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a response guide for educators and families

Hate on the Internet: A Response Guide for Educators and Families Partners Against Hate c/o Anti-Defamation League 1100 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 1020 Washington, DC 20036 www.partnersagainsthate.org Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention U.S. Department of Justice 810 Seventh Street, NW Washington, DC 20531 www.ojp.usdoj.gov Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202 www.ed.gov







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At the time of this publication's printing, all Web site addresses were accurate and provided material that was, in the judgment of Partners Against Hate staff, appropriate for all audiences. Partners Against Hate is not responsible for future changes to any Web sites and does not endorse any Web sites other than its own.

Partners Against Hate is a collaboration of the Anti-Defamation League, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, and the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence.







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Partners Against Hate

Partners Against Hate represents a joint effort by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF), and the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence (CPHV) to design and implement a program of outreach, public education, and training to address youth-initiated hate violence. Funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Department of Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, Partners Against Hate features an innovative collection of both on- and offline resources and support to a variety of audiences, including parents, educators, law enforcement officials, and the community at large.

The primary goals of Partners Against Hate are as follows:

- To increase awareness of the problem of bias crime.
- To share information about promising education and counteraction strategies for the wide range of community-based professionals who work and interact with children of all ages.
- To help individuals working with youth better understand the potential of advanced communications technologies to break down cultural barriers and address bias.

Partners Against Hate coordinates its individual organizational experiences and broad-based networks to promote awareness of promising techniques to prevent, deter, and reduce juvenile hate-related behavior. A key component of this effort is the inclusion of technology-based communications advances – namely the Internet – which have the ability to provide individuals and organizations interested in preventing juvenile hate crime with the tools to educate and change hate-related behaviors in ways never before imagined.

In addition, Partners Against Hate blends an array of existing organizational resources with new programs and initiatives that enhance understanding of promising practices to address hate violence in all segments of the community. The Partners' extensive networks of contacts allow for the broad distribution of resources and information designed to address youthful hate crime. Further, the Partners' professional experiences allow diverse perspectives to be shared and ensure the fullest range of input, participation, and strategic coordination of resource materials.

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The ADL stands as the leading source of current information on hate incidents and on recommending effective counteractive responses. The League's model hate crimes statute has been enacted in 44 States and the District of Columbia, and ADL conducts hate crime seminars at local law enforcement training academies in a number of States. On the national level, ADL provides hate crimes seminars to law enforcement authorities, educators, attorneys, and community groups on effective strategies to identify, report, and respond to hate violence.

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF)

LCCREF has extensive experience and expertise in developing strategies and methodologies for reducing prejudice and promoting intergroup understanding within groups and organizations, including schools, neighborhoods, and the workplace. LCCREF enjoys a close relationship with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the nation's oldest and most broadly based civil rights coalition. Within this broad coalition, LCCREF is widely regarded as a leader with respect to its ability to leverage the power of technology to advance social change.

Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence (CPHV)

CPHV develops and implements prevention programs in middle and high schools, on college campuses, and for health care professionals. CPHV's workshops and programs provide both adults and students with an understanding of the destructive impact of degrading language and slurs, and with practical skills to effectively intervene in ways that model respectful behavior.

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I. Introduction to this Guide

Scope and Purpose

Hate on the Internet: AResponse Guide for Educators and Families is designed to assist educators and adult family members in preparing children of all ages for safe use of the Internet. As Americans have expanded their use of the Internet, hate groups have also increasingly used this technology to spread messages of hate and intolerance. Without question, the Internet has become a key force in the lives of young people, providing a rich resource for research, learning, communication, and entertainment. Increased use of the Internet has created the need for new skills for navigating this medium and for assessing online sources of information. This guide has been developed to assist educators and families in exploring these issues with students through discussion and activities.

The democratic right of free speech, articulated in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, is built on an understanding of the benefits of a "marketplace of ideas," where the free expression of a variety of competing perspectives furthers the search for truth. By taking advantage of the protection offered by the First Amendment, hate groups are now using the Internet to quickly and inexpensively reach large numbers of Internet users, including children and teenagers who may not have yet developed the critical thinking skills necessary to assess sources of information or differentiate between reputable and disreputable Web sites.

The purpose of this guide is to provide families and educators with useful information about hate on the Internet and to provide strategies to help prepare children for the hate they may encounter as they navigate the World Wide Web. This guide provides background information on some of the hate groups that are currently utilizing the Web, the varied forms of hatred children may encounter online, and the resulting risks for children. *Hate on the Internet* includes practical tools and resources to teach children the skills for safe, productive, and educational use of the Internet.

Two basic assumptions guided the development of the content for this guide:

1. Open, honest communication among family members is a key component in addressing concerns about children's online experiences. Children of all ages will be comfortable sharing their feelings and experiences with adults in an atmosphere that promotes trust and communication. When children raise questions about online information that they don't understand or that is upsetting to them, adults will have opportunities to discuss the experience

and to brainstorm with children possible responses that promote safety. Parents and adult family members can regularly initiate and foster these dialogues, providing opportunities to raise concerns honestly and directly.

2. Critical thinking skills assist children of all ages in making sound judgments and good decisions. When children master critical thinking skills, they have learned how to think, rather than what to think. In the new information age, children are often bombarded with ideas and "facts" from a wide variety of sources. Adults cannot completely control or limit the information children receive. Arecommended approach is to provide opportunities for children to develop skills to analyze the information they obtain. Critical thinking skills enable children to become active contributors in maintaining their own safety.

Intended Audience

Every day, more homes and schools initiate and expand their use of the Internet, providing access to increasing numbers of children and youth, and new opportunities and techniques to enhance their learning. The World Wide Web has increased accessibility to massive amounts of information on virtually every topic imaginable. Because online information is largely uncensored and unverified, the increasing use of the Internet poses new challenges to education professionals and family members who are responsible for the safety, education, and emotional development of children. Hate on the Internet has been designed primarily for families and educators; however, much of the material will also be relevant to librarians, a profession which has taken on increased responsibilities in the education of our youth.

Adult family members and teachers, primary influences in the daily lives of children, can play a key role in identifying situations that might put children at risk. The Internet, while providing young people with abundant information and resources, also brings some potential dangers. By understanding these dangers and providing opportunities for young people to develop effective safeguards, parents and educators can promote an online experience for children that is enjoyable, educational, and safe. This guide will assist educators and families in becoming informed about some of the potential dangers of this technology and provides strategies to prepare young people for safe navigation of the Internet.

Today, most public and academic libraries provide Internet access to their patron communities thereby expanding the traditional role of librarians to include educating library patrons to be independent online information seekers. The American Library Association affirms that (ALA Council, 1996):

"Freedom of expression is an inalienable human right and the foundation for self-government. Freedom of expression encompasses the freedom of speech and the corollary right to receive information. These rights extend to minors as well as adults. Libraries and librarians exist to facilitate the exercise of these rights by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology."

Librarians are frequently called upon to assist in educating young patrons to assess the information they obtain via the Internet. This guide provides resources to assist librarians and media specialists in this process.

How to Use this Resource

In addition to this Introduction, the *Hate on the Internet:* A Response Guide for Educators and Families **includes the following sections:**

- **Defining the Problem: The Internet as a Tool of Hate** this section provides a description of the historical and current hate activity on the Internet. This section details the ways children might encounter hate online, and includes specific examples.
- Helping Children Navigate the Internet Safely this section details the growing influence of the Internet in the lives and education of youth, provides theoretical information about the dangers posed by hate groups, and includes recommended strategies to promote the online safety of children.
- Practical Tools for Educators and Families included in this section are resources and tools for use with children of all ages, including Internet Guidelines for Parents & Families, Educators, and Librarians and Internet Tips for Kids, which can be used to stimulate discussion about the responsibilities that accompany the privilege of computer use. Internet Tips for Kids is suitable for posting and can provide a visual reminder of family discussions about these issues. Suggested discussion points and activities for families are also included in this section.
- **Bibliographies** included in this section are recommended resources grouped as follows: "Suggested Resources for Families," "Suggested Resources for Educators," "Suggested Resources for Students," and "Additional Online Resources." These resources have been selected to promote a safe and educational online experience for children.

Increased awareness of the presence of hate on the Internet is an important first step in promoting the online safety of children. This publication is available in a .PDF format at the Partners Against Hate Web site, www.partnersagainsthate.org. Partners Against Hate invite you to share this resource with others interested in the online safety of young people. You may want to consider the following strategies:

- 1. Provide a brief synopsis of the issue of Internet safety at a staff meeting and share information about this resource and how it may be obtained.
- 2. Circulate the guide among colleagues in your organization. Attach a short note explaining why you feel the information is valuable for your work with children and youth.
- 3. Provide copies of the handout, *Internet Tips for Kids* (see Practical Tools for Educators and Families), and suggest the staff consider posting or distributing the handout and reviewing its content with students.

