

Online Safety

Awareness and adult supervision minimize risks

Children today have never known a world without the Internet. They can log on using home computers, tablets, smartphones, and game consoles at home, at friends' homes, at libraries, and at schools. Technology can be used appropriately and responsibly to connect, communicate, and collaborate. With all the benefits of Internet access, however, come certain risks.

Trusting, curious, and unsophisticated in the ways of the world, children are especially vulnerable to online risks: access to inappropriate material, exposure to online predators, harassment, bullying, downloading viruses, and identity theft.

At The Meher Schools, we limit students' access to the Internet. Students in the upper elementary grades may conduct research online, visiting approved Websites only, under the supervision of teachers. Students in preschool and the lower elementary grades do not access the Internet at school.

Experts advise that parents establish rules for Internet use and be aware of their children's online activities. We recommend that just as you monitor TV and other media your child consumes and monitor playdates, you actively involve yourself in your child's online activities.



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Consider the amount of time your child spends online and be aware of what information he or she is sharing and receiving, and who he or she is interacting with. We recommend that children not be tagged or named in photos posted online, so that their names and locations are more likely to remain private. It's important to understand that privacy is not guaranteed for information shared online.

Children need guidance to think about how what they say or do online might affect themselves or others in the future. Common Sense Media offers a tips for parents at www.commonsensemedia.org/privacy-and-internet-safety.

The Family Online Safety Institute publishes a list of Internet safety tips for parents, which can be accessed at www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting. For further information about Internet safety and social networking, see www.connectsafely.org/safety-tips-advice/ and www.netfamilynews.org.