

Be an Online Pro

As school gets started again, you may find yourself using the computer, tablet or cellphone more. Is your online self as well-behaved as the offline you?

This week, The Mini Page reminds you how to be safe, courteous and responsible when using the internet.

Important skills

Do you know what **competency** is? It means an ability to do something well.

When kids or adults spend time online, we need to remember six competencies:

- Balance
- Ethics
- Privacy
- Reputation
- Relationships
- Online security

Balance

Computers and smartphones have made it possible for people to talk with each other, find information and play games at any time of the day or night. Sometimes we get so excited about these possibilities that we spend too much time looking at a screen.

Experts suggest you use your electronics away from your bedroom. Don't use them at the dinner table. Talk with your family instead.

Charge phones and other devices away from bedsides. Noise and light can disturb sleep, which can be unhealthy. Put electronics away one hour before bedtime.



Mini Fact:

Experts say that kids who have positive online experiences are more successful as adults.

Reputation

In just a few years, you may be applying to college or trying to get a job. Colleges and companies have started looking at social media to find out more about possible students or employees.

Ask your parents to review posts to Snapchat, YouTube or other social media before you post.



Relationships

Cellphones and social media keep us in touch with friends. But texts and emoji may not express very well what people are really feeling.



If someone posts something mean or hurtful to you, take some time to think about it before responding. Talk to an adult about how or whether you should respond at all.

Online security

Back up your computer frequently so you won't lose work you've done. Ask your family to install protection against viruses and malware (damaging software). Use a wireless network password.

Resources



On the Web:

- bit.ly/MPonlinesafety

At the library:

- "A Smart Girl's Guide: Digital World: How To Connect, Share, Play and Keep Yourself Safe" by Carrie Anton


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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of online safety are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

BALANCE, COMPETENCY, ETHICS, INTERNET, LOCATION, LOGIN, NETWORK, ONLINE, PASSWORD, PHOTOS, POST, PRIVACY, REPUTATION, SECURITY, SMARTPHONE, SOFTWARE, TABLET, TEXTS.

P	C	P	E	A	H	I	N	T	E	R	N	E	T	C
A	V	O	E	K	R	O	W	T	E	N	Y	S	N	T
S	S	S	M	K	L	O	G	I	N	D	C	O	O	R
S	T	T	R	P	H	O	T	O	S	I	A	F	I	E
W	X	T	D	G	E	T	H	I	C	S	V	T	T	C
O	E	N	O	H	P	T	R	A	M	S	I	W	A	N
R	T	Q	T	A	B	L	E	T	M	M	R	A	C	A
D	J	O	N	L	I	N	E	N	S	X	P	R	O	L
N	S	E	C	U	R	I	T	Y	C	O	K	E	L	A
R	E	P	U	T	A	T	I	O	N	Y	P	G	H	B




Cook's Corner

One-Crust Apple Pie

You'll need:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 stick butter, melted
- 5 to 6 apples, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 unbaked pie shell

- 1 tablespoon nutmeg
- 1/3 cup grated cheddar cheese



What to do:

1. Mix sugar, butter and apples.
2. Layer in a pie shell and sprinkle with nutmeg.
3. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour or until apples are brown on top.
4. Sprinkle with cheese and bake for 10 minutes more. Serves 8.


* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

7 Little Words for Kids

Use the letters in the boxes to make a word with the same meaning as the clue. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in the solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

1. not expensive (5) _____
2. piece of beef (5) _____
3. bird found in cities (6) _____
4. once in a while (9) _____
5. unusual (7) _____
6. broken leg protector (4) _____
7. mode of transportation (8) _____

PL	ETI	AIR	EAP
CA	MES	EON	STR
AK	CH	ANE	ST
PIG	ANGE	SOM	STE



Answers: cheap, steak, pigeon, sometimes, strange, cast, airplane.

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Mini Jokes



Ollie: Why did the computer need a doctor's appointment?

Opal: Because it had a virus!

Eco Note



Unusually heavy summer rainfall over the southwestern U.S. has brought out an acid-squirting creature in Texas' Big Bend National Park. Officials in the park say the **vinegaroons**, or whip scorpions, can shoot well-aimed but nonpoisonous vinegar acid from their tails if threatened. They also have large pincers but are typically nocturnal and can't see very well. Park visitors are advised not to worry too much about the scorpions unless they happen to annoy one.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about staying safe in the digital world.

Teachers:

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