

Top Five Rules For Safe Online Chatting

by Barbara J. Feldman on August 28, 2007 · 0 comments



Online chatting stops being fun when someone gets hurt. Online predators are becoming more skilled and learning new tricks that they are then using against people like you and I. Although it is not the majority of online chatters who are targeted by a predator, it is nonetheless important to exercise caution to ensure that you too do not become another sad statistic. Below are five of the top online chatting safety rules to abide by. As individual situations will differ, you may need to keep additional chat room safety rules in mind that are not necessarily listed here.

Rule #1 — Protect your identity

The most important safety rule to remember when chatting online is that anything you type in a chat room can be seen by everyone. Predators looking to take advantage of people will look for even the smallest bit of volunteered personal information and they will use that information against you. Just as you would never post your credit card number or social security number in a public place, you should never give out any personal information while you are chatting online. Some examples of personal information that should remain protected include your real name, telephone or cell phone number, mailing address, passwords, banking details, etc.

Rule #2 — People on the Internet may not be who they say they are.

One of the greatest dangers about chatting online is that you have no way of knowing whether or not the person that you are chatting with really is who they say they are. Predators are known for their ability to persuasively portray a variety of different types of people in order to gain your trust. This is why it is so dangerous when people decide to meet those who they only know from their

online chats. You could be putting yourself right in the arms of a predator by not using caution and being wise about the situations you put yourself in.

Rule #3 — Use a secure chat room

Chat rooms come in all different shapes and sizes. Some chat rooms are a free-for-all, while others have specific rules and codes of conduct that must be followed. Make sure that you enter a chat room that is appropriate for you. Children have no place chatting with adults. Find a chat room with a moderator who can add additional security by filtering out any inappropriate content from the chat room.

Rule #4 — Parents, set chatting safety rules for your children

Children are often the targets of predators because children are generally very trusting. Teach your children important online chatting safety rules. Make sure that you talk to your children about the conversations that they have online and the types of people that they are chatting with. Make sure that your kids are in age-appropriate chat rooms and encourage your children to come to you if they ever feel uncomfortable about a question that was asked to them or a message that they received. Many times it is best to only allow your child to chat with people that you and they know personally, rather than allowing conversations with strangers.

Rule #5 — Do not let your guard down

Predators, including pedophiles, who are online and in chat rooms are very clever and have experience in being deceptive. These dangerous people will often spend months gaining your trust, or the trust of your children, before asking personal questions or to meet you in person. Remember that unless you know personally the person that you are chatting with, you have no way of knowing whether or not your chatting partner really is who he says he is.

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