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II. Defining the Problem: The Internet as a Tool for Hate

Few Americans would willingly welcome hate groups such as neo-Nazis or the Ku Klux Klan into their homes to spread their pernicious message of hate. Yet, as a result of the fast spreading technology of the Internet and the World Wide Web, many people have, through inadvertence or curiosity, encountered hate-filled messages and images on the screens of their home computers.

from The Web of Hate: Extremists Exploit the Internet,
 Anti-Defamation League

The Emergence of Hate Speech Online

By using any of the many search engines available through the World Wide Web, an Internet search of the words "Ku Klux Klan" will produce an extensive list of Web sites promoting hate. These sites are readily accessible to the approximately 160 million Americans, including significant numbers of impressionable children and youth, who today use the Internet.

Even before the birth of the World Wide Web, media-savvy leaders of some organized hate groups recognized the potential of technology to disseminate their messages and further their goals. In the 1980s, Louis Beam, a leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and neo-Nazi publisher, George Dietz, collaborated to create a computerized bulletin board accessible to anyone with a computer, phone line, and modem. The bulletin board, "Aryan Nation Liberty Net," was subscription-based and designed to recruit young people, raise money, and incite hatred against the "enemies" of white supremacy.

In the early 1990s, many bigots united in organized online discussion groups called USENETs. USENET newsgroups were similar to the "Aryan Nation Liberty Net" but were more easily accessible to anyone with Internet access. USENETs were free and provided a venue for participants to write, read, and respond to messages of hate.

The evolution of the Internet into the World Wide Web, with its easily accessible and inviting graphic interface, has provided people, including extremists, with new ways to communicate with each other and with a vast new potential audience, using not only words, but also pictures, graphics, sound, and animation.

Don Black, a former Klan leader and convicted felon who learned to use computers while incarcerated, is attributed with creating one of the earliest hate sites, *Stormfront*, in 1995 (McKelvey, 2001). Since its creation, *Stormfront* has served as a veritable supermarket of online hate, stocking its shelves with materials that promote anti-Semitism and racism. *Stormfront* is among the most visited hate sites on the Internet, claiming upwards of five million visits to the site over the past decade. When first created, the site contained links to a scant handful of other Web sites with similar messages of hate. Today, *Stormfront* provides links to hundreds of white supremacist sites, and hundreds of other sites are easily found online.

Who is Spreading Hate Online?

A wide variety of people with bigoted ideologies, including Holocaust deniers, "Identity" adherents, Ku Klux Klan members, and virulent homophobes, use the Internet to spread their views.

Extremists Seeking Credibility

A common rationale among extremists is to use the Web to build increased respectability and mainstream acceptance of their ideas. Such groups typically characterize themselves as legitimate activists who have been unfairly denied mainstream attention. For example, David Duke, former leader of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, veils an ideology of white supremacy behind misleading rhetoric of "white rights." By couching bigotry in pseudo-scientific and sociological terms, Duke articulates a subtle but virulent brand of racism that exploits race-related issues such as illegal immigration and affirmative action. Other examples of Web sites designed to increase the respectability of extremist groups include the Council of Conservative Citizens and American Renaissance, which sponsor both a monthly print publication by the same name and a Web site.

Holocaust Deniers

Holocaust denial is a propaganda movement that seeks to deny the reality of the Holocaust, the systematic mass murder of six million Jews and millions of others deemed "inferior" by the Nazi regime in Europe during World War II. Misrepresenting their propaganda as "historical revisionism," Holocaust deniers attempt to disseminate their extremist ideas by offering unsupported arguments against the established historical facts of the Holocaust. Their beliefs include accusations that Jews have falsified and exaggerated the tragic events of the Holocaust in order to exploit non-Jewish guilt. Holocaust denial groups have posted thousands of Web pages, filled with distortions and fabrications, designed to reinforce negative stereotypes such as the contention that Jews maintain control of academia and the media. Among the most visited sites promoting

Holocaust denial are the Institute for Historical Review, Bradley Smith and his Committee for Open Debate of the Holocaust (whose efforts focus largely on U.S. college campuses), and sites sponsored by Ahmed Rami, Ernst Zundel, and David Irving.

"Identity" Adherents

The Identity Church, a pseudo-theological movement that promotes racism and anti-Semitism, emerged in the U.S. during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Proponents of this movement use inflammatory and degrading language to promote hate against many groups of people, including Jews, African-Americans, and other people of color. Identity organizations that have a notable presence on the Internet include Aryan Nations, the Posse Comitatus, the Church of New Israel, America's Promise Ministries, Scriptures for America, and the 11th Hour Remnant Messenger.

KKK Members

Although the Ku Klux Klan has undergone many permutations throughout its violent 130-year existence, the group is currently fragmented. The Internet is providing a means for the group's various factions to gain strength. Web sites of these factions share many commonalities, including information on upcoming rallies, explanations of customs (such as cross burning), and spurious accounts of Klan history. The American Knights and the Imperial Klans of America are two factions with a significant online presence.

Neo-Nazis

Numerous groups and individuals have created and maintain Web sites promoting the anti-Semitic, racist ideas of Adolf Hitler's Nazi party. The National Alliance, one of the largest and most active neo-Nazi organizations in the United States today, was founded by William Pierce, author of *The Turner Diaries*. The stated mission of this group is "to build a better world and a better race" and to create "a new government . . . answerable to White people only" (*Extremism in America*, 2001). When Pierce died in July 2002, leadership for this group was transferred to Erich Gliebe, who recently expressed his admiration for both domestic and international terrorist groups. Though Gliebe does not necessarily agree with their political views, he praised the Islamic terrorists who attacked the United States on September 11, 2001, describing them as "serious, patient, and organized, and they had the discipline to keep their mouths shut so as not to leak any information about what they were planning" (*Extremism in America*, 2001).

The National Alliance Web site features transcripts from a weekly anti-Semitic radio broadcast, online access to many articles from the group's National Vanguard magazine, and a catalog of books with over six hundred titles. The National Alliance has recently focused most of its attention on recruiting young racists through the online marketing of white power music. In recent years, dozens of violent crimes, including murders, bombings, and robberies, have been either traced to National Alliance members or appear to have been inspired by

neo-Nazi propaganda. Other neo-Nazis groups and individuals with a significant online presence include the National Socialist Movement, Matt Koehl, and Gerhard Lauck. In Germany, where distribution of hate literature is now illegal, Lauck has successfully used the Internet to sidestep national laws and widely distribute his literature and ideas throughout the country.

Racist Skinheads

Racist skinhead groups share common hateful beliefs and promote these beliefs with others. Skinheads typically align themselves with the perception of strength, group belonging and superiority promoted by the white power movement. A major aspect of racist skinhead life is devotion to musical groups who record rock music with hateful lyrics. Skinheads have effectively combined bigotry-laced hard rock and the Internet as a main propaganda weapon and means of attracting young recruits. Resistance Records, owned by the National Alliance, is a multi-million dollar enterprise that uses its Web site to market white power rock CDs by groups such as Angry Aryans, and subscriptions to Resistance magazine – the Rolling Stone of the hate movement. Other notable racist skinhead Web sites include those of the Hammerskin Nation, Plunder & Pillage, and Panzerfaust Records.

Westboro Baptist Church

Incorporated in 1967 as a not-for-profit organization, the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) describes itself as an "Old School (or Primitive)" Baptist Church. Promoting virulent homophobia, the WBC claims responsibility for staging tens of thousands of protest rallies across the U.S. and abroad. The WBC Web site is devoted to spreading hate against people who are gay through homophobic language and ideas, photos and other graphics, and a variety of documents that support their position that the United States is "doomed" because of support and tolerance for gay Americans.

World Church of the Creator (WCOTC)

The World Church of the Creator is one of the fastest-growing hate groups in the U.S. today. The group's primary goals, articulated in their motto, "RaHoWa," (Racial Holy War) and their belief system, Creativity, is the "survival, expansion, and advancement of [the] White Race exclusively" (Extremism in America, 2001). Creators, as group members call themselves, do not align themselves with any religious beliefs, instead placing race as the ultimate issue influencing all realms of life. The hatred of WCOTC members is directed toward many groups, including mainstream Christians, African-Americans and other people of color, and Jews, who are particularly vilified.

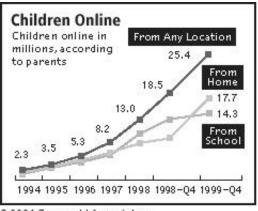
The WCOTC Web site is extensive, frequently updated, and designed to make membership easy. Visitors to the site are provided with a membership form, a list of local "churches," and a detailed manual that explains the group's beliefs and practices, including such topics as planning WCOTC wedding ceremonies and dealing with law enforcement. The group also sponsors more than thirty other

affiliated Web sites and distributes propaganda through extensive online mailing lists, bulletin boards, and chat rooms. A "Comedy" section of the WCOTC Web site includes pictures, jokes, and free downloadable racist video games targeted toward teens.

