (inappropriate photos). He got an e-mail later saying she was in L.A. and wanted to see him.

When I was 15, met guy on internet named John, 22. Going to get offline - want to talk on the phone? Talked 3-4 hours the first night. Responding to the focused attention. Older guy telling her she was a good person. She was very insecure and had been depressed. Very vulnerable. Second or third day - will you be my girlfriend? I have a strong connection with you. Looked at it as innocent. "The first couple times we talked, we talked about movies and music - things I wanted to

talk about. Then he started talking about adult things. He tried to get me to do phone sex with him." She didn't want to. They isolate you from your friends. She was out of touch because she was on vacation with friends, and he got very upset about it and wanted to isolate her from her friendships. He was then going to fly across country to find a place to live near her. Constant e-mailing, phone calls, late night. After talking with a friend in the police department, her parents played the "Missing" game with her after talking with her about John. In the game, she noticed certain phrases were used word for word the same as John was doing with her. That made her realize that John may be an internet predator. She was in love with him and it was difficult for her. It was her first love. She trusted him. Her thinking was - how could I be so stupid. The family supported her - John was at fault. Per the police officer that the family spoke with (Officer Mercer), John is actually wanted by the FBI. John was having a sexual relationship with a 13-year-old. He wrote the same letters to each victim, word for word. They caught him and arrested him. And this victim had to sit on witness stand and read letters he sent to her. She was not physically hurt, thankfully. Others have ended up dead or sexually assaulted.

BE SMART ALL THE TIME.

To report: WWW.CYBERTIPLINE.COM

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Presented by: Officer Will Harris
100 Perry Street
Castle Rock, CO 80104
WEHarris@crgov.com
(303) 663-6148
fax (303) 663-6105