

Faculty Insider—Acceptable Use Policies

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“The dream begins with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes and leads you to the next plateau, sometimes poking you with a sharp stick called “truth.”

~Dan Rather

What is an acceptable use policy?

An acceptable use policy (AUP) is a written agreement, signed by students, their parents, and school staff, outlining the terms and conditions of school technology use. It specifically describes acceptable uses, rules of online behavior, and access privileges. It also includes penalties and consequences for violation of the policy.

Why have an AUP?

The Internet can be a powerful tool for use in a learning environment. Having nearly instant access to sites on everything from tree frogs to the daily weather allows for creative lesson planning. There are countless websites with information on virtually every subject. As a resource for teachers it is astonishing. Lesson plans are available by subject areas as well as reproducible worksheets and online activities—all at the click of a button. Students can develop their computer skills, take online field trips, do research, or correspond with friends. By using the Internet in the classroom, students now have access to information not available in school libraries. Students' horizons are expanded without ever leaving the classroom.

However, with the good we are also finding some bad. The Internet has its dangers. There are online predators, cyber harassment and bullying. Not to mention the sites that are objectionable for racial, sexist, political, sexual, or other reasons. And then there are sites that are simply people's opinions presented as fact—a trap many students haven't yet learned to sidestep. To complicate matters, in the U.S. the Constitution protects material placed online, preserving freedom of speech. What most people don't realize is that the



Internet is an international linking of networks, making it impossible to censor. Thus, schools and educators must rely on other means to safely use this resilient educational tool.

One option is to limit access to sites through filtering or blocking software. Students growing up in the computer age, however, often have the skills to bypass such software. Also, software does make mistakes. Many educators find such filtering and blocking annoying as they research valid topics, such as the Holocaust. Site after site is electronically “banned” even though they are educationally legitimate sites.

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NAC Tracks

Does your school's AUP cover cyber bullying?





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Instead of banning or blocking, many schools are turning to a better method—that of proactive education. By teaching students responsible behavior, asking them to sign an agreement, and providing in writing consequences for wrongful action—students develop a sense of responsibility and ownership for their online experience. Thus, we develop and agree to Acceptable Use Policies.

AUPs can be developed at almost any level. Many states, such as California or Indiana, have either developed their own AUPs or set up mandatory guidelines for developing AUPs. Often school districts come up with guidelines based upon these or national recommendations. While appropriate, these do not necessarily cover every aspect that may face an individual school. Many schools adapt and add to these policies making them their own. How to present and enforce AUPs is often left to the school-level decision makers. But if you are developing one, here are some tips.



AUPs should be designed to

- Educate parents about their children's use of the Internet
- Educate students about
 - > risks peculiar to computer communication
 - > rules for efficient, ethical, legal computer/network use
 - > safe and appropriate computer social behavior
 - > use of available and unavailable services
- Preserve digitized materials created by students and teachers
- Protect vulnerable children from inappropriate communications
- Discourage children from making inappropriate personal disclosures
- Encourage ethical behavior, and discourage criminal behavior
- Encourage accepted netiquette from the start
- Encourage polite and civil communication
- Encourage individual integrity and honesty
- Encourage respect for others and their private property
- Provide for enforcement of agreed rules of behavior
- Encourage equal access to educational opportunities for all children
- Protect the school networking equipment and software from danger
- Help improve network efficiency by influencing resource usage
- Share responsibility for the risks of using the Internet
- Reduce the risk of lawsuits against teachers, schools, and providers
- Simplify life for computer systems administrators
- Discourage copyright infringement, software piracy, and plagiarism
- Discourage slander, libel, defamation, and malicious gossip
- Discourage profanity, obscenity, pornography, and waste
- Discourage network game playing and/or anonymous messages
- Discourage use of computers and networks for profit or politics
- Assure users that their online activities are monitored
- Assure users that their e-mail privacy is being respected.

Compare your draft AUP against these suggestions and you will likely end up with a well-rounded document in which all parties can agree. 



NAC Corner—New Customized NAC Reports


i-SAFE's National Assessment Center (NAC) is the place where pre-program assessment data and post-program assessment data are collected and disseminated in our annual NAC report, "At Risk Online: National Assessment of Youth on the Internet." Last year our report included data from over 170,000 students who took NAC assessments. Over the past year i-SAFE has experienced an increasing demand for assessment analysis reports from teachers and schools. Until now the demand was from districts and states.