How Do Children Encounter Hate Online?

Today, children and youth regularly use the Internet for schoolwork, entertainment, and socializing. A report based on a 1999 national survey on parents and their children and the Internet (Children, Families and the Internet,

2000) conducted by Grunwald Associates, in collaboration with National School Boards Foundation, reported that 25.4 million children ages 2-17 access the Internet in the U.S. on a regular basis, as illustrated in the chart to the right. This number is approximate 40-percent an increase since the previous year. These children may encounter hate on the Internet in a variety of ways, including online bulletin boards, chat rooms, Web sites, and USENET newsgroups.



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The USENET, an Internet communication system that contains thousands of public discussion groups, attracts hundreds of thousands of participants each day, both active (those who write) and passive (those who simply read postings). Newsgroups have been compared to community bulletin boards, providing another forum for extremists to debate and discuss their ideas and to insult, harass, and threaten the targets of their hatred.

It should be noted that while some USENET newsgroups are devoted specifically to white supremacy, most are concerned with mainstream, legitimate topics. A common tactic of online bigots is to post messages promoting their beliefs on multiple mainstream newsgroups with the hope of attracting new supporters. Some groups, including the National Alliance, have engaged in this strategy for many years, often tailoring their messages to the particular interests of the newsgroup where they are posting. For example, for a newsgroup focusing on food, extremists have posted messages promoting the "kosher tax," a falsehood which suggests that standards required of vendors to maintain compliance with kosher food standards result in increased food prices for all consumers.

The strategies employed by hate groups have been expanded to Web-based bulletin board systems, particularly those hosted by legitimate companies such as CNN, America Online, and Yahoo! People who visit such bulletin boards, expecting to find rational, informative conversations on topics of mutual interest, instead can encounter disturbing messages posted by extremists.

Chat Rooms

"Chat" rooms provide opportunities for multiple computer users from diverse geographic locations to engage in simultaneous real-time online communication. Once a chat has been initiated, participants can join the conversation by typing text on their home computers and sending it via their modem. Entered text appears almost instantaneously on the monitors of all other participants in the chat room. In many respects, chat rooms are similar to conference calls.

Many hate group extremists, including white supremacists such as WCOTC leader Matt Hale, regularly host chat sessions in order to interact with their supporters. As with USENET newsgroups, extremists also try to enter mainstream chat rooms in search of new recruits.

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging allows an Internet user to engage in a private chat room with another person or persons with access to the same instant messaging system. Typically, the instant messaging system alerts the user when someone on the user's private list is online. The user can then initiate a chat session with that particular individual. Instant messaging resembles a traditional telephone conversation between two people.

Computer users with online access can add anyone on the same instant messaging system to their private list. Unsuspecting users, including children, can easily be added to the instant messaging lists of white supremacists or other hate groups. The following is an account of the experience of one 11-year-old Jewish boy (Lieberman, 1999):

"Out of the blue, someone asked if my grandparents were one of the Six Million. I responded, 'No, they survived.' The next statement that appeared on my computer screen was, 'Oh - that's too bad.' The remark puzzled me. I then asked what was meant by that statement. The person wrote, 'Any Jew that survived was a mistake – and now – you're here.' I got very scared and shut down my computer."

E-mail

E-mail can easily and inexpensively be used to spread hate propaganda. Extensive mailing lists may be purchased for an established fee, or can be readily created using one of a number of free online directories. Large-scale e-mail mailings are free of the typical postal fees and materials costs associated with traditional mass postal mailings. Without ever revealing their identities,

enterprising groups and individuals are now able to mass-mail unsolicited hate materials to tens of thousands of people.

Hateful e-mail can also be directed at a single, specific target. When the 11-year-old described earlier turned his computer back on, he found hundreds of anti-Semitic e-mail messages in his mailbox from "Adolph Jr." with the subject "Jewish extermination part two."

The World Wide Web

Though purveyors of hate make use of all the communication tools the Internet provides, Web site development is their forum of choice. Bigots, promoting their messages of hate on bulletin boards, in chat rooms, via instant messages, or with e-mail, often encourage their readers to gain additional information by visiting their Web site.

In addition to the World Wide Web's multimedia capabilities and popularity with Internet users, the Web also allows bigots to present their messages of hate without mediation. Although civil rights activists may critique a group's manifestoes in USENET newsgroups and other interactive forums, hate groups are under no obligation to publish these differing perspectives on their Web sites. When children visit a hate site, they see only the opinions of the individuals creating that site, often presented as hard fact. Other points of view that may discredit or disagree with those opinions can only be accessed through additional online research.

Although the ability to assess the accuracy and reliability of online information is now a vital skill for children and youth, the nature of the Internet can make it difficult for people to evaluate the credibility of organizations sponsoring Web sites. Both the reputable and the disreputable are on the Web, and many Web users lack the experience, knowledge, and skills to distinguish between them. Increasingly, Web development tools have made it easier for members of hate groups to create sites that visually resemble those of reputable organizations. Consequently, these groups can easily portray themselves as legitimate voices of authority.

Generally, people locate specific Web sites in one of three ways: by connecting from another site via a link, through Web directories, and by using one of a number of online search engines. If children follow links from legitimate sites, they are unlikely to end up at a hate site without being aware of the nature of the site. Mainstream sites rarely link to hate sites, and those that do, typically do so in an educational context, so readers understand that if they click on the link, they will be taken to an extremist site.

Web directories, which contain categorized lists of specific sites and their Web addresses, rarely provide descriptions about the sponsors or content of listed sites. While some directories accurately classify hate sites as such, others describe these sites using some of the misleading terms that extremists

themselves employ, such as "White Pride" and "Racialist." In one leading Web directory, students can find Holocaust denial sites under the term "Revisionism," the same euphemism that Holocaust deniers use to infer legitimacy for their beliefs. Some Web directories have separate versions which include only those sites that are appropriate for children, such as Yahooligans by Yahoo! These child-friendly directories are designed to be free of addresses for hate sites and other inappropriate content.

While many Web directories provide useful information for identifying hate sites, most search engines do not. Search engines, unlike Web directories, provide users with listings that are based on a computer algorithm, without the added benefit of human assessment and evaluation. Search engines tend to classify Web sites on the basis of how sites describe themselves. Although search engines are indispensable for conducting online research, providing extensive listings of Web sites associated with a particular term, children need instruction to prepare them for the possibility of encountering hate and misinformation while conducting online searches. Many hate sites purposefully describe themselves in misleading terms so that search engines will include their sites in search results for legitimate, benign terms, such as "Civil War" or "Holocaust history."

Examples of Hateful Web Sites Targeting Youth

Some hate sites are designed to specifically reach youth and influence their thinking. The following Web sites are examples:

Martin Luther King, Jr.: An Historical Examination: This misleading hate site, which is designed to interest students researching the civil rights movement, appears under a variety of different Web addresses when children search for information about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The site provides a number of links with titles such as "The Truth About King: Who He Fought and Fought For" and "Jews & Civil Rights: Who Led the Civil Rights Movement." By clicking on these titles, the Web user is directed to Web sites that include hate propaganda from the National Alliance and David Duke. "If you are a teacher or student, I hope you will take a stand for right and wrong and use this information to enlighten your peers," writes neo-Nazi National Alliance member Vincent Breeding, credited with creating and maintaining the site.

Stormfront.org for Kids: 12-year-old Derek Black, son of *Stormfront* Webmaster Don Black, is credited with creating this Web site that targets youth. "I used to be in public school. It is a shame how many white minds are wasted in that system," Derek writes on his site. "I am now in home school. I no longer get attacked by gangs [sic] of non-whites and I spend most of my day learning, instead of tutoring the slowest kids in my class." In the past, the site has provided visitors with a free "white power" version of a popular video game, and currently attempts to maintain the interest of visitors by including sections such as "Optical Illusions."

Links to other hateful Web sites are also included.

World Church of the Creator Kids!: This game-based site describes its purpose as making it "fun and easy for children to learn about Creativity." The site features word search puzzles, where children look for terms such as "racetraitor," and word unscrambling games with hints like "this is what the white race faces if we don't save it" (answer: extinction). The site also contains racist crossword puzzles with clues such as "equality between the races is a _____" (answer: "myth") and fables with extremist morals, such as "the greatest gift a White Person can give another White Person is the chance at White Salvation." An e-mail address is provided for children who enjoy the site to contact World Church of the Creator.

Youth and the Electronic Community of Hate

The Internet has provided the means for extremists to create an "electronic community of hate." Proponents of bigotry are no longer isolated from others who share their beliefs. They can communicate easily, inexpensively, and sometimes anonymously with thousands of compatriots from the comfort of their own homes. The organized network of hate on the Internet poses grave risks to children, ranging from victimization to entanglement in the Web of these antisocial, hate-filled, and violent influences.

