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01 Jun 2010 04:56pm | Posted by [Siobhan Riley](#) | Local News, Crime, Faith & Family



Parents Play a Role in Internet Safety

STARKVILLE, Miss. (WCBI) - Summer may mean your kids will be spending extra time at home surfing the net.

90-percent of children from five to 18 years old use the internet.

Experts say parents need to be proactive about monitoring what their kids are doing on-line.

WCBI News has some tips for keeping a close eye on your children's internet habits.

Andrea Myles has two teenage boys who spend time on the internet and so does she, making sure she keeps up with what sites they're surfing.

She even has special software through Skype that allows her to see the conversation her 13 year old is having with his friends on-line.

"We have our computer set up to where, when our children are on-line chatting, we plug on to the computer and we get a notification. That notification tells us, they're online, they're chatting. The beauty of it all is that the conversation comes up on our computer," said Myles.

Mariah Smith is the Extension Instructor at Mississippi State and says 50-percent of children who use the internet have had some type of access to pornography

She tells us that parents stand a much better chance of their children being safe on-line when they use filters.

"PC Magazine does a great review of different types of filters. You can say, they can only be on the computer when I'm home from three to five. They restrict the time and also send you reports of their daily activities," said Smith.

The most important way to monitor what your child is doing on the internet is to check the history.

If there is nothing in the section, that means someone has cleaned it out, which could mean the child has deleted a site they didn't want their parents to know they were using.

"So the question you need to be asking is why is it cleaned out because most of the time, the history from your computer is kept for 20 days," Smith replied.

"I've discovered by putting it in the family room that our children are less likely to venture into sites that are not as healthy," said Myles.

Smith says there are also passwords that a parent can use to make sure their kids aren't using unfamiliar sites.

If you do invest into a filter, most of them do cost, but there are some you can get for free.

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