Keeping Your Children Safe Online

Electronic devices have become children's preferred mode of communication. As a result, it is important for parents to take an active role in their children's cyber lives. Here are some tips to keep your children safe online:

⇒ Monitor cell phone and computer use closely. It is recommended that computers be installed in locations where adults can supervise easily (Ex - family room, den, etc.)

⇒ Insist on full access to your children's online activities. If your child is the recipient of unkind or inappropriate postings/texts/comments, take action to protect him/her. You can't control what other people say or do but you have total control over who you allow to access your home computer or your child's electronic devices. Make sure perpetrators are blocked or "unfriended" immediately. Report serious threats to the police.

⇒ Collect all cell phones before bedtime to ensure that your child gets a good night's rest without cyber interruptions. At best, texting at night can result in a poor night's sleep.   At worst, texting often leads to excitement overload or unnecessary upset before the next school day even begins.

⇒ Contact school authorities if a cyber issue outside of school isn't resolved in a timely fashion or is creating a disturbance at school.

⇒ Monitor sleepovers in your home closely. Make sure that it is impossible for overnight guests to access your family's computers or cell phones in the middle of the night. It can be difficult for children to say no to peer pressure from a pushy guest.