

Stop passing the buck!

1.) (CHW) Guest is: Ken Shallcross, can you provide our listeners with 7 top tips, that will help parents and kids to be safe online.

(Ken)

1. Educate yourself. Do research on the web. Know where your kids are going and whom they are talking to.
2. Talk to your kids. Open communication. Talk about these three: predators, cyberbullies, and dangerous information to post online.
3. Use monitoring software. Filters can be maneuvered around and may cause only stronger desire to go to forbidden sites. Monitoring gives more accurate knowledge of what they are up to.
4. No computers in the bedroom!
5. Google your child and yourself.
6. Establish definitive rules that include approved surf times and full disclosure of accounts and passwords.
7. Go private on all online accounts for under 18 users!

2.) (CHW) What is it that excites you about what you are doing and how do you see Pandora's role in developing "Responsible Cybercitizens"?

(Ken)

It's a big issue right now that has the attention of the media, parents, law enforcement, Washington – you name it – all eyes are on this topic. But the funny thing is, the solution is right there in front of our noses. It's so clear. But it needs help being shouted into a few more ears.

Personally, if I can work for a company that has a product that I believe in and that tries to do good in the community, it makes it a lot easier to go to work every day. I hope we can help a few parents wake up and listen. Really take responsibility. Parents need to go back to being parents. And the first step is being the boss of the PC and the Internet in their house.

3.) (CHW) What do you think is the weakest link in the security chain when it comes to protecting families and kids from the cyber criminals and online predators.

(Ken)

Lack of knowledge. That's easy. Lack of full knowledge of what is coming in and going out of your house through that connection. Years ago it would be pretty easy to overhear a phone conversation or check the mail (both coming and going)... The Internet is a lot harder to patrol through causal means.

The Internet has done some great things for our society, but it also more-or-less completely obliterated the small town nature of 90% of the country. If you are connected to the net, you are connected to the world. And there are a lot of people in the world that will use your lack of knowledge to get what they want.

If you don't know what is happening on your machine, where your kids are doing, what they are saying, if you don't have antivirus or a program to screen emails, if you aren't doing what you can to limit and clean your machine of spyware – someone's going to get the best of you. Knowledge is power.

4.) (CHW) What other technologies or services would you suggest to use in conjunction with PC Pandora software for total personal computer security for your families and kids.

(Ken)

Hah... your brain for starters. Get an antivirus to run constantly on your machine. Use simple utilities that will back up your data (or have something that will help recover it) and that will routinely clean and check your machine for clutter, bad files and/or potential threats. I'd also say look into online communities like cyberhood watch where you can find information and join discussions. Again, knowledge is power... the more you know... etc.

5.) (CHW) How do we teach our children about posting info that could be detrimental to their safety, while still allowing them their freedom? How much protection does PC Pandora actually provide?

(Ken)

Good question. Let me answer the second part first. PC Pan will show you what your kids are doing, whom they are writing to and what they are saying. It can't – and nothing out there can – stop them from physically typing words. The only thing that can stop them is their own brain. (PC Pan can block websites and programs – but not the ability to type). So one way or another kids are going to communicate.

The big generational difference here is that parents, and everyone about age 30 and up, hold the PC and the Internet as a very valuable tool. The older you are, the less of a necessary tool it is. The under 20 year olds today hold computers and the Internet as an essential way of life. They literally do not know life without it.

So it's hard for them to conceive a world that is not really at their fingers. Conversely, it's hard for them to understand the spectrum of the world that the Internet connects them to.

The biggest challenge parents have is conveying that reality and scale to kids and in turn understanding their world. Trying to show children that posting a single sentence about themselves can be seen by anyone in the world. If you can convey that, it'll be easier to get them to understand the consequences of posting potentially dangerous information. Tell them what that is. Show them examples (if you can find them). The earlier you start drilling that into their heads, the more cognizant they will be when they are older, and consequently – safer.

6.) (CHW) In addition to good communications with our children and PC Pandora, what other technologies do you know of, or recommend, that will help preserve the Internet's integrity?

I really don't know what to say for this one... I guess you could use the fact that some sites are committed to making an environment safe for kids and getting them into the online world at an early age. WebKinz, the penguin site (forget what it is)... those are good advancements for the good of society – even though there is an obvious effect of “getting them hooked at an early age.”

It's hard for me to answer because the Integrity of the Internet is derived from the people who use it.

7.) (CHW) How is the Internet changing and how do you see the future of the Internet, in the marketing and distribution of sex crimes? and how can parents be proactive in keeping their children safe from predators, and becoming potential sex crime victims?

Long term, possibilities are endless. The juxtaposition we are in with the Internet is that it is this entirely non-tangible, physically-removed-but-ever-present way to communicate. It is essentially the same problem that came about with the airwaves but compounded. How do you regulate something you can't touch, but everyone can use? When the FCC tries to push too much, people cry 1st amendment – and I agree. But, you also can't have no regulations on what the greater populous see and hear – otherwise it would just get out of hand.

Unfortunately, the Internet is so wide and vast and has such anonymous potential, that it's hard to restrict without literally being big brother and singling out people and watching/tracking them. So how do you restrict, but not completely disallow? And if you do disallow, what do you forbid? That is the challenge. And believe me, there are folks that want child porn and child trafficking to be legal.

The Internet will continue to serve the purposes of the ill-intending. We can't totally stop that... so... the more kids know, the wiser they can be online. The more parents know, the more they can do to keep their kids safe.

It really comes down to each individual parent's responsibility for his or her own child. For children less fortunate without parents, well – that's a whole other area of the government that needs to be fixed but hopefully someone somewhat competent will help keep those children safe. If they don't hopefully someone will step in.

8.) (CHW) What is the one thing that if you could, you would change about the way the Government, (local, state, fed) Corporation, Businesses, Organization etc..., handles certain issues or the way citizens handle things in regards to protecting our children on the internet, against predators, pedophiles and human trafficking etc... what would that be?

(Ken)

Stop passing the buck! Stop instilling a false sense of security with press releases, agreements and partnerships that mean nothing.

I'm glad MySpace finally bucked up, but they did it only after several state AGs launched an investigation and basically called them out publicly. They also waited until after numerous incidents being publicly ousted linking sex predators using their site AND after a few suicides pointing to cyberbullying on the website. So, thanks for taking recognizing the problem... a few days late.

Also, age verification is a waste. The only way to truly identify is with a credit card or government issued ID/number (SSN or License, etc.) If it gets to the point where you have to enter your personal information to join a social networking site, this phenomenon will come to a dead halt.

Promote technology. Kids are using it – so should parents.

Finally, local law enforcement: keep offering classes, seminars and informational meetings about the dangers; parents: please go to these meetings!!!

Reference Links:

[PC Pandora](#)

[CHW radio.com](#)

[TheCyberHoodWatch.com](#)

[OnlineSecurityAuthority.com](#)