



# Supervising children online

Children need parents and carers to teach them how to make smart choices about who and what they find online, to deal with commercial material, safeguard their privacy, to have a positive experience when meeting people online, and use their time on the internet effectively.

The types of rules you may have made about how to deal with strangers and what children can watch on television or video are also relevant to the internet. There are some general principles that apply to children in most age groups:

- Involve the family.
- Set some appropriate guidelines for internet use and discuss them with the children you care for.
- Take an interest in the new sites children are finding online and spend time exploring with them. This will help children retain your values for when you cannot be together.
- Keep in touch with what children are doing online.
- Put the computer with the internet access in a public area of the home, such as the living room, rather than a child's bedroom or playroom.
- Have family talks about the internet and encourage children to let you know if they come across anything disturbing.
- With older children, you may choose to discuss the nature of material found on the internet.

Remember that children will have access to the internet not only at home, but also at other places like schools, friends' houses and libraries.

Mobile internet devices such as phones and PDAs are also being used by children for internet access.

By allowing children to make informed decisions about the content they access, and by developing a sense of trust at home, your children will be in a good position to use the internet in a responsible way when they are away from the home environment.

## About NetAlert

NetAlert is the Australian Government's online safety program, set up to protect Australian families online. NetAlert is part of the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). It offers independent, sensible, helpful and reliable advice and information about potential problems, dangers and threats on the internet and ways to minimise or avoid these problems.

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