Hate groups sometimes target children and teenagers directly using sophisticated marketing strategies. Tara McKelvey reported in USA Today that, "just as fashion editors and e-book publishers have started reaching out to elementary school children and teens ... so have hate groups." Hate propaganda, from subtle to heavy handed, is aimed at influencing both the attitudes and behaviors of impressionable young readers. Hate groups are increasingly spreading their ideas by developing and selling online products that typically appeal to youth, such as CDs, jewelry, books, and other items. At the extreme, anti-Semites and racists use the Internet to recruit new, young members. A number of sites provide online application forms, making it easy for children and youth to gain membership. Some hate sites provide links to pages with detailed instruction on bomb-making, a serious concern in light of the increase in acts of violence in schools over the past decade.

A variety of family and community influences can cause youth to feel isolated and alone. The "electronic community of hate" can provide a sense of value, importance, and belonging to lonely and impressionable young people. Although a large majority of families would never allow their children to attend the meeting of a hate group, young people can easily participate in the "electronic community of hate" without their parents' knowledge by simply logging on to the Internet from the privacy of their bedrooms, living rooms, or at school or library computers with unfiltered Internet access. Staff from the Anti-Defamation

League who monitor hate on the Internet report that online communications and requests for guidance are common occurrences between teenagers and those espousing racist ideologies online.

In addition, young people who become entangled in the online Web of hate discover exciting opportunities to assume roles of power, influence, and responsibility. Many young people have well-developed computer skills that are of great value to hate groups interested in creating, hosting or expanding Web sites. In 1998, the Webmaster for the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) was 20-year-old Kelly Daniels, who was living in his parents' basement at the time. Daniels ran Candidus Productions, the official WCOTC Web site design company, and went on to design the Resistance Records Web site and to join the National Alliance.

In addition to influencing young people's beliefs and attitudes, exposure to hate on the Internet can also influence children's actions. Using the Internet, people espousing racists, anti-Semitic ideologies have encouraged youth to translate hateful thinking into action, which ranges from excluding classmates to committing violent hate crimes. In 1999, white supremacist Internet materials were implicated in two horrific, hate crime sprees, described below. Though the extremists charged with these crimes were not children when the crimes were committed, all three perpetrators became involved in the hate movement through the Internet at a time when they were young and impressionable.

Matthew Williams

While attending the University of Idaho, Matthew Williams was a solitary student who turned to the Internet in search of a new spiritual path. Described as a "born fanatic" by acquaintances, Williams reportedly embraced a number of the radical-right philosophies he encountered online, from the anti-government views of militias to the racist and anti-Semitic beliefs of the Identity movement. He regularly downloaded pages from extremist sites and continually used printouts of these pages to convince his friends to also adopt these beliefs. At age 31, Matthew Williams and his 29-year-old brother, Tyler, were charged in July 1999 with murdering a gay couple, Gary Matson and Winfield Mowder, and with involvement in setting fire to three Sacramento-area synagogues. On June 18, 1999, while investigating the crimes, police discovered boxes of hate literature at the home of the brothers (Anti-Defamation League, 2001).

Benjamin Nathaniel Smith

Another violent episode occurred in 1999 in the Midwest, just a few weeks after the arrest of the Williams brothers. Named "Creator of the Year" in 1998 by World Church of the Creator leader, Matt Hale, 21-year-old Benjamin Nathaniel Smith went on a racially-motivated shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana over the July 4th weekend. Targeting Jews, African-Americans, and Asian-Americans, Smith killed two and wounded eight before taking his own life, just as law enforcement officers prepared to apprehend him (Anti-Defamation League, 2001).

Can Hate on the Internet be Eliminated?

Technologically and legally, it is likely that removing hate speech from the Internet is almost impossible. Decentralized by design, the Internet is a worldwide network that consists of thousands of computers with high-speed connections. Often described as an "information superhighway," the Internet crosses international borders, has thousands of unpoliced on-ramps, and has no uniform rules of the road. Because the Internet is global, the laws of the most permissive country have historically set the tone. In general, it is the United States, with its cherished right of free speech, that tends to govern the freedoms afforded online speech. U.S. citizens must often struggle to reconcile their belief in the Constitutional right of free speech with the recognition that the Constitution provides the same rights to all, including hate groups. protection of these freedoms results in an environment where legitimate dialogue exists alongside hate. A number of people with extremist views from other countries exploit these American freedoms and store their hate sites on computers in the U.S., thus avoiding more stringent laws in their home countries.

The First Amendment shields the majority of hate speech from government regulation. Unless blanket statements of hate, such as "I hate Blacks," contain specific threats, they are protected under the First Amendment. This is true even if such statements mention specific names and cause distress to those individuals. Additionally, in a 1997 Supreme Court decision, *Reno* v. *ACLU*¹, lawmakers clarified that traditional First Amendment protection of free speech did extend to speech on the Internet.

The First Amendment does not protect all speech. Speech that is threatening or harassing, for example, may be legally actionable. Threats are generally defined as an individual's declaration of intent to hurt another person. Threatening speech is by far the most likely type of unprotected hate speech to be prosecuted. To be prosecuted, threats must be believable and directed at a specific person, organization or institution. Courts will look at the context in which a statement was made to determine if it is threatening. Prosecution of threatening speech is one measure that has led to some success in the battle against hate on the Internet.

The nature of the Internet, however, complicates the prosecution of threatening hate speech. By using any one of a number of services that provide almost complete anonymity, people intent on promoting bigotry may send repeated emails to a person without revealing their identity. A prosecutable message may easily and anonymously be transmitted to multiple computers in other countries, even if both the sender and the recipient of the message live in the United States. It is not unusual for foreign companies, responsible for computers that are used to transmit such messages, to refuse to provide information to law enforcement

agencies in the United States. For example, in the incident described earlier in this publication, in which an 11-year-old Jewish child received multiple e-mail messages from "Adolph, Jr.," many of the messages contained death threats. The Internet Service Provider used to transmit these messages from the Netherlands refused to respond to inquiries about the incident, and authorities were unable to determine the source of the messages. Even when Internet Service Providers want to help investigators, they may be unable to provide the information necessary to identify the culprit. Such companies keep logs of the activities on their computers for a limited time only. If an investigation begins even a week after a potentially criminal message was sent, the relevant records may have already been deleted.

Though most of the thousands of Internet Service Providers that exist in the United States do not regulate hate speech *per se*, some contractually prohibit users from sending bigoted messages on their services, even when that speech is legally permissible. Such prohibitions do not violate the First Amendment because they are stipulations of private contracts with users and do not involve government action. The effectiveness of this strategy is very limited, however, as subscribers who lose their Internet accounts for contract violation may easily sign up with another service that has more permissive regulations. Furthermore, many companies that provide Internet service in the United States have little incentive to regulate the speech of their users because the Telecommunications Act of 1996² specifically states that Internet Service Providers cannot be held criminally liable for the speech of subscribers.

²Telecommunications Act of 1996, Public Law No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (1996).

III. Helping Children Navigate the Internet Safely

There are few simple answers to the problems and challenges created by the presence of hate on the Internet. Because of the probability that children may at some time encounter such material, children need opportunities to develop skills that include the following:

- ability to think critically, in order to discern fact, opinion, and misinformation
- ability and tools to assess the reliability and credibility of online sources of information
- response strategies to use if they encounter individuals or groups online that promote hate

The development of these skills requires an ongoing process that includes open discussion of concerns and opportunities to develop and practice skills.

Children's Growing Use of the Internet

As use of the Internet increasingly permeates almost every realm of human endeavor, educators have begun to consider the uses of World Wide Web to enrich and revitalize the formal learning process in schools. By 1999, the U.S. Department of Education was describing technology as the "future of educational reform," a central element in contemporary education, crucial to preparing the next generation for future economies and job markets. The Department embarked on a strategic review and revision of its national educational technology plan, resulting in five new national goals for technology in education (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology, 2000):

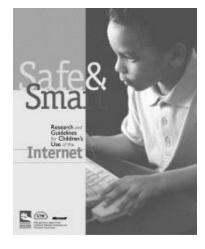
- **Goal 1** All students and teachers will have access to information technology in their classrooms, schools, communities and homes.
- **Goal 2** All teachers will use technology effectively to help students achieve high academic standards.
- **Goal 3** All students will have technology and information literacy skills.
- **Goal 4** → Research and evaluation will improve the next generation of technology applications for teaching and learning.
- **Goal 5** → Digital content and networked applications will transform teaching and learning.

Students are currently expected to use the Internet for schoolwork, research, communication, and class work. Teachers are expected to be computer savvy. In order to monitor children's progress, parents and other adult family members now need to understand the basics of computer use and navigation of the Internet.

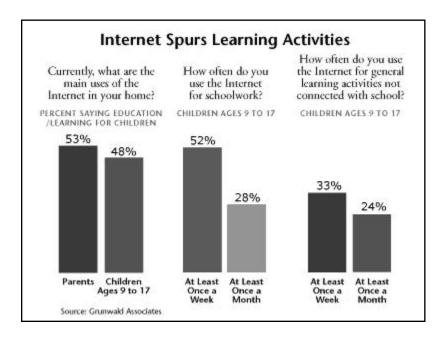
The Internet is quickly becoming a primary source of information for students. Computer availability in schools, libraries, and many homes has made an almost endless supply of information readily available to students. By typing a few key words from a research topic into a search engine, users are provided with extensive lists of potential Web sites and are able to link up with specific sites in seconds. For example, the key words "internet advantage," when typed into a common search engine (google.com), yields a result of 2,050,000 potential Web sites in a few seconds. As an expansive digital library available around the clock worldwide, the World Wide Web enables students to engage in extensive research on any topic, at any time, from any location that provides Internet access.

Internet usage has continued to soar within an environment largely lacking in information about the online behavior of children and youth. In order to develop strategies to assist students in safely navigating the Internet, educators and families need information about where children are currently accessing the Internet, how long they are spending online, what types of sites they are visiting, and what needs they have for guidance and supervision. The National School Boards Foundation (NSBF) partnered with Grunwald Associates in a project that gathered and analyzed high-quality data, which explored some of these

questions, and developed guidelines for parents and educators to inform their decision making. In 2000, the NSBF released Safe & Smart, a report that detailed the findings of an extensive survey of parents and children about children's use of the Internet (Children, Families, and the Internet 2000, Grunwald Associates). Realizing that educators still face challenges to improve student achievement with the use of technology, NSBF later released a survey on school technology decisionmakers in 2002 entitled Are We There Yet? This survey was based on a market research report of school administrators with technology decision-making responsibilities in 811 school districts (Schools and the Internet, Grunwald



Associates). While these studies confirm that educators, parents, and children alike view the Internet as a positive and beneficial force in children's lives, the reports also highlight the existence of persistent concerns about online safety of children.



Safe & Smart reports that more than half of all students use the Internet for schoolwork at least once a week. Although the most common reason parents purchase computers with Internet access is for educational purposes, according to Safe & Smart, less than 50-percent of youth actually use home computers for that purpose. For many youth, the majority of their online time at home is devoted to chat rooms, e-mail, instant messaging, and games. Monitoring children's online interactions can be a challenging activity for parents. Merely being in the same room, or occasionally glancing over a child's shoulder at the computer screen may discourage children from accessing sexually explicit or pornographic sites, but is less effective in monitoring chat room, e-mail, or instant messaging Many youth quickly learn and use a system of online communications. shorthand to alert one another to the presence of a parent or sibling. The use of codes, such as POS (parent over shoulder), P911 (parents here) and, when parents have left the room, 55 (it's clear now), allow young people to guard the nature of their communications while a parent or other adult is close by.

The desire to respect children's privacy in the absence of credible concern often makes many adult family members reluctant to monitor their children's online activity closely. This is problematic however, because children are unaware of the true identity of those they are communicating with online. The ability of members of hate groups and other adults with questionable motives to masquerade as peers adds gravity to concerns about children's online safety. Thus, it is vital that parental guidance and monitoring be combined with opportunities for young people to develop skills for responsible online decision-making and for assessing the credibility and reliability of online acquaintances and sources of information.

Survey data from the NSBF's second national study (Are We There Yet?, 2002) indicates that school leaders view online learning as a significant trend in education with the potential to substantially expand its role as an instructional tool in the future. Nine out of ten school leaders, however, indicated they are concerned about students' online safety. Schools have instituted a number of positive strategies to monitor students' online activities, including filtering software, teacher supervision, and school policies and honor codes. While these preventative strategies are important safeguards, they are not infallible. The Web site content of some hate groups is designed to be able to permeate filtering software, and adults with supervision responsibilities may lack the necessary computer competence to effectively monitor students' online activities.

Protecting Children Online

Extremists have historically used a variety of print materials, including books, posters, pamphlets, flyers, magazines and catalogues, to communicate their messages of hate to new audiences. In recent years, they have increasingly used video and telecommunication resources, such as movies, recorded audio and videotapes, and public access programming, to spread their beliefs. As the presence of online technology has increased in the classroom and community, extremists have taken their messages of hate to the Internet, enabling them to reach millions of people at little or no cost. From the privacy of their own homes, many members of extremist groups have developed the technological savvy to maintain sophisticated Web sites, orchestrate e-commerce, and direct conversations in chat rooms and listserves. At the same time the U.S. Department of Education was developing recommendations and policies for schools to monitor online education, the first extremist Web site was being developed by Don Black, a self-proclaimed "White Nationalist" and creator of the racist Web site Stormfront. Proponents of hate, such as William Pierce and Matthew Hale, were already using the Internet to actively recruit new members, spread hateful philosophy, and accrue revenue by selling products online. In his memoir, My Awakening, David Duke wrote, "How many millions of dollars would it cost me to have a radio station that could broadcast my radio programs to the entire globe, 24 hours a day? Through the Internet, I do it RIGHT NOW and [at] a fraction of the cost."

A False Sense of Anonymity

Because children and adults typically engage in online activity from the privacy of their own homes, most feel that their online communication and activity is largely anonymous. By assuming seemingly unthreatening personae, purveyors of hate are able to make children feel a false sense of safety which encourages engaging in more open and unrestrained communication than would be likely in

a face-to-face situation. Members of extremist groups attempt to use such opportunities to promote their philosophies, to form alliances with alienated youth, and to encourage involvement and interest in the group's ideas and activities.

Presenting Beliefs as Truth

Many extremist sites masquerade as sources of legitimate information, presenting propaganda and half-truths as fact. Determining the credibility of particular groups and organizations hosting Web sites can be difficult and challenging. As Web development tools have become increasingly user-friendly, extremist groups have been able to create professional-looking sites that visually resemble those of reputable organizations.

Internet Filters

Concerns have increased significantly over the ease with which young people encounter and access inappropriate online content, including extremist sites. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) reported that in 1999, one in five children was frequently being misled by predators online (Finkelhor et al, 2000). As a result, many adults and organizations that serve youth are beginning to initiate the use of software programs that limit children's access to that particular Web content. These programs, known as filters, are designed to act as gatekeepers, protecting children by blocking access to Web sites of individuals or groups that advocate hatred, bigotry, violence, or inappropriate sexual content. Many filtering programs, however, do not block these sites or censor their content. Internet filters are primarily tools to assist adults in becoming aware of what sites children are viewing on the Web. In light of the constantly changing nature of the Internet, however, these filters cannot guarantee accuracy or thoroughness in identifying objectionable sites. Occasionally, these filters may block legitimate sites that offer some educational content, while failing to block the offensive sites they were designed to exclude. Filters can be useful tools, but they do not guarantee absolute protection from hate on the Internet for children. According to a recent report on filtering software conducted by Consumer Reports (2001), "Filtering software is no substitute for parental supervision. Most of the products we tested failed to block one objectionable site in five."

Sample Internet Filtering Software Packages

Crayon Crawler: Crayon filters provides parents with the ability to block children's access to hate content, inappropriate language, and from giving out personal information. A child-safe Web browser is also included. (Free download available at www.crayoncrawler.com.)

Cybersitter: Cybersitter attacks offensive Internet content in newsgroups, chat rooms, and e-mail through a combination of highly tailored filtering capacity and recognition of a wide variety of questionable content on individual sites. (Available for \$39.95 at www.cybersitter.com.)

HateFilter: The Anti-Defamation League's HateFilter® is a free software product designed to protect children by blocking access to Web sites of individuals or groups that, in the judgment of the Anti-Defamation League, advocate hatred, bigotry or even violence towards Jews or other groups on the basis of their religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other immutable characteristics. (Free download available at www.adl.org/hatefilter/hatefilter important.asp.)

We-Blocker Software: We-Blocker enables parents to effectively restrict children's access to Web sites that contain hate speech directed towards a particular group based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or social status, including sites by individuals and militant extremist groups. (Free download available at www.we-blocker.com/index.php.)

Critical Thinking: The Best Tool Against Hate

Critical thinking skills, described by John Dewey as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends," (Dewey, 1938) are one of the most effective tools to provide young people with protection against hate on the Internet.

In the absence of critical thinking skills, children remain vulnerable to extremism and the other dangerous anti-social influences that permeate our culture. To develop critical thinking skills, educators must raise issues that create dissonance and refrain from expressing their own bias, thus allowing students to debate and resolve problems. This process requires patience, skill, and commitment on the part of educators (Tama, 1989).

