Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet

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Recommended Citation

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Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet

By Jeffrey Barlow <barlowj@pacificu.edu>
Editor, Interface


The Internet has become a dangerous place in the last two years, as criminals of all descriptions have learned to use it for their own ends. It is an unusual day that opening our e-mail does not reveal multiple appeals for fake medicines, requests from those working some variant on the “Nigerian” e-mail scheme, and a variety of attempts to “phish” financial data. [1] And further, every variety of pornography is endlessly pushed at us.

These problems are serious enough even for consenting adults, but when one realizes that most children now must use the Internet for their school assignments, the number of potential victims seems endless.

There is need then, for at least one good book that helps parents guide their children through the potential dangers of the Internet. There is, however, a type of book that merely makes the problem worse by repeated breathless warnings of terrible dangers, coupled with facile solutions that usually involve buying software off the shelf and in effect preventing the child from accessing potentially dangerous sites. These works, which proliferate constantly [2], are little more than extended advertisements.

Other parents resort to futile attempts to turn back time to a period when there was no Internet and deny children its advantages as well as shielding them from its disadvantages. This, of course, is an impossible task. A teacher of my acquaintance recently received in her office a pair of earnest parents, accompanied by their chagrined high school freshman daughter. The parents gravely informed the teacher that they had decided that their daughter, who had been denied access to the Internet at home, now needed “Internet lessons” so as to be able to use it as effectively as the other students in her classes. As soon as the parents left the room, the student told the teacher not to bother arranging a tutor; she had been using it at friends’ houses as long
as she could remember.

In search of a useful parental guide, we looked at many works. The one we find most useful, for a certain type of parent at least, is Simon Johnson’s *Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet*. Johnson comes to the task with strong credentials. He has been working in the Internet industry in Australia, has a great deal of experience in security in particular, and is a parent as well.

The strengths of the book are that the author sees safety for children as a subset of the wider issue of Internet security. By protecting our computers and ourselves we also begin the task of protecting our children. For those of us whose heads have long been abuzz with such terms as “firewall,” “filtering,” “virus,” or “phishing,” the work serves as a systematic introduction to computer security. Using it as a guide, one could effectively heighten the security on a home computer system, as well as guide a neophyte user, whether child or adult, through the dangers of the Internet.

The author’s overall approach might be summed up in this quotation:

The Internet and the threats that exist on the Internet are only likely to grow. It is your responsibility to educate your children about the dangers of the Internet. Although I have filled a lot of pages with software evaluations, I can’t stress enough that education is the key, not computer software and certainly not “banning the Internet” altogether. Internet filters, virus scanners, and firewalls reduce the risk, but they don’t eliminate it. There will always be ways around computer software; its not 100 percent foolproof, and you shouldn’t rely upon it as a babysitter. (p. 280)

As indicated above, much of this book is composed of very careful software reviews of the leading applications for specific security-related tasks. This approach is a two-edged sword. The reviews are currently very useful ones, but will quickly become dated. (The work appears to have effectively been closed for publication as of June 2004.) This is an extremely crowded and dynamic field. Some of the also-ran producers will be updating their software, new producers entering the field, and others closing down, perhaps because their product was better than their business model.

But the book could, we believe, maintain its utility for two reasons: First, the reviews, no matter how dated they become, themselves lay out the advantages and disadvantages to different approaches to accomplishing security-related goals. We learn about different approaches to filtering, for example, and the trade-offs involved in them. Secondly, the author has created a WWW page where he suggests he will continually update the material. Unfortunately, at present the pages, found at [http://keepyourkidssafe.com/](http://keepyourkidssafe.com/) consist of an extended advertisement for the book, backed by the sorts of terrifying statistics intended to make parents either rush to the bookstore or pull the plug on the Internet.

Given the dynamism of the Internet and the creativity of the market-driven criminals who see it
as little more than a gigantic pond of rather stupid fish, it is probable that no book can be useful for longer than a year or so. But until a better book comes along, Simon Johnson’s work, *Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet*, is the place to begin protecting your children, providing that you are willing to take considerable responsibility for doing so. This will include systematic education of your children, strengthening the defenses of your home system, and becoming a thoughtful consumer.

