

# DO YOU HAVE AN INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR YOUR HOME?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are very proud that Holy Rosary School has Internet access. We believe that the Internet offers unparalleled learning opportunities for our students. The ability to have almost immediate contact with subject-matter experts around the world, to have electronic pen pals, to participate in online expeditions, and to have access to information on almost any topic of interest is something that only the Internet can offer.

We also know however, that the Internet can be a scary and threatening place for our students. That is why we have an Acceptable Use Policy in place, why we discuss at length Internet safety, and why our students are never left alone to surf the Net. Moreover, we feel that the policies that we have in place are not just good policies for our school environment but are also appropriate for your home.

The American Library Association recommends that parents and guardians enact an Internet Acceptable Use Policy for home. Some questions they suggest asking yourself when reviewing Internet use in your home are: Is the computer with Internet access located in a “public” area in your home so that you may supervise your child’s use of the Internet? Does your child have unsupervised access to chat rooms? Have you discussed “etiquette” with your child? Have you discussed the hazards of the Internet with your child? Have you discussed what your child should do should they encounter inappropriate material or behavior on the Internet?

Children have been trained to be cautious with strangers and certainly not to get into a stranger’s car or go somewhere with a person not known to the family. Parents require that their children let them know where they are and whom they are with. The Internet is in many ways just another street or house. Children should be told not to give their names, phone numbers, addresses, describe themselves, or tell what school they attend to anyone on the Internet. They should know not to give out passwords or credit card numbers. Parents should also know whom their children’s e-mail pals are and what chat rooms they are frequenting. We recommend that you sit in on a chat room session with your child a few times to ensure that the chat room is an appropriate place for him or her. You might be surprised.

Information on the Internet that might lead to a child molester or pornographer may be sent to law enforcement through the 24 hours a day *CyberTipline* operated by the *National Center for Missing & Exploited Children* at [www.missingkids.com/cybertip](http://www.missingkids.com/cybertip) or (800) 843-5678. *The American Library Association* Web site is: [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org). Another resource is *Keeping Your Child Safe Online* at: [www.the-dma.org/pan7/parents-cybrsvvy7b1.shtml](http://www.the-dma.org/pan7/parents-cybrsvvy7b1.shtml).

Following are tips from the Federal Bureau of Investigation for keeping your child safe on the Internet. We strongly urge you to discuss these tips and most importantly, for your child’s safety, supervise his or her use of the Internet. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Susana Lapeyrade-Drummond*

Susana Lapeyrade-Drummond  
Principal

08/13/07

## **Things to Tell Your Child about the Internet**

1. Never give out information such as your name, home address, school name or telephone number in a public message, in chat rooms, or bulletin boards. Never send anyone your picture without checking with your parent or guardian.
2. Be careful when someone offers you something for nothing, such as gifts or money. Be very careful about offers that involve your coming to a meeting or having someone visit your house.
3. Tell your parent or guardian right away if you come across information that makes you uncomfortable.
4. Never arrange a face-to-face meeting without telling your parent or guardian. If you meet, do so in a public place with a parent or guardian.
5. Remember that people online may not be who they seem. Since you can't see or even hear them, people can easily misrepresent themselves. Someone claiming to be a 12-year old girl could be an older man.
6. Be sure you are dealing with someone you and your parents know and trust before giving out personal information about yourself via e-mail. Never give out your family or friends' personal information either.
7. Get to know your online friends just as you get to know all your other friends.
8. Make sure you understand and follow electronic mail etiquette.
9. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others.
10. Use appropriate language. Do not swear or use vulgarities.
11. Do not reveal your personal address or phone number of either yourself or your fellow friends.
12. Remember that electronic mail is not necessarily private. Those that operate the system may have access to your mail.
13. Do not "spam" (send excessive email to someone), send chain letters, or excessively forward e-mail to others as it may slow down a network or even bring down a connection.