

Pointers For Parents

Online Safety Tips For Kids And Parents

(NAPSA)—Being a parent with children who like to go online can be less of a hassle than many fear. With concerns about children's safety and privacy, you often find you have to say "no" to many things they want to do online. Fortunately, there are ways to help keep your kids safe on the Internet. Here are some steps to take to make your kids' online experience better:

- Talk to kids about Internet safety. Explain the importance of never sharing personal information, such as their name and address, online.

- Keep the computer in the family room, kitchen or living room, not in your child's bedroom. Check the screen from time to time to make sure that he or she is viewing appropriate material.

- Be aware of the sites your children visit and the chatrooms they go into. Take the time to visit some of these sites.

- Find activities online that you and your child can do together. This will not only ensure you know where your child is going, it helps build trust, making it more likely they'll turn to you when they encounter problems.

- Look for games and chat areas intended for children. For example, Disney Online recently released Disney's Toontown Online, a massively multiplayer (MMP) 3D online game for kids and families.

MMPs are online games that can be played simultaneously by



You don't have to choose between letting your children play games online and being safe.

thousands of players around the world. Unlike traditional video or computer games, players interact with other players in real time to determine the course of the game. Toontown was designed specifically to be safe, appropriate and fun for kids as well as adults.

"Toontown gives kids a chance to experience some of the best features of the Internet, interactivity and community, without worrying about the Internet's darker side," said Parry Aftab, executive director of Wired Safety (www.wiredsafety.org).

To learn more about Toontown, or to join in the fun, go to www.toontown.com. For more online safety information, visit Surfswell Island (www.surfswellisland.com), a Disney Online Web site that provides kids and families with an entertaining and interactive way to learn valuable lessons about "smart surfing."