Online Safety Tips for Students

Anytime you open a web browser information about you is being monitored and stored. This can be as simple as tracking what you do and how often or information about computer and where your computer is. When you start to use online tools that ask for more information about you it is important to follow some guidelines to keep you and your information safe from harm.

1. Avoid using personal information in online accounts or programs and don’t give personal information to anyone directly. This means you want to avoid giving your name, phone number, address, e-mail, school name, parents’ work address/telephone numbers, credit card information, your picture, your passwords, date of birth and any other information that can identify you. You could use a made-up name or nick-name that doesn’t reveal anything about you, including your gender, instead of your actual name, for example, when setting up an account.
2. If you create an account, make sure you keep your password private and don’t give it to anyone else. Try to make it hard to guess, use longer passwords that contain numbers and letters and never use something that is about you, such as your name, your pets’ names or birthdates as part of a password.
3. Never give out someone else’s personal information online and don’t discuss others in a way that can identify who they are. Remember that possibly anyone can see what you have posted and it could be harmful to others or yourself.
4. Carefully consider everything you post online. Anything you post, including comments and/or pictures/video can be very hard to remove once done. As soon as you put something online it is out of your control and others can do anything they like with it.
5. Make sure you know who you are talking to and that the information is true. You can always check with a parent or teacher if you aren’t sure.
6. Be responsible and polite, never threaten or harass another person and always report to a parent or teacher if someone else is threatening or harassing you.
7. There can be harmful programs and files available online that don’t appear to be dangerous. Never install or download anything unless you are directed to by a person you know. If you aren’t sure check with a parent or your teacher.