

# Fact Sheet— Dangers in Cyberspace

Understanding cyberspace dangers will help you and the children you are babysitting avoid Internet dangers. Think about how you would share this information with the kids you babysit.

**The list below contains several dangerous pitfalls for Internet users of all ages.**

1. **Cyber bullying.** Cyber bullying is using the Internet to bully or harass someone. It happens in chat rooms and networking sites and through e-mail, instant messaging, text messaging and blogging. At best, it's hurtful. At worst, it destroys someone's reputation.
2. **Meeting people with bad intentions.** You can 'meet' people in chat rooms, interactive game sites or social networking sites where a computer user's privacy can be invaded without his or her knowledge. Remember, people you chat with on the Internet can make up anything about themselves. They could actually be people it is dangerous for you to know.
3. **Downloading files, music or video containing viruses or spyware.** Downloading files, music or video can open the door to computer viruses, spyware and other invasions of your privacy. Downloading copyright-protected materials, like movies and songs, without permission may lead to financial and legal penalties.
4. **E-mail from untrustworthy sources.** Receiving and opening e-mail from someone you don't know can be a problem. The e-mail could be from a person 'phishing' for private information by pretending to be a legitimate official who needs certain information. E-mail can also include SPAM that could be harmless or that could possibly insert viruses or spyware into the e-mail receiver's computer.
5. **Too-good-to-be-true Web offers.** Some Web sites and e-mail messages make offers that are too good to be true. When a user responds to these e-mail messages, he or she opens his or her computer to viruses and spyware, and may lead to dangerous interactions.
6. **Spending too much time on the Internet.** Computer use can be addictive. A person who uses the computer constantly may neglect his or her family or friends or he or she may become bored on the sites usually visited. Boredom can lead to exploring inappropriate Web sites.