



CANADA'S CENTRE
FOR DIGITAL AND
MEDIA LITERACY

Internet Safety Tips by Age: 5-7

Five- to seven-year-old children have a positive outlook and an accepting nature. They take pride in their new reading and counting skills and love to converse and share ideas. They are eager to behave well; they are trusting; and they don't question authority.

Kids at this age may be very capable at using computers, i.e. following commands, using the mouse, and playing computer games. They are, however, highly dependent on adults or older children to help them find websites, interpret online information or send email.

5- to 7-year-olds:

- will accept media content at face value
- don't have the critical thinking skills to be online alone
- may be frightened by media images, both real and fictional
- may be frightened by realistic portrayals of violence, threats or dangers
- are vulnerable to online marketers who encourage them to give out personal information through surveys, contests and registration forms
- risk moving from appropriate to inappropriate sites through hyperlinks
- may be exposed to search results that link to inappropriate websites

Safety Tips

- Always sit with children at this age when they are online.
- Create a personalized online environment by limiting children to a list of favourite or "bookmarked" sites.
- Use kid-friendly search engines or ones with parental controls.
- Keep Internet-connected computers in an open area where you can easily monitor children's activities.
- Investigate Internet-filtering tools as a complement — not a replacement — for parental supervision.
- Start teaching kids about privacy. Tell them never to give out information about themselves or their family when online.
- Have children use an online nickname if a site encourages them to submit their names to "personalize" the Web content.
- Protect them from offensive "pop-ups" by disabling Java on your computer or using blocking software.
- Don't let children this age use instant messaging, email, chat rooms or message boards.



- Encourage children to come to you if they come across anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened. (Stay calm. If you "freak out" they won't turn to you for help when they need it.)

