BUCKAROO & WALLABELLA BOINGG
EXPLORE

Buckaroo

Wallabella (Bella)

www.DarbysKidsClub.com

DIGITAL SPACE

URL (Earl)

ROTFL

LOL

PROACTIVE PARENTS/GUARDIANS GUIDE
The Internet is an amazing place. It’s a great resource for both grown-ups and kids. It’s become a virtual library just a few clicks away. Think about how your kids use the Internet. Maybe they play games or do schoolwork or chat with friends or even watch their favorite shows. It’s all there. Type a few letters on the keyboard and you’re in!

But the Internet is not without its dangers. That’s where you step in to lay down some rules, watch their online activity and make sure they’re safe.

This booklet can help. Read on.

We wrote a book to teach kids about the digital world of the Internet. *The Adventures of Bolngg & Sprockette: Buckaroo & Wallabella Bolngg Explore Digital Space* gives kids a quick glimpse into the net. Have your kids start off this book by taking the pre-test to see what they already know.

There is so much that you can do online!

Awesome!

Desktop pcs, laptops, tablets and smartphones are as much a part of kids’ lives today as tv, radio and playing outside were for older generations. Your parents likely kept an eye on the shows you watched and the music you listened to as a child.

Today it’s even more important to know about what your kids see and hear online, who they meet, and what they share about themselves online. It’s a safety issue. With their safety in mind, you’ll want to:

- Talk to them about your concerns
- Use information and tools to protