



Little Falls Township Public Schools

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

March 24, 2017

I am writing to you out of genuine concern for a recent increase in inappropriate games, language, and behaviors that have been exhibited by our students. During each of our investigations of these situations YouTube, YouTube kids, online interactive games, and other internet sites were consistently identified as the means to the information. While we have strict policies and guidelines for internet use in school, we are asking that you partner with us in this extremely important endeavor. We must work together to ensure that our children are safe and having exposure to developmentally appropriate information. Below is a list of suggestions for the safe utilization of electronic devices.

1. The computer should be in an open area, not in a child's room.
2. Assure your children that you know you can count on them to use the Internet responsibly.
3. Set clear expectations for your child, based on age and maturity. What sites is he/she allowed to visit just for fun? Write down the rules and place them next to the computer. Even sites and Apps that may appear age appropriate use language and actions that are not appropriate, especially in a school setting.
4. Use filtering software designed to help parents limit the websites children can access.
5. Remind your child that you are not spying; you are keeping him/her safe.
6. Tell your child that people who introduce themselves on the Internet are often not who they say they are. Show your child how easy it is to assume another identity online. Don't assume your child knows everything about the Internet. Kids are naturally trusting.
7. Instruct your child to never give out personal information online, including his/her full name, gender, age, school, address, or teams. Teach your child to be generic and anonymous on the Internet.

This letter is in no way meant to be judgmental. It serves to raise awareness and offer suggestions as we enter a time where our children are technologically advanced but not developmentally ready to handle what they are being exposed to through the internet.

"The Internet offers incredible benefits to families, and people are becoming more connected at a younger age every day," says Amber Lindsay, director of program development and outreach for the Internet Keep Safe Coalition. "From the moment youth start using technology, parents should take an active role in communicating and keeping current on what their child is doing....Open communication creates a relationship of trust that will make this process easier."

If you have any questions, concerns, or need assistance, please contact your child's principal. We have staff who are trained and available.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracey Marinelli".

Tracey Marinelli

One District... One Team... One Vision...

www.lfschools.org