DANGER — HANDLE WITH CARE!

The internet is great place for learning and for just plain fun!

But... it can also pose serious problems for youngsters! Problems concerning their personal welfare; their mental health; their sense of social appropriateness and even their family ties.

Why? Because along with the countless benefits that on-line browsing provides, there are also predators, misfits and malcontents seeking to invade young minds on the net.

This brochure has been prepared to guide both parents and young web surfers in ways to avoid or minimize potential pitfalls in cyberspace.
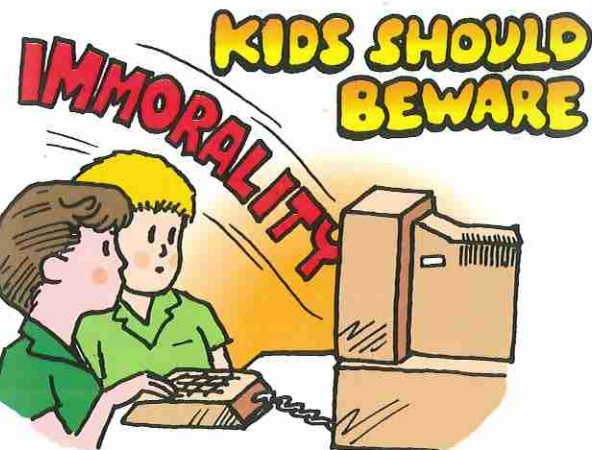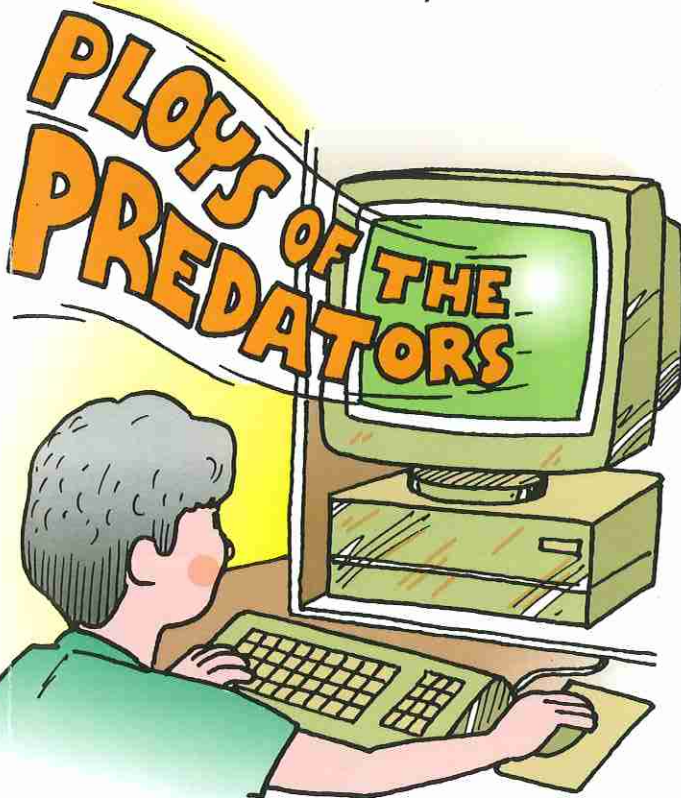
THE CYBER-SNARE

Although the number of kids who are physically molested, abducted or just disappear because of contacts made on the net is relatively low, the danger is still very real.

How do people who prey on children use the web to ensnare their victims? With convincing cunning!

Remember, in chat rooms, and on bulletin boards people can pretend to be anyone at all. Young browsers think they are communicating with another teen or pre-teen with similar interests when, in fact, they're being lured into a sinister snare. The predator wants to entice his or her would-be victim to meet privately in person... a scenario which could have a very unhappy ending!

The counter-measures are two-fold:

1.) Youngsters need to be alerted to this danger and be wary of it.

2.) Parents need to be aware of who their kids are chatting with; e-mailing to; and what they are saving in their computer files. Naturally, this calls for an open and respectful relationship between all family members.

PLOYS OF THE PREDATORS

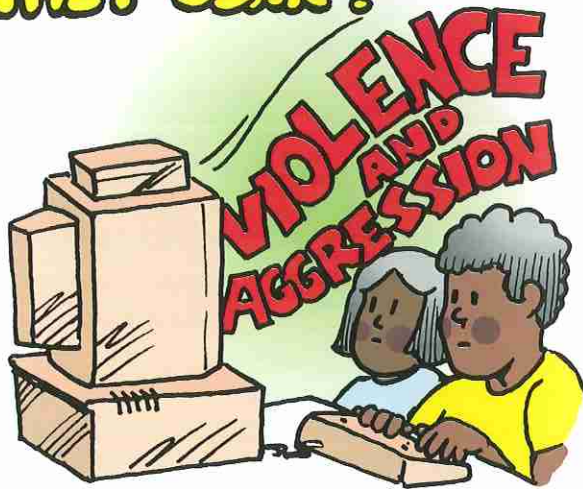
KIDS SHOULD BEWARE — IMMORALITY

Although many on-line services exercise control over the type of content and conduct in its own domain, the net is enormous and impossible to police completely. Material of an objectionable or perverse nature can find it's way onto the young surfer's monitor.

What can parents do about it?

1.) Talk openly and honestly with your children. Teach them about the psychological harm of lascivious indulgence and how it's distortions can have serious harmful effects on their own loving relationships in the future.

2.) Investigate the use of appropriate blocking software to prevent the intrusion of, or, the access to unhealthy or unwholesome material.

