



STOP | THINK | CONNECT

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## Safety Tips for Mobile Devices

Mobile devices can perform a variety of tasks: take pictures, send text messages, surf the Web, and store information. Today's mobile devices are as powerful and connected as any PC or laptop. Take the same precautions on your mobile device as you do on your computer with regard to messaging and online safety. The first step is **STOP. THINK. CONNECT.**

### Keep a Clean Machine.

Mobile devices are computers with software that needs to be kept up-to-date (just like your PC, laptop or tablet). Security protections are built in and updated on a regular basis. Take time to make sure all the mobile devices in your house have the latest protections. This may require syncing your device with a computer.

- **Keep security software current:** Having the latest mobile security software, web browser, and operating system are the best defenses against viruses, malware, and other online threats.
- **Protect all devices that connect to the Internet:** Computers, smart phones, gaming systems, and other web-enabled devices all need protection from viruses and malware.

### Protect Your Personal Information.

Phones can contain tremendous amounts of personal information. Lost or stolen devices can be used to gather information about you and, potentially, others. Protect your phone like you would your computer.

- **Secure your phone:** Use a strong passcode to lock your phone.
- **Think before you app:** Review the privacy policy and understanding what data (location, access to your social networks) on your device an app can access before you download it.
- **Only give your mobile number out to people you know and trust** and never give anyone else's number out without their permission.
- **Learn how to disable the geotagging feature on your phone** at <http://icanstalku.com/how.php#disable>.

### Connect with Care.

Use common sense when you connect. If you're online through an unsecured or unprotected network, be cautious about the sites you visit and the information you release.

- **Get savvy about Wi-Fi hotspots:** Limit the type of business you conduct and adjust the security settings on your device to limit who can access your phone.
- **Protect your \$\$:** When banking and shopping, check to be sure the site is security enabled. Look for web addresses with "https://" or "shttp://", which means the site takes extra measures to help secure your information. "Http://" is not secure.
- **When in doubt, don't respond.** Fraudulent texting, calling and voicemails are on the rise. Just like email, requests for personal information or to immediate action are almost always a scam.

### Be Web Wise.

Stay informed of the latest updates on your device. Know what to do if something goes wrong.

- **Stay current. Keep pace with new ways to stay safe online.** Check trusted websites for the latest information, and share with friends, family, and colleagues and encourage them to be web wise.
- **Know how to cell block others.** Using caller ID, you can block all incoming calls or block individual names and numbers.
- **Use caution when meeting face-to-face with someone who you only "know" through text messaging.** Even though texting is often the next step after online chatting, that does not mean that it is safer.

## **Be a Good Online Citizen.**

It is easy to say things from via phone or text that you would never say face to face. Remind your kids to maintain the same level of courtesy on the phone as they would in the real world.

- **Safer for me more secure for all:** What you do online has the potential to affect everyone – at home, at work and around the world. Practicing good online habits benefits the global digital community.
- **Text to others only as you would have them text to you.**
- **Only give your mobile number out to people you know and trust** and never give anyone else's number out without their permission.
- **Get permission before taking pictures or videos of others with your phone.** Likewise, let others know they need your permission before taking pictures or videos of you.

**STOP.** Before you use the Internet, take time to understand the risks and learn how to spot potential problems.

**THINK.** Take a moment to be certain the path is clear ahead. Watch for warning signs and consider how your actions online could impact your safety, or your family's.

**CONNECT.** Enjoy the Internet with greater confidence, knowing you've taken the right steps to safeguard yourself and your computer.

### **Additional resources:**

- AT&T Smart Controls: <http://www.att.net/smartcontrols-IncreaseSafety>
- Verizon Thinkfinity Online Safety Resources: [http://foundation.verizon.com/core/internet\\_safety-tips.shtml](http://foundation.verizon.com/core/internet_safety-tips.shtml)