There are five general steps that outline the process of critical thinking. The following brief description of the critical thinking process underscores the value of these skills in assessing information obtained through the Internet (Guffey, 1996):

- 1. **Identifying and clarifying the issue.** Clearly articulating the main question that is being considered, as well as the secondary questions that are implied by the topic; seeking and generating additional questions relating to the issue.
- **2. Gathering information.** Learning more about the issue and context in which the issue is presented; researching the history surrounding the issue; accessing different sources of information to collect a balanced perspective.
- **3. Evaluating evidence.** Unwillingness to accept information gathered at face value; consideration of the sources of information and their accuracy; questioning whether information is fact or opinion and whether the source has biases or ulterior motives that might prevent complete objectivity.
- 4. Considering alternatives and implications. Analyzing and synthesizing information and drawing conclusions from the evidence gathered; listing potential solutions or perspectives and weighing the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- **5. Creative thinking.** Achieving distance from information or material and striving to develop unique and original perspectives.

Parents also have an important role to play in encouraging critical thinking skills in children. Children quite naturally form categories to help them understand the differences they perceive around them; it is the responsibility of parents and teachers to help children better understand those differences and to not form value judgments about them. Parents and families have a unique role to play as the first source of information children use to begin building not only their own sense of identity but also their ideas and beliefs about issues related to bias and prejudice. Giving children clear, accurate, and age-appropriate information when they encounter these issues, helps them to begin processing the information in nonjudgmental and meaningful ways (Wotorson, 2001).

Skills to Assess Web Site Content

Critical thinking skills have been long recognized as core competencies for students in all disciplines of learning. Simple educational strategies can be used at home and school to educate young people to use critical thinking to assess the accuracy of information and to learn how to respond when they encounter individuals or Web sites that promote hatred and bigotry. The University of North Texas has developed a process to promote and reinforce the use of critical

thinking to evaluate information on the Web (www.library.unt.edu/classes/education/snap.htm):

EVALUATING WEB SITES is a S.N.A.P.!

S = **Source** - Somebody created this site. Who?

N = Nature - Why does this site exist? Purpose?

A = Appearance/Accessibility - Does this site function efficiently?

P = **Page Content** – Is the information accurate and reliable?

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This process is useful for younger school-aged children (grades K-6), beginning to use the Internet. Developmentally, elementary school children do not typically question online content, but rather uncritically accept as truthful information they access on the Web. Once children understand the need to evaluate the accuracy of online content and have learned a simple process to do so, they will be more likely to become actively engaged in their own online learning. As critical thinking skills improve, students can be encouraged to engage in an in-depth evaluation of online content and can begin to develop responsive strategies to protect themselves against online purveyors of hate.

Beginning in the upper elementary years, children will benefit from opportunities to develop advanced skills to assess the accuracy of Web site content. For example, students using the Internet for research can learn how to read the headers and footers of Web pages, which often provide information about the author, sources of the information, and applicable copyright restrictions. Search engines may also provide additional information about Web authors and sources. If concerns about the credibility of a Web author or site sponsor arise during the evaluation process, information on the site should be disregarded.

Note: The next section, **Practical Tools for Educators and Families**, includes a sample Web Site Evaluation Form, created by the Anti-Defamation League. Partners Against Hate recommends this or similar forms as effective tools to assist middle and high school students in assessing Web content.

While critical thinking skills are among the most useful tools for promoting safe navigation of the Internet, the Internet itself provides rich resources for teaching these skills to children. According to Mark Ivey and Elizabeth Kemper (Ivey and Kemper, 2000):

"In a world overflowing with information, it's no wonder that kids often struggle to put it all into context in a way that will translate into real knowledge and understanding. That's where critical thinking comes in – the ability to anticipate consequences, to wade through the hype to find truth, to conduct logical analysis and so on. As we move more toward an information-based society, these skills take on even more importance. The personal computer can help your child develop these thinking skills, with your help. And although the computer isn't a cure-all, appropriately applied it can go a long way towards boosting a child's critical thinking."

IV. Practical Tools for Educators and Families

Educators and adult family members can provide opportunities for children and youth to develop skills to protect themselves from hate on the Internet. The following tools and activities, included in this section, are designed to support this process:

- Internet Guidelines for Parents & Families, Teachers, and Librarians
- Internet Tips for Kids
- Responding to Hate Online: Some Scenarios
- **■** Web Site Evaluation Form
- Families on the Internet: Suggested Activities and Discussion Guidelines

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Internet Guidelines for Parents & Families, Educators, and Librarians

- Locate computers in open areas shared by the family. Position computers so that adults can easily view what is on the screen. When supervising children's computer use, establish a consistent, helpful presence that discourages the perception that adults are violating children's privacy.
- Post, discuss, and reinforce with children the Internet Tips for Kids.
- Spend time visiting Internet sites with children. Use these opportunities to demonstrate and model practical application of a critical thinking approach to assessing content and accuracy. Encourage questions about material children do not understand.
- Be aware of the online activities of children. Initiate discussion about children's online experiences.
- Discuss with children the dangers of sharing personal information with others online and continually reinforce the importance of this guideline. Clarify the kinds of information that should never be shared (names, addresses, phone numbers, names of schools and grade levels). This is a critical safety rule for people of all ages.
 - Provide children with opportunities for skill development and the necessary tools and resources to assess accuracy of Web site content. Provide supervised opportunities for children to practice these skills online.
 - Instruct children to immediately notify the appropriate authorities (parent or other adult family member, teacher or other school personnel, librarian, etc.) when they encounter hate online.

- Discuss and provide opportunities for children to practice strategies for responding to individuals and groups encountered online that promote intolerance and hate. Distinguish between immediate strategies (logging out of chat room) and long-term strategies (writing a letter to the local Anti-Defamation League office or police department to provide information about the Web site).
- Explore and utilize services and resources provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to protect children from encountering hate online, such as built-in filters. If your current ISP does not offer family-oriented services, explore other local options for this Internet access.
- Restrict time children spend online, and provide guidance for structuring online time. Limit unstructured random surfing, and consistently supervise children's online activities.
- Model safe use of the Internet, avoiding potentially dangerous situations, including online romance and gambling. Children are keen observers of adult behavior and will often emulate it, despite warnings to the contrary.
- Stress personal responsibility in children. Knowledge and education are key weapons against hate and intolerance. Establish an environment of open communication to build awareness of children's online activities and to take necessary steps to protect children from online encounters with people who promulgate hatred and bigotry.
- Talk frequently with children about what sites they are visiting, and what they are seeing and hearing online. Use these opportunities to teach and reinforce skills to assess online content and safety.

Internet Tips for Kids

If you encounter hate online, notify someone immediately. If you see any threatening or offensive language online, immediately report it to a parent or other adult family member, a teacher or other school staff.

Do not give out identifying information, including your name, your street address, the town you live in, your telephone number, or school name without asking a parent. Just as you would exercise caution and judgment giving personal information to a stranger you might meet in person, never share any personal information with someone you don't know in a chat room, discussion board, e-mail, instant message, or online form.

Never accept e-mail, e-mail attachments, downloaded files or links to Web sites from people you do not personally know.

Keep your passwords a secret. Don't even tell your best friend.

Log off and discuss concerns if an online experience makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable. If you read anything that upsets you in a chat room or on a Web site, leave the site immediately and notify a teacher, librarian, parent, or other adult family member.

Never agree to meet someone in person without asking a parent first.

Seek out reliable sources of online information. When doing research on the Internet, focus on sites with Web addresses that end in ".org," ".gov" or ".edu" – these suffixes indicate that the sites are sponsored by not-for-profit organizations, governmental agencies, and educational institutions, like schools and universities.

Do not respond in any way to online messages that communicate hate. Do not engage in dialogue with individuals advocating prejudice, hatred, or violence toward any person or group. Log out of the site and notify an adult about your experience.

Use critical thinking skills to determine reliability of online information. If a Web site seems disorganized, is poorly written, or makes claims you question, search for alternative sources of information.

Know who is sponsoring the Web sites you visit. By clicking on the "home" or "about us" sections of Web sites, you can determine the sponsor of a Web site. If you determine that a Web site is sponsored by an extremist group or other organization you are unfamiliar with, the information on the site is suspect.

- **DO** . . . discuss with your family Web sites you have visited that interest you or that you have questions or concerns about.
- DO NOT . . . contact the sponsor of a Web site or provide any personal information, such as your e-mail address or screen name, without first discussing your interest with a parent or other adult family member.

Responding to Hate Online: Some Scenarios

Ongoing family dialogue about the online experiences of children assists children in developing the necessary skills to promote safe navigation of the Internet and to appropriately respond to individuals and groups using the Internet to promote hate.

Attempts by members of hate groups to involve children and youth in their activities should be reported to law enforcement authorities or to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The ADL Web site (www.adl.org) also provides useful information on hate groups and offers free filtering software that redirects children's attempts to access hate sites, connecting them instead to Web pages that provide factual information about the nature of these organizations.

