

SAFETY

Cyberbullying and Your Teen

NewsUSA

(NU) - According to the National Council of Juvenile Court Judges, each year nearly 3.2 million students are victims of online bullying, a serious Internet safety concern. To address these issues, Boys & Girls Clubs of America has partnered with Sprint to promote online safety resources for teens and parents.

Sprint's 4NetSafety program aims to open the lines of communication about Internet safety between young people and the adults who care for them. The online resource offers free tools from experts that address the perils that young people commonly encounter online and encourage positive dialogue about Internet safety.

"Sprint is pleased to be entering into this partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America," said Debby Ballard, Sprint's director of community affairs. "Internet safety is an area that is very important to Sprint, as evidenced by our 4NetSafety program, and our partnership with BGCA allows us to add to and raise additional awareness about these valuable resources."

A recent survey of young people revealed some startling statistics about how parents are supervising their children's online time. More than 53 percent say their parents never ask them about whom they are talking to on the Internet, and over half say their parents never surf the Internet with them.

"The Internet can be a wonderful resource, but it has always been our goal to teach our youth



Cyberbullying is a serious safety concern.

how to navigate the Web safely and appropriately," said Dan Rauzi, senior director of technology services and programs at BGCA. "Sprint and BGCA teamed up to raise awareness about a prime concern of ours – the importance of a healthy and safe virtual life for America's youth."

Sprint and Boys & Girls Clubs of America offers the following tips to parents to help keep their teens safer online.

1. Remind your teen that what they post stays online forever.
2. Ask to see their profile page.
3. Tell your child to only add friends they know in real life.
4. Have them use a nickname that doesn't identify their location, gender or age.
5. Tell them not to post plans or whereabouts on a site or page.
6. If your or someone else's child is harassed or bullied online, report it to your local law-enforcement agency or call the CyberTipline at 800-843-5678.