

# NEW OAKLAND NEWS



NEW OAKLAND  
CHILD-ADOLESCENT & FAMILY CENTER

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## Internet Safety



### A Parent's Concern...

*...my 9-year-old son spends a lot of time on the computer surfing the Internet and instant messaging his friends and I worry about him getting into trouble with strangers online. What can I do to protect him? - Brian*

Simple surfing and instant messaging with friends are common activities for kids — and generally safe, if you've discussed some rules of use with them. Chatting with strangers, however, may be a different story. Although there's no way to know the actual risk, the FBI cautions that kids whose Internet activity isn't monitored are most at risk for being exploited.

Keep the computer in a common room in the house, rather than in your son's bedroom. Take an interest in the sites your son is visiting and the people with whom he is chatting (some shady characters pose as kids or teens in chat rooms to seem less threatening). Warn him never to give out his personal information; (his phone number, name, address, school name, etc., agree to meet in-person anyone he meets in a chat room, or share any photographs).

Urge your son to introduce you to any new "friends" he meets online and to tell you if he ever feels uncomfortable about conversations that take place. Most important, talk to him about the dangers of interacting with strangers online and remind him that people online often don't tell the truth. The FBI also recommends that parents maintain access to young kids' online accounts and randomly check their email.

Finally, you can use parental controls offered by your internet service provider or through blocking and filtering software. ♦

# HOW NEW OAKLAND CAN HELP



If you are beginning to observe unusual behavior such as withdrawal from personal relationships and secretiveness and/or anger concerning their online activities take the time to question and communicate with your child.

However, if it is becoming increasingly difficult to discuss or maintain control in this area New Oakland can help by providing a comprehensive and practical approach that assists children-adolescents and parents in learning strategies to address issues associated with the internet.

By way of an initial evaluation, outpatient counseling, in-home

counseling and/or the FACE to FACE Partial Hospital Program, children and families are provided with solutions that go far to resolve the often traumatic experiences and parent-child conflict that result from internet related issues.

Should you wish to learn more about the specialized treatment services at New Oakland Family Centers, please contact any one of our five tri-county sites for more information and to set up an initial evaluation. ♦



**800-395-FACE (3223)**

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## Meet the Director of Pharmaceutical Research



Kimberly Smith, LMSW

Mrs. Smith currently serves as the Director of Pharmaceutical Research for all New Oakland facilities. Her primary responsibility is the overall management of the Pharmaceutical Research division of New Oakland. Additionally, Mrs. Smith provides full clinical support

and supervision for the Clinton Township facility and also heads up the office of Recipient Rights at New Oakland Child Adolescent and Family Center. Kimberly received her Masters in Social Work from Wayne State University and has worked over 20 years in the mental health field. Presently, Kimberly is coordinating Adult and Pediatric Central Nervous System Clinical Trials for a number of pharmaceutical companies and has been for the last ten years. Kim has been married to her husband Dave for over 21 years and they are the proud parents of a rescue dog named Cleveland. In her free time Kim enjoys reading, traveling, listening to music and attending concerts. ♦

FIVE LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU

**West Bloomfield Center**  
5775 W. Maple Road  
West Bloomfield, MI 48322  
(248) 855-1540

**Livonia Center**  
31500 Schoolcraft Road  
Livonia, MI 48150  
(734) 422-9340

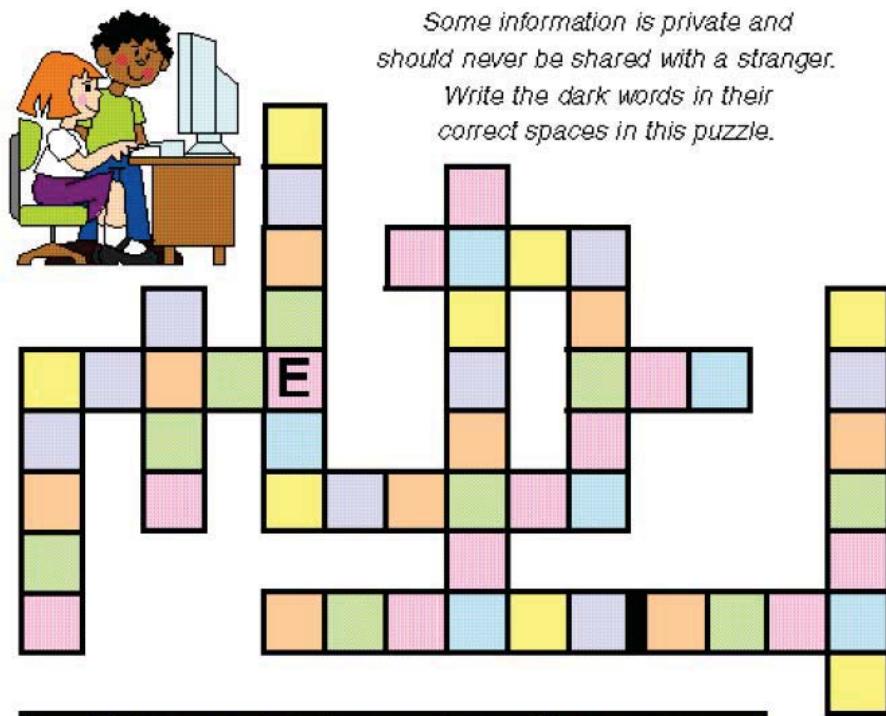
**Clinton Township Center**  
42669 Garfield Road  
Clinton Township, MI 48038  
(586) 412-5321

