

To Be Read At Open School Night In All Grade 5 Classrooms

A Message From Marc Epstein, District Technology Director

The Great Neck Public Schools place a high priority on educating our students about technology and Internet Safety. In Grade 5, we focus on Cyberbullying prevention, the social, emotional and legal consequences of irresponsible online behavior, concerns regarding social networking sites, and how to evaluate the accuracy and bias of online information sources.

Inappropriate Internet use rarely, if ever, occurs in school because Internet access is filtered and students are supervised when they go online. However, in 5th grade and in middle school, students become more social online just like in real life. Their buddy lists grow, their profile becomes more personal, and some even establish pages on social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook. Parents often are not aware of exactly what their children are doing on the Internet but need to be involved more than ever before. Here's what you can do to help:

1. Establish rules and limit the amount of time your child uses the Internet in your home.
2. Supervise your child and his or her friends when they go online.
3. Do not allow your child to go to Web sites that you haven't visited first.
4. Place all Internet-enabled computers in a family room and never in your child's bedroom.
5. Consider activating or purchasing filtering software and monitor the sites your child visits.
6. Create screen names and online accounts for your child that do not include any personally identifying information.
7. Make sure your child knows not to share personal information with others while online.
8. Make sure your child understands that passwords are private and not to be shared.
9. Explain to your child that sharing personal information online in a profile or on social networking sites can endanger their safety.
10. Remind your child to behave online as you would always expect him or her to behave in person and that there are real-world consequences for inappropriate online behavior.
11. Remind your child that people are not always who they seem to be online and make sure your child knows to come to you if anything online makes him or her feel uncomfortable.

If you have any questions, feel free to stop by and see our school's computer teacher or visit the Great Neck Web site for more information.