Internet Safety Resources:

- www.netsmartz.org

- www.missingkids.com

- www.internetsafetycenter.com/

- http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/family/net_safety.html

- http://www.ehow.com/list_5481523_internet-safety-tips.html

- http://www.wikihow.com/Be-Safe-on-the-Internet

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If you need more information about this or other parenting topics call 1-800-CHILDREN or visit our website at *www.pcain.org*

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Internet Safety

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The internet can be a wonderful and useful tool to enhance our knowledge about any topic. Within seconds it keeps us up-to-date on our favorite sports teams and celebrities, and enables us to be linked in at work and school.

In those same seconds however, a predator can "enter" our homes, and potentially harm our children. According to research, 1 in 5 children has received some type of sexual solicitation through the internet. It is imperative then, that we teach ourselves, and more importantly our children, some basic internet do's and don'ts.

- Parents! You need to become computer savvy. Learn how to use the internet; keep up on all of the lingo, upgrades and the latest security software

- Find out where your child has access to the internet...school? A friend's house? The library? Their cell phone?

- Check the history of your internet log to see what sites have been visited

- Use parental control tools. Your service provider can assist you with determining what is best for your family, and how to use them... even on cell phones!

- Keep the computer in a common area of the home. This tactic is not a "cure all", but it does help in being able to supervise how long your child is spending on-line, as well as what they are doing while on-line

- Tell your children to never give out any personal information on-line.

- Do not post pictures of your children on social media outlets, especially if any identifying information is able to be viewed, e.g. the name of their school or sports team on a jacket or jersey, their name on a piece of clothing, etc. Any of these items may enable someone to trace your child's whereabouts.

- Keep an open dialogue with your children. Tell them to let you know immediately if someone makes any kind of sexual solicitation toward them (or any type of unwanted contact or message)

- It is not necessary, or recommended, that young children have their own social media site.

- Insist that you be permitted to view your teen's social media site for any inappropriate content, or for any content that may be deemed "risky".

- Model courteous behavior. Never tolerate bullying of any type.

- There MAYBE some warning signs if a predator has made contact with your child. Your child may be using the computer late at night; may divert the monitor or their phone when you enter the room; may start receiving phone calls or gifts.

- There's no such thing as "private" on the Internet. You may think so, but it's not true. People can find anything they want — and keep what you post — forever.

- It is appropriate for you to want your child to have a cell phone for emergencies. It is not imperative however, that that phone have all types of web access that you are not able to control.

For more information about internet safety, you may visit www.preventchildabuse.org, and they have many resources to which you may link.

Some of this information was gleaned from **Prevent Child Abuse** America