**Clarkston Center**  
6549 Town Center Drive  
Clarkston, MI 48346  
248-620-6400

**Warren Center**  
26522 Van Dyke Ave.  
Center Line, MI 48015  
586-759-4400

# KID'S ZONE!

## INTERNET SAFETY CROSSWORD



*Some information is private and  
should never be shared with a stranger.  
Write the dark words in their  
correct spaces in this puzzle.*

Things you should never share with a stranger:

Your **NAME**.  
Your **ADDRESS**.  
Your **PHONE** number.  
Your **AGE**.  
Your **SCHOOL**.  
Your **PHOTO**.

Your **PASSWORD**.  
Your **EMAIL** address.  
A **CREDIT CARD** number.  
Where your parents **WORK**.  
Private information  
about your **FRIENDS**.

FACE to FACE Crisis Intervention and Assessment Program

800-395-FACE (3223)

## Children Online

Computers have traditionally been trusted by both children and adults as reliable and accurate sources of information. The rapid growth of online services and Internet access has added a new dimension to modern computing. Through a modem and phone line children now have access to an almost endless supply of information and opportunity for interaction. However, there can be real risks and dangers for an unsupervised child.

Most online services give children resources such as encyclopedias, current events coverage, and access to libraries and other valuable material. They can also play games and communicate with friends. The ability to click from one area to another appeals to a child's natural impulsivity and curiosity and needs for immediate gratification or feedback.

Most parents teach their children not to talk with strangers, not to open the door if they are home alone, and not to give out information on the telephone to unknown callers. Most parents also monitor where their children go, who they play with, and what TV shows, books, or Magazines they are exposed to. However, many parents don't realize that the same level of guidance and supervision must be provided for a child's online experience.

*contued on back...*

# CHILDREN ONLINE *cont...*

Parents cannot assume that their child will be protected by the supervision or regulation provided by the online services. Most "chat rooms" or "news groups" are completely unsupervised. Because of the anonymous nature of the "screen name," children who communicate with others in these areas will not know if they are talking with another child or a child predator pretending to be a child or teen.



Unlike the mail and visitors that a parent can see at home, e-mail or "chat room" activity is not seen by parents. Unfortunately, there can be serious consequences to children who have been persuaded to give personal information, (e.g. name, passwords, phone number, email or home address) or have agreed to meet someone in person.

Some of the other risks or problems include:

- children accessing areas that are inappropriate or overwhelming.
- online information that promotes hate, violence, and pornography.
- children being misled and bombarded with intense advertising.

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- children being invited to register for prizes or to join a club when they are providing personal or household information to an unknown source; and hours spent online is time lost from developing real social skills and from physical activity and exercise

In order to make a child's online experience more safe and educational, parents should:

- limit the amount of time a child spends online and "surfing the web";
- teach a child that talking to "screen names" in a "chat room" is the same as talking with strangers;
- teach a child never to give out any personal identifying information to another individual or Web site online;
- teach a child to never agree to actually meet someone they have met online;
- never give a child credit card numbers or passwords that will enable online purchases or access to inappropriate services or sites;
- remind a child that not everything they see or read online is true;
- monitor the content of a child's personal webpage (homepage) and screen name profile information;
- provide for an individual e-mail address only if a child is mature enough to manage it, and plan to periodically monitor the child's e-mail and online activity;

- make use of the parental control features offered with your online service, or obtaining commercially available software programs, to restrict access to "chat rooms," news groups, and inappropriate websites;

- teach a child to use the same courtesy in communicating with others online as they would if speaking in person -- i.e.. no vulgar or profane language, no name calling, etc.;

- insist that a child follow the same guidelines at other computers that they might have access to, such as those at school, libraries, or friends' homes.



Parents should remember that communicating online does not prepare children for real interpersonal relationships. Spending time with a child initially exploring an online service and periodically participating with a child in the online experience gives parents an opportunity to monitor and supervise the activity. It is also an opportunity to learn together. ♦

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**800-395-FACE (3223)**

**FACE to FACE 7 Step Approach to Family Crisis Assessment & Intervention**