Footnotes:

[1] We have published on all of these in the pages of Interface. For financial transactions, see Financial Transactions on the Internet, Part II.
http://bcis.pacificu.edu/journal/2003/05/edit.php
For the Nigerian scam, see the May 2002 edition of Interface, “Globalism, Crime, and the Internet”,
“Phishing” is the creation of fake web pages, which appear to be those of legitimate companies. This scheme begins by multiple emails spammed to potential victims who are usually warned of some problem at their bank, etc., that require that the victim enter account numbers, passwords, credit card information and other private data into the fake web site.


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28 THOUGHTS ON “KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE ON THE INTERNET”

internet marketing roberts and zahay

on February 2, 2014 at 5:40 AM said:

I drop a comment when I appreciate a post on a site or I have something to valuable to contribute to the conversation. Usually it is a result of the sincerness displayed in the post I read. And on this article Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet | Interface.

I was excited enough to leave a comment 😊 I do have a couple of questions for you if you do not mind. Could it be simply me or do a few of the remarks come across like they are coming from brain dead individuals?

😊 And, if you are writing at additional social sites, I would like to follow everything fresh
you have to post. Would you list all of all your public pages like your twitter feed, Facebook page or linkedin profile?

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**Barney**

*on February 2, 2014 at 7:58 AM said:*

Link exchange is nothing else but it is simply placing the other person’s web site link on your page at appropriate place and other person will also do same for you.

---

**lost weight using my fitness pal**

*on February 2, 2014 at 12:55 PM said:*

Hi, its fastidious post regarding media print, we all know media is a impressive source of facts.

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**online selling**

*on February 2, 2014 at 4:20 PM said:*

Thanks for sharing such a pleasant thought, piece of writing is fastidious, thats why i have read it completely.

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**Bradly**

*on February 2, 2014 at 5:35 PM said:*

Great beat ! I would like to apprentice while you amend your site, how can i subscribe for a blog site? The account aided me a acceptable deal. I had been tiny bit acquainted of this your broadcast provided
First off I would like to say fantastic blog!

I had a quick question in which I’d like to ask if you do not mind. I was curious to find out how you center yourself and clear your mind prior to writing. I’ve had a hard time clearing my mind in getting my thoughts out there. I do enjoy writing but it just seems like the first 10 to 15 minutes tend to be wasted simply just trying to figure out how to begin. Any recommendations or hints? Thanks!

I’m really enjoying the theme/design of your site. Do you ever run into any browser compatibility issues? A small number of my blog readers have complained about my site not operating correctly in Explorer but looks great in Firefox. Do you have any suggestions to help fix this issue?

I like the valuable info you supply for your articles. I will bookmark your weblog and check once more here frequently. I am rather certain I will learn lots of new stuff proper right here! Best of luck for the next!
seo linkbuilding
on February 2, 2014 at 9:58 PM said:

Hello, everything is going fine here and ofcourse every one is sharing facts, that’s actually fine, keep up writing.

9ja
on February 3, 2014 at 1:31 AM said:

This is my first time pay a visit at the following and i am truly impressed to read everthing at alone place.

Sherrie
on February 3, 2014 at 4:03 AM said:

My coder is trying to convince me to move to .net from PHP. I have always disliked the idea because of the expenses. But he’s tryiong none the less. I’ve been using WordPress on numerous websites for about a year and am concerned about switching to another platform. I have heard very good things about blogengine.net. Is there a way I can import all my wordpress posts into it?

