



Internet Safety and Etiquette

Several websites (*generate list with group*) offer opportunities to chat, practice *small talk*, and potentially meet others. However, the openness allows easy access to your personal information which can turn into a safety issue.

Use a few safeguards to protect yourself:

- ❖ Select an email name that is not your actual full name
- ❖ Refrain from giving out personal identification such as your address and phone number
- ❖ Share appropriate topics- general interests
- ❖ Remember that you are *talking to a large group*. Networking chats are not personal conversations.

Back & forth responses can lead to shared interests with one contact person. This can lead to an interest in meeting that person. Again, safeguards need to be followed:

- Ask to meet. Remember, a *no* is not a disapproval of you as a person. Do go with the rule that after a person says *no* 3 times you are ready to move on.
- Plan a public meeting place.
- Build many opportunities to connect with the person in different public places.
- Plan and reciprocate invites. If the initiating and planning is one-sided, it is a sign that this is not a mutual friendship.
- Be aware of peer pressure.
- Restrain your intensity.
- If at any time you are unsure of your feelings or how to respond, confide in a trusted adult.

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