To keep up with the growing popularity for customized NAC reports we are expanding our breadth of analysis and streamlining our services. To fill the growing volume of requests NAC has set up a special Web page on the i-SAFE Web site to make obtaining your own customized NAC report fast and easy. With additional services and staffing requirements to meet your needs quickly and professionally we also added a new fee structure.

Benefits to you include: obtaining the latest assessment data analysis for your students; meaningful comparisons to national data; and tracking of the latest trends in on-

line risks and online safety behaviors. You now have direct access to this information online through the i-SAFE Store.

To order your customized NAC report, go to www.isafe.org. Click on the "i-SAFE Store" button in the lower left of the window and click the

"My Services" tab. Or, go directly to the NAC store page by clicking <http://auth.isafe.org/store/services.php>. There you will find our fee scale quoted. Fees are based on the number of student respondents to our assessments. Order your report using a purchase order or credit card. As with any change, your feedback is important to us. We welcome your comments about what your experience was like accessing the NAC report through the i-SAFE Store. 




In Action—A Little Action Can Go a Long Way

Jefferson County School District in Louisville, Kentucky has had an active 2006-2007 school year implementing i-SAFE training programs. In October alone it offered online safety training to 152 schools. The purpose of the training is for one or two people in every school to be i-SAFE certified. From there, district officials asked the i-SAFE certified trainers to implement their Internet safety education strategies.

Since this training, some schools have been holding parent meetings to get parents more involved in all aspects of their children's learning activities and to give parents a boost to become aware of ways to keep their children safe when they go on the Internet. School assembly programs were also held to educate the students. Middle school assistant principals address the issue of cyber bullying during their staff meeting this month. In March the district PTA has scheduled a parent-awareness training.

Some of the schools in the district utilized creative approaches towards Internet safety education, such as:

- holding a Cyber Awareness Week in which students participated in online safety activities;
- students write PSAs that they read during morning announcements with an invitation to other students to become i-MENTORS;
- a Student Technology Leadership Program within one school is taking on the task of sharing information not only with their own school, but is working towards becoming i-MENTORS and teaching students at a nearby elementary school.

By targeting educators, students and parents with the specific education that they need to promote Internet safety a community has come together. To learn more about i-SAFE's Internet safety programs and to start making a difference in your community visit <http://ilearn.isafe.org> 



i-SAFE Brings Worldwide Students Together

It's early morning at Semely Primary School in Semely, England, and all the students want to do is go online. They know that when they log on messages will be waiting for them from the United States. The students are eager to see new designs, responses to questions, or any new contributions left for them over night.

Karl Hopwood, headmaster at Semely, and project leader for the teams collaborating on Crossing Borders: A Safer Internet Day 2007 Competition, recently reported, "Checking the message boards in the morning is high on the priority list."

As Mr. Hopwood's students slept, the students at Athens-Chilesburg Elementary (A.C.E.) school in Lexington, Kentucky, were busy creating, editing, manipulating, tweaking and collaborating on their own, spurred on by the postings and comments they found left for them on the message board when they got to school.

The collaboration between the 9 to 11 year old students at the two schools will produce a PowerPoint presentation. "The PowerPoint idea helps students to 'see' and think of possible projects," says A.C.E. school project leader Dayna Lykins. "We really like the idea of compiling small projects into one large PowerPoint."

i-SAFE brought these two schools together, and developed the collaboration message board students use as their communication tool. "We are proud to be part of SID 2007 Blogathon Competition," says i-SAFE President and CEO Teri Schroeder. "Through this competition, students are empowered to build on their Internet



safety knowledge and share their learning with their peers. Our goal is to spread Internet safety awareness, and continue to provide education and empowerment to schools worldwide."

So, how did "Team Semely - Athens-Chilesburg" do? Check out their project through www.isafe.org. In addition, i-SAFE is producing a behind-the-scenes video that documents this collaboration. You'll see the entire creative process - from how decisions were made, to how challenges were met - directly from the students themselves. The world is invited to view this unique and enjoyable video documentary by visiting www.isafe.org.

