

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act & Parent Resources

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act gives parents control over what information websites can collect from their children. Many companies, however, are not providing information about what data a mobile app collects, who will have access to that data, and how it will be used. Allowing your child access to games and other seemingly harmless applications on a smartphone or computer risks his or her exposure to intrusive marketing and access to personal information.

A recent survey of apps for children by the Federal Trade Commission found that 10 percent of apps with social networking services did not disclose their presence; 17 percent of the apps allowed children to make purchases without parent/guardian consent; and 58 percent contained constant advertising, while less than 20 percent disclosed that advertising would appear.

The following suggestions may help keep children from being bombarded by unwanted advertising, from making unwanted purchases and from disclosing personal information and location:

- Be choosy about the applications that you let your child use. Try the app yourself to check for advertising messages and/or social networking and purchase options before allowing your child access.
- Select activities that do not require access to the Internet or an application, such as looking at family pictures or listening to preselected music, screened and approved by you.
- Make certain that the ability to make purchases is password protected.
- Set up family rules and consequences explaining that all purchases made via a smartphone or computer must have parent/guardian consent.
- Caution children about the use of social networking and other sites and/or apps that can pinpoint locations.
- Monitor computer and smartphone use whenever and wherever possible.

For more information on the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, please see the following links:

www.ftc.gov/opa/2012/12/kidsapp.shtm

www.ftc.gov/opa/reporter/privacy/coppa.shtml

Antivirus Software

Because the devices are owned by you, the QPS is unable to provide you with Antivirus/Anti-Malware software. QPS strongly encourages you to install Antivirus and/or Anti-Malware software on any personally owned devices which you will allow your student to bring to school and to keep the Antivirus/Anti-Malware software up to date at all times.

The following companies provide free antivirus solutions:

<http://free.avg.com/us-en/homepage>

<http://www.avast.com/free-antivirus-download>

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows/products/security-essentials>

Internet Safety/Cyberbullying

You are encouraged to review the following material on Internet Safety and Cyberbullying with your students.

<http://www.ag.state.il.us/children/safetytips.html>

<http://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/cyberbullying/index.html>

Engage your student and be involved.

Parents are strongly encouraged to be aware of the programs and apps that their children are installing on their devices as well as the activities that they are engaged in when using the devices. The following are links to websites which provide you with information on responsible "Digital Citizenry"

<http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/>

<http://www.common sense media.org/advice-for-parents/be-good-digital-citizen-tips-teens-and-parents>

<http://safely.yahoo.com/expert-advice/be-a-good-digital-citizen-tips-for-teens-and-parents/>