3.) As precautionary measures, parents need to take the time to monitor the child's e-mail, computer files and home page activity on a routine basis. Note: be sensitive, however, and understanding about the difference between taking a sincere interest in the child's activities and simply spying.

4.) If you feel that your child is being exploited by sexual or compromising situations on the net, notify the FBI or The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

HOW MUCH CAN THEY BEAR?

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

The amount of violence and aggression that can be found on the computer is more than combat video games and war or weapon-oriented programs. It also includes hate mongering, intolerance, and "how-to" info on anything from bomb building to acquiring illegal substances and equipment.
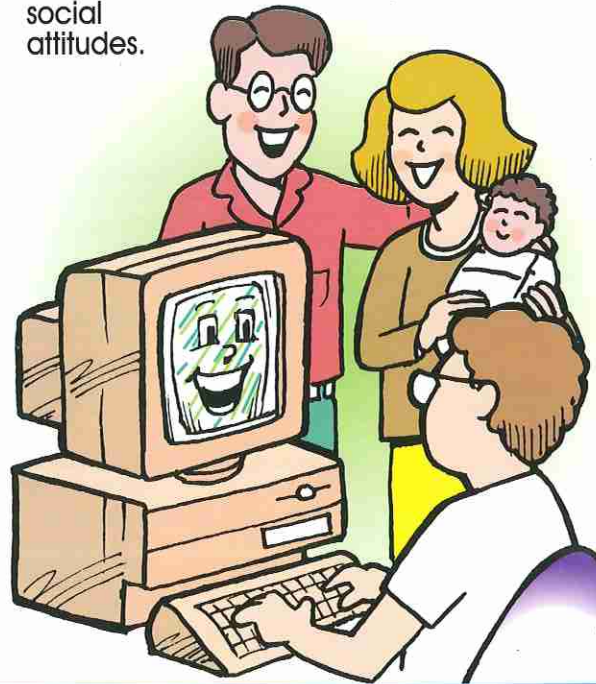
What are appropriate parental responses?

1.) Once again, good communication between parent and child is essential. They need to understand that "heroics" based on violence and aggressive behavior are never acceptable. That this type of behavior is sadly primitive and has no place in a future world based on human harmony.

2.) Still, on-line program activities should be monitored, with discretion, to protect the child from anti-social influences. Review all available forms of communication, such as e-mail, chat-rooms, internet relay chat, news groups and print-outs.

3.) Know the kids your child pals around with. What are their homes like? Their attitudes? It's your right and responsibility to insure family values and socially acceptable behavior in the home.

FINAL THOUGHTS :-

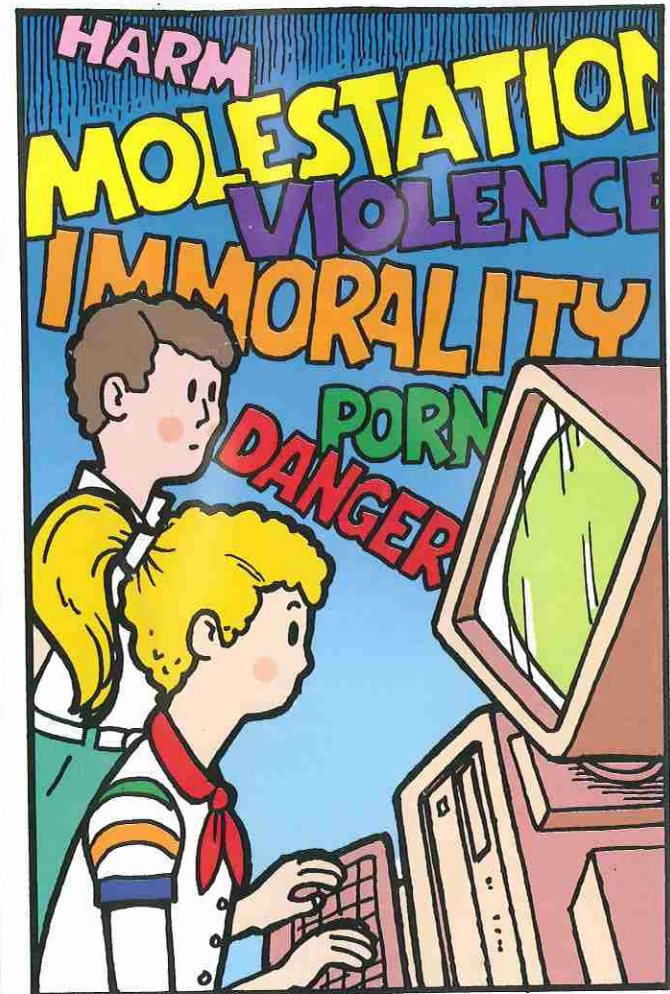Minimize the chances of your child being exploited on the web.

1.) Keep your child aware and wary of the real dangers of sexual victimization or exploitation.

2.) Spend time with your kids on-line. Find out what they like to do and what appeals to them. *Have fun!*

3.) Keep the computer in an open location, not in the child's bedroom. It's much harder for exploiters to operate out in the open.

4.) Don't overlook the use of parental controls available through your service provider or with blocking software.

5.) Monitor your child's on-line accounts, e-mail and also, the family phone bill. Be open and honest about this supervision and explain the reasons.

6.) Teach your child the responsible use of internet resources and the advantages of acceptable social attitudes.

SAFETY ON THE WEB

HARM
MOLESTATION
VIOLENCE
IMMORALITY
PORN
DANGER

JUNIOR POLICE OFFICER
DUBLIN POLICE

DUBLIN POLICE SERVICES