The students are excited as they became more than colleagues. Some of them became fast friends. "I think my kids would be extremely excited to converse about other topics with Mr. Hopwood's kids on a regular basis," observed Ms. Lykins.



Alert—Spam with Trojan Viruses Hits Everywhere

Have you gotten these spam e-mails? The subject lines include "Storm batters Europe", updates on Condoleezza Rice, or claims that Hussein is alive. They masquerade as news flashes such as CNN updates, but it is spam laden with Trojan viruses. The subject lines vary, but the Trojan payload is the same: executable files surreptitiously installed on your computer. The files have names such as "Full Story.exe", "Full Text. Exe", "Full Video.exe" or "Read more.exe". This spam is currently hitting worldwide and some security experts estimate at least one in every 200 e-mail messages includes this Trojan. If you see this spam e-mail, don't open the attachment, don't save it to your computer, delete it immediately!



How to Make a Screen Shot

On a Windows machine, if you want to take a picture of what's on your screen, hit 'print screen' or the 'Prnt Scrn' key or on your keyboard, then open a program such as Microsoft Word, and hit Control + V, or 'Edit Paste'.

On a Mac, press Command + Shift + 3. The screen shot will be saved as a file to the desktop. If you would like to paste the picture in a document instead, just hold down the Control key while you press the other keys, then open your document and 'Paste'.





Congratulations Adrianna


By now, you may have seen the news that i-SAFE spokesperson Adrianna Sgarlata was not crowned Miss America 2007. The title went to Miss Oklahoma Lauren Nelson during the pageant on January 29th in Las Vegas. As the reigning Miss Virginia, Adrianna will continue to be the voice for America's youth, raising awareness about Internet safety for children, and as an anti-bullying advocate.

Since being crowned Miss Virginia last June, Adrianna has connected with thousands of students. She has visited classrooms, appeared at community events throughout Virginia, and she's featured in i-SAFE Public Service Announcements (PSA) to promote Internet safety awareness among children, parents, educators, and entire communities about online dangers. Adrianna's volunteer work – much of it raising Internet safety awareness as an i-SAFE spokesperson – resulted in being named one of the seven finalists for the Miss America Organization's prestigious "Quality of Life" scholarship. We'll continue to let you know what Adrianna is up to through these newsletters, and on i-SAFE's Web site.

It's a shame America didn't get to see Adrianna perform. She is an accomplished opera singer. If you missed the Miss America Pageant telecast on Country Music Television (CMT), re-broadcasts are scheduled to air on several cable networks this month. Check your listings. 



It's Your Turn

If you have concerns, questions, ideas, or opinions, we want to hear them. This newsletter is your forum. Your input will help us craft articles like "Ask an Expert" where we answer reader's questions, or it may be the framework for an informative article. You may have an Internet skill or tip that we can pass along to others, or you may have questions about the use of some of our programmatic materials. What about stories you can share about your online adventures? Did something interesting happen to you or a family member on your path to Internet safety that may be inspirational to others? How did you overcome a problem you encountered on the Net? Or, you may simply want to comment on a topic that you would like to see covered in more depth in our newsletter. Comments, questions, stories, editorials, opinions, you have them and we want them! Contact news@isafe.org and we look forward to hearing from you. 

Curriculum Bonus



Since this month's theme is acceptable use policies, we're carrying the theme through to our curriculum bonus. Use this word search to review AUP terms with students or even faculty. We highly suggest you also take the time to download and review the AUP lesson plan found in the grades 5-8 curriculum. This will help review your school's AUP with your class.

Click here for the curriculum bonus word search. 

About i-SAFE

Founded in 1998 and active in all 50 states, i-SAFE Inc. is the leader in Internet safety education. i-SAFE is a nonprofit foundation whose mission is to educate and empower students, parents, seniors, and community members to safely and responsibly take control of their Internet experiences. i-SAFE provides knowledge that enables them to recognize and avoid dangerous, destructive, or unlawful online behavior, and to respond appropriately. This is accomplished through dynamic K through 12 curriculum and community-outreach programs to students, parents, law enforcement, and community leaders. i-SAFE is the only Internet safety foundation to effectively combine these elements. www.isafe.org