



# OTTAWA DISTRICT HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

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**TO: ODMHA Council, ODMHA District Chairs, Association Presidents, Risk and Safety Coordinators, All Teams and Parents**

**FR: Jeff Steele, Director of Risk and Safety Management, ODMHA  
Brent Dick, V.P. Risk, Safety and Conduct Management, ODHA**

**DT: December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

**RE: Online Safety Tips**

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The web is a wonderful place for kids, so long as they are aware of the risks. While the Internet is an open door to a world of great information, communication and entertainment, it can also be a direct passageway to danger. We're committed to helping our team officials as well as parents keep their kids safe while they explore and enjoy the door that's not locked.

The online world is far reaching and largely unrestricted, and everyone with kids in their lives needs to know what they are facing as they explore it. Just as with children's "offline" activities, parents can take steps to help children remain safe and empowered.

## **Talk to Your Kids**

One of the most important things you can do to empower your children about online safety issues, is to talk to them. Talk about the benefits and risks of the Internet. Make them feel that it's OK to ask you questions or talk to you if they run into problems online. Build guidelines around Internet use just as you would for other activities. Be proactive in finding out who your kids are talking to online. Help them make smart decisions while they use the Internet.

## **Keep Your Computer in a Public Area**

Keep your computer in a public area of your house, not in a bedroom or behind closed doors.

Member of





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## **Never Reveal Personal Details Online**

Social network sites such as Facebook and MySpace can be effective mediums for keeping in touch with family and friends; however these environments can also be used by some for inappropriate purposes. Talk to your kids about the importance of their personal information. They should never disclose personal details that would allow someone online to contact them in real life. This includes full name, address, phone/cell number or email address. It also includes things like their favourite hangout, restaurant, or places where they might be playing sports. Also, kids should never send photos of themselves over the Internet to someone they don't know. Kids who are contacted by someone they don't know should be encouraged to report this to an adult whom they trust. The adult can then assess the appropriateness of the situation and act accordingly.

## **Reinforce that people in chatrooms may not be who they say they are.**

It's best to keep chatroom conversations in the "public" area of the chatroom. They can move to private rooms where they can have one-to-one conversations and these can be dangerous—this is also known as whispering. Discourage whispering with strangers where unknown chatroom users can have an opportunity to build a relationship with your child. They should never arrange to meet someone they have met online in real life. If they do, they should take an adult and meet in a public area.

For more information, please visit the Canadian Red Cross' Protect Your Child Online Program....  
[www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local Association's Risk and Safety Coordinator or this office.

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