Any help would be really appreciated!

network marketing gold
on February 3, 2014 at 7:12 AM said:

Thanks for finally writing about > Keep Your Kids Safe on the Internet | Interface < Loved it!
write Articles To sell to magazines
on February 3, 2014 at 7:25 AM said:

Someone essentially lend a hand to make severely articles I would state.
That is the first time I frequented your website page and up to now?
I amazed with the analysis you made to create this particular post incredible.
Great activity!

binary calculator
on February 3, 2014 at 10:29 AM said:

Hi! Would you mind if I share your blog with my facebook
group? There’s a lot of people that I think would really enjoy your content.
Please let me know. Thank you

horizon air vista aero lancer meeting domain web hosting meredith
abdominoplasty faa backround laptop notebook america airlines mysoace
bedford texas flint michigan breakfast vantage stained www cheapticket com
active san diego bed and breakfast copper re
on February 3, 2014 at 1:07 PM said:

Hi there Dear, are you actually visiting this web page daily, if so afterward you will without
doubt get fastidious know-how.

money target
on February 4, 2014 at 3:54 AM said:

Having read this I believed it was rather enlightening.
I appreciate you finding the time and energy to put this
content together. I once again find myself personally spending way too
much time both reading and commenting. But so what, it was still worthwhile!
Brandi  
on **February 4, 2014 at 7:50 AM** said:

Hello i am kavin, its my first time to commenting anywhere, when i read this post i thought i could also create comment due to this sensible post.

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Harriet  
on **February 4, 2014 at 9:20 AM** said:

Hello there! I could have sworn I’ve been to this website before but after checking through some of the post I realized it’s new to me.

Anyways, I’m definitely glad I found it and I’ll be book-marking and checking back often!

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make money using iphone  
on **February 4, 2014 at 9:32 AM** said:

If some one desires expert view concerning blogging and site-building then i propose him/her to go to see this weblog, Keep up the pleasant work.

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nigeria entertainment news  
on **February 4, 2014 at 10:29 AM** said:

Hi there, Sorry to your extended comment Thanks for sharing your article, following time can you write about wart removal products. Also is there any proven property cure for skin warts? Can you suggest me some? I live in Canada. Please dont forget that some stuff might not be offered in my area. That is why suggest me general issues that can be discovered everywhere. Also would you recommend buying wartrol online? is it not dangerous?
Hi! I could have sworn I’ve been to this site before but after browsing through some of the post I realized it’s new to me. Nonetheless, I’m definitely glad I found it and I’ll be bookmarking and checking back frequently!

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Enid

on February 4, 2014 at 2:19 PM said:

Thanks for a marvelous posting! I certainly enjoyed reading it, you could be a great author. I will ensure that I bookmark your blog and will come back down the road. I want to encourage yourself to continue your great posts, have a nice day!

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mobile bay

on February 4, 2014 at 4:44 PM said:

When I initially commented I clicked the “Notify me when new comments are added” checkbox and now each time a comment is added I get four e-mails with the same comment. Is there any way you can remove me from that service? Thank you!

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earn Money at home

on February 4, 2014 at 7:20 PM said:

Touche. Sound arguments. Keep up the amazing effort.
Annie
on February 5, 2014 at 12:03 AM said:

Very energetic post, I liked that bit. Will there be a part 2?

Elizabeth
on February 5, 2014 at 1:49 AM said:

I loved as much as you will receive carried out right here. The sketch is tasteful, your authored subject matter stylish. Nonetheless, you command get got an edginess over that you wish be delivering the following. Unwell unquestionably come more formerly again as exactly the same nearly very often inside case you shield this increase.

Miquel
on February 5, 2014 at 6:51 AM said:

I was wondering if you ever considered changing the page layout of your blog? Its very well written; I love what youve got to say. But maybe you could a little more in the way of content so people could connect with it better. Youve got an awful lot of text for only having 1 or two images. Maybe you could space it out better?

code p0300
on February 6, 2014 at 12:01 PM said:

With havin so much content do you ever run into any problems of plagorism or copyright infringement? My blog has a lot of completely unique content I’ve either created myself or outsourced but it seems a lot of it is popping it up all over the web without my permission.
Do you know any solutions to help reduce content from being stolen? I'd genuinely appreciate it.