The following scenarios are useful for review and discussion with children of all ages; they provide opportunities to discuss potential situations that may arise online. Children should have opportunities to develop and practice responses to these scenarios. A set of sequential discussion questions follows each scenario to assist children in using critical thinking skills to develop appropriate responses. Each scenario also includes a section of *Useful Discussion Points*, designed to provide additional guidance for parents or adult family members in leading these discussions with children.

Scenario 1

A friend you just met in a chat room suggests the two of you have a private chat. Once you get in the private chat-room, the friend starts talking about his hatred of Jews. He asks you if you ever heard of the Holocaust and when you say you have, he tells you that it is all a lie and that it never really happened. He gives you a Web site address that proves what he is saying.

Consider the following:

- Would you continue to chat with this person? Why or why not?
- What are some possible consequences of continuing to chat with this person?
- Would you be interested in visiting this Web site based on what this person said?
- What can you know about the identity of the person you are chatting with? What can't you know?
- Should you tell anyone else about this conversation? If so, who? Why is this important?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Discuss the potential dangers to your child of visiting sites sponsored by groups that promote hate, bigotry, and misinformation. Explore with your child Web sites that provide factual information about the Holocaust (http://motlc.wiesenthal.com/pages/, www.adl.org/main holocaust.asp, or www.aish.com/holocaust/default.asp). Encourage your child to discuss concerns about online experiences with you before taking any action.

Scenario 2

You are checking your e-mail one night and find an e-mail message from someone you don't know. You open the e-mail and read a message that suggests you check out a great Web site that has a lot of games and free stuff. The e-mail contains a hyperlink, which you click on to go to the site. It seems to have a lot of fun activities. You think the Web site might be a religious site because the sponsors are a group called the World Church of the Creator.

Consider the following:

- What are some possible consequences of opening an e-mail from someone you don't know?
- If you decide to spend some time on the site playing games, why might it be important to know the purpose or beliefs of the sponsoring organization?
- If you were unsure, how might you determine the purpose and beliefs of the sponsor of this site? If you determine the purpose of this site is to promote hatred, what should you do?
- Who, if anyone, should you tell about this experience? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Discuss with children the possible consequences of opening e-mail messages from people they do not know (computer viruses, increased "junk" e-mail, exposure to inappropriate or offensive content). Discuss ways your child can assess the content and accuracy of Web sites. Provide guidance about what steps children can take when they become aware they are visiting a site that promotes hate and bigotry (not to provide any identifying information, log off site, discuss with parent or other adult family member). When children raise questions or

concerns about particular Web sites, work with them to identify alternative Web sites that are reputable and that provide verifiable information.

Scenario 3

One of your friends' and your favorite online activities is to visit a site that hosts bulletin board discussions for kids your age on topics that interest you. During the past week, you have been participating in a lengthy discussion about name-calling and bullying at school. You and your friend have just posted a message where your friend mentioned she was African-American. Suddenly, you get an instant message that includes a racial slur and a threat against the family of your friend.

Consider the following:

- What is the first thing you should do?
- Should you respond to the instant message? Why or why not?
- What are some of the possible consequences if you decide to respond to the instant message?
- Would your response differ depending on whether or not you knew the person who sent the instant message to you? If so, in what way?
- Who, if anyone, should you tell about what happened? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Encourage children to recognize the potential danger when hate speech includes threatening language. Clarify and practice the steps children should take if they are ever threatened online (log off immediately and notify an adult family member or teacher). Reassure children of their safety and help children understand the necessity of taking all threats seriously, including those wagered through the seeming anonymity of the Internet.

Scenario 4

You are using a search engine to research the Civil War for a class project. When you click on one of the links from the search results, you find that that it is a site for the Ku Klux Klan. As you look around the site, you notice that by providing your e-mail address, you can play an online video game. You love to play video

Consider the following:

- Should you go ahead and type in your e-mail address? What are the possible consequences of providing identifying information, such as your e-mail address, to the sponsors of this site?
- Have you ever heard of the Ku Klux Klan? What do you know about this group?
- Based on your current knowledge, should you continue to explore this site?
- Who, if anyone, should you tell about visiting this site? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses

Reinforce that children should never provide identifying information to online acquaintances or on Web site forms without first discussing their interest with you. If children inadvertently visit Web sites sponsored by groups that promote hate, discuss with your child the possible motivation of the group. Supplement your child's knowledge of the Ku Klux Klan with factual information (such as www.adl.org/issue_combating_hate/uka/default.asp or www.tolerance.org/maps/hate/group.jsp?map_data_type_id=3). Encourage children to discuss their online experiences; provide regular opportunities for them to do so.

Scenario 5

For the past several months, you have been conversing with an online friend you met in a chat-room. Recently, the two of you have started "instant messaging" one another every evening. The friend has told you that he is the same age as you and attends a school near yours. Tonight, when the two of you were discussing your concerns over the recent terrorist attacks, your friend said, "Muslims all hate America. They all celebrated when they heard about the attacks. If we all killed one Muslim, maybe we'd be even." You respond that you disagree and that you have some Muslim friends that were as upset as you were. The next message says, "Wait! You better not be telling be you're one of them, because if you are, you better watch your back . . ."

Consider the following:

- How did the comments made by your friend make you feel? What do you think your friend meant by "You better watch your back?"
- Do you think you should respond to this comment? Why or why not?
- Can you be sure of the identity of the person you have befriended online?
- What are the possible consequences of having given identifying information to a person you don't really know?
- Do you think you should continue this online friendship? Why or why not?
- Who, if anyone, should tell you about this experience? Why is this important?
- What should you do?

Suggested Adult Responses:

Discuss with children their thoughts about what their friend said. Provide an opportunity for children to discuss their feelings and disappointments. Ask them to consider how their feelings would differ if they discovered their online friend was an adult rather than a peer. Discuss the possible consequences of the responses your child is interested in pursuing. Supplement your child's **ideas** with factual information about Muslims, Islam, and Arab culture.

Web Site Evaluation Form

Directions: This form provides a format for evaluating the credibility and reliability of information provided on a Web site. Complete this form and consider the information you have gathered before accepting online sources of information. If you cannot find the answer to a particular question, write "no information" or "not applicable" on the line. Record examples or key ideas to assist in your evaluation.

	I. General Information
N	ame of Web site
W	eb site address
Sı	abject of Web site
	II. Design and Navigation
D	oes the home page include a table of contents or menu?
	oes the text relate to any graphics, sounds or videos that are included at this te? If so, give examples.
	there are links, do they take you where you are supposed to go? If not, what is e problem linking to other sites?
C	an you navigate around the web site without getting lost or confused?

III. Host or Sponsor	
Is there a statement explaining the purpose of this site? If so, what is it?	
Who is responsible for this Web site (person or group)?	
Is there an "About Us" link or a link to information about the person or grou who is responsible for the site?	-
Can someone be contacted offline about this site? If so, who?	
Have the authors of this site described where they got their information?	_
IV. Content	
Does this site include the date that it was written?	
When was it last updated?	
Does the site cover what it says it's supposed to cover?	
Does the information seem reliable?	
How could you or how did you verify the information?	

What key v	vords do you notice in this site?
What is th	e relevance of these key words? How might they help you det
	site is misleading?
	V. Opinion Rating
Why does	(or doesn't) the Web site interest you?
Would you	recommend this site to someone else studying this topic? If y not?

Families on the Internet: Suggested Activities and Discussion Guidelines

The following additional activities and discussion questions will assist families in promoting children's safe navigation of the Internet.

- 1. Review the *Internet Tips for Kids* with children. Discuss each tip listed and ask why the tip is important. Suggest children choose a location to post *Internet Tips for Kids* so that it will serve as a reminder as they work at the computer.
- 2. Visit with your child Web sites that critically explore issues of bias and prejudice. Assist your child in becoming aware with the resources available on these Web sites; for example, the Web site of the Anti-Defamation League (www.adl.org) provides factual information on hate groups and a variety of classroom and community programs and resources to combat prejudice. The Web site of the Southern Poverty Law Center (www.tolerance.org) provides current statistics on hate crimes and sample Web pages that demonstrate some of the strategies employed by groups that promote hate and bigotry through the Internet. Additional online resources are included in the Bibliographies at the end of this publication.
- 3. Visit www.worldtrek.org/odyssey/teachers/treasure.html and do the Internet Treasure Hunt with your child.
- 4. Ask children to take you to their favorite Web sites. Inquire and discuss what features children like about the sites.
- 5. Spend time teaching children the skills to evaluate their favorite Web sites (consider using the SNAP process, page 32, for younger children and the sample *Web Site Evaluation Form* created by the Anti-Defamation League, page 44, for middle and high school students).
- 6. Choose a topic of interest to your family and use a search engine to search the Web together to gather information. Suggested search topics include the origins of your family surname, a potential vacation spot, things to do in your community, or recipes for a favorite kind of food.
- 7. Discuss with children what actions they might take if they were to encounter a hateful Web site. The following are some suggested actions:
 - tell a teacher, parent, or other adult about the Web site
 - remove the hate site from your screen
 - install filtering software in your personal computer
 - inform responsible authorities about the threatening, hateful, or violent material you find (parents, teachers, police, civil rights organizations)
- 8. If children have personal e-mail addresses, ask if they have ever received inappropriate e-mail messages. Instruct children not to reply to any unsolicited e-mail and to show you any future e-mail messages that concern them.

V. Bibliographies

Suggested Resources for Families

The following list of resources includes magazines, Web sites, and books that provide information and guidance for families seeking a safe online experience.

Magazines for Families

PC World

Every issue is filled with articles, monthly PC product rankings, news, and Web site reviews.

Wired

The focus is on current issues, technological advances, and the information revolution.

Yahoo! Internet Life

This publication combines print and online content to give users easy, direct access to the best sites on the World Wide Web. Every issue has hundreds of Web site reviews. Yahoo! Internet Life is also available online at www.yil.com.

Web Sites for Families

Bsafe Online

www.bsafehome.com

This site is a vertical service provider (VSP) that distributes and supports a new and growing line of Internet filtering and security applications for the home, school and small business markets.

KidsClick!

www.kidsclick.org, http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick

This is a search engine designed by librarians to guide young Internet users to quality, age appropriate Web sites.

KIDS FIRST!

www.cgcm.org/kidsfirst/index.shtml

Sponsored by the Coalition for Quality Children's Media (CQCM), a national not-for-profit, voluntary collaboration between the media industry, educators and child advocacy organizations. The mission of CQCM is to teach children the skills to become critical media users and to increase the availability of quality children's media. Although KIDS FIRST! does not presently evaluate Web sites, the principles and articles presented are applicable to children's Internet use.

Kidz Privacy

www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/edcams/kidzprivacy/index.html

This site is a campaign to spread awareness of the Federal Trade Commission's 1998

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and offers tips to keep children safe from online predators.

Parents Guide to the Internet

www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/internet

This online publication was written by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement. The guide helps parents bridge the gap between what children know and what they know to be able to assist children with their school work and help them get ready for the information age of the next century.

A Parents' Guide to the Internet...and how to protect your children in cyberspace www.familyquidebook.com/aboutbooksubindex.html

This is an excellent online book that offers comprehensive discussion and guidance for parents concerned about Internet usage by children.

Protecting Children Online

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cnty/cntydepts/safety/da/protecting/index.html

Sponsored by the County of San Diego District Attorney, this is an example of a local Web site that provides statistics and direction for parents concerned with keeping children safe from Internet predators.

Yahooligans! Parents' Guide

www.yahooligans.com/parents/index.html

This Web site offers resources and articles about safe surfing, monitoring, policy-making and online security.

Books for Families

Aftab, P. (1999). The Parent's Guide to Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

- Bullard, S. (1997). Teaching Tolerance: Raising Open-Minded, Empathetic Children. New York, NY: Doubleday.
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Suggested Resources for Educators

The following list consists of recommended Web sites and books that are available for teachers and librarians to help them promote safe and educational use of the Internet to their students.

Web Sites for Educators

AT&T Learning Network: Resources for Teachers

www.att.com/learningnetwork/teachers

This comprehensive site is self-described as the place "where education and technology emerge."

ProQuest: Information and Learning

www.bigchalk.com/cgi-bin/WebObjects/WOPortal.woa/db/Home.html

This site provides an extensive spectrum of educational Internet services to teachers, students, parents, librarians and school administrators involved in K-12 education. The site is divided into easy to navigate sections for teachers (by level), students, librarians/media specialists, and parents.

Children on the Internet

www.otal.umd.edu/UUPractice/children

This document analyzes the elements of quality educational Web sites. Statistics and tips on Internet usage by children are offered as well as a list of recommended sites.

Education Planet: The Education Web Guide

www.educationplanet.com

This Web site directs teachers, students and parents to web-based educational web tools and e-learning services. An Extensive 'Search' option links the user with over 20,000 educational supplies for all grade levels. Teachers share ideas on how to integrate technology into curriculum.

NZiTech Network's Safety Online: Building Safer Online Communities http://www.nzitech.net/safety/index.htm

This online publication is a safety resource guide for Educators and Parents. The guide aims to help educators, teachers, and parents decide on strategies to help protect their students and children online. It includes information about dangers, strategies for protection, monitoring, filtering, and empowering your children to make effective decisions when using the Internet.

Yahooligans!: Teachers' Guide

www.yahooligans.com/tq/index.html

This site offers many online lesson plans by subject and general resources for teaching Internet literacy including use policies and related links.

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Suggested Resources for Students

The following Web sites and books are recommended for youth who use the Internet for schoolwork or entertainment.

Web Sites for Students

America Links Up: A Kids Online Teach-In

www.getnetwise.org/americalinksup/index2.html

America Links Up: AKids Online Teach-In is a public awareness and education campaign sponsored by a broad-based coalition of non-profits, education groups, and corporations concerned with providing children with a safe and rewarding experience online. This site contains a number of valuable resources for parents and kids.

Ask Jeeves for Kids

www.ajkids.com

This site is an easy and kid-friendly way for kids to find answers to their questions online. A student enters a question and the engine returns one link that has been reviewed to assure quality, appropriate content. Designed to be a fun destination site focused on learning and "edutainment." The service combines human editorial judgment with filtering technology to enable kids to find both relevant and appropriate answers on the Web. This site also includes study tools, games, and a message board.

Kid Pix

www.kidpix.com

This Web site is sponsored by The Learning Company School Division and is a popular multimedia creativity title in schools across the nation.

KidsClick!

www.kidsclick.org

This is a search engine designed by librarians to guide young Internet users to quality, age appropriate Web sites.

Yahooligans! TheWeb Guide for Kids www.yahooligans.com

Books for Students

Dyson, M.J. (2000). Homework Help on the Internet. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Gralla, P. (1999). Online Kids: A Young Surfer's Guide to Cyberspace, 2nd ed. John Wiley & Sons.

Meers, T and Caldwell, T. (1999). 101 Best Web Sites for Kids. Lincolnwood, IL: Publications International, Ltd.

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- Trumbauer, L. (2000). Homework Help For Kids on the Net (Cool Sites). Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press.

Additional Online Resources

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking: Promoting it in the classroom. ERIC Digest. (ED 306554) www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC Digests/ed306554.html

Critical thinking skills and teacher education. ERIC Digest. (ED 297003) www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC Digests/ed297003.html

Three definitions of critical thinking www.criticalthinking.org/k12/k12library/definect.nclk

Teaching critical reading through literature. ERIC Digest. (ED 363869) www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed363869.html

Untangling the Web: Critical Thinking in an Online World www.library.ucsb.edu/untangle/jones.html

Hate on the Internet

A parent's guide to hate on the Internet: Helping your child safely navigate the information highway

www.adl.org/issue education/parents quide hate net.asp#1

The Consequences of Right-Wing Extremism on the Internet www.adl.org/internet/extremism rw/before.asp

Combating Extremism in Cyberspace: The Legal Issues Affecting Internet Hate Speech www.adl.org/Civil Rights/newcyber.pdf

Internet Safety for Children

Children Online

www.aacap.org/publications/factsfam/online.htm

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA)
www.cdt.org/leqislation/105th/privacy/coppa.html

A Critical Framework for Media Literacy www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/bigpict/mlframe.html

SafeKids.com

http://safekids.com

Teen Safety on the Information Highway

www.ncmec.org/missingkids/servlet/ResourceServlet?languageC
ountry=en US&PageId=0

Useful Statistics

Computers and the Internet

http://kids.infoplease.lycos.com/ipka/A0772279.html

Filtering Programs Useful but Far from Perfect

www.safekids.com/articles/filtering2000.htm

Home Computers and Internet Use in the United States: August 2000 www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/p23-207.pdf

How Many Online?

www.nua.ie/surveys/how many online/index.html

Internet and Web Use in the United States: Baselines for Commercial Development http://elab.vanderbilt.edu/research/papers/html/manuscripts/baseline/internet.demos.july9.1996.html

Internet Users in the U.S.

http://kids.infoplease.lycos.com/ipka/A0778257.html

The Land of Confusion? High School Students and their Use of the World Wide Web for Research

www.michaellorenzen.net

The National Center for Education Statistics

http://nces.ed.gov

Safe and Smart: Research and Guidelines for Children's Use of the Internet www.nsbf.org/safe-smart/index.html

Third of UK Children Use Internet

http://cyberatlas.internet.com/big picture/demographics/art icle/0,1323,5901 150351,00.html

U.S. Tops World in Online Time

www.childrennow.org/newsroom/news-00/cam-ra-8-7-00.htm

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Partners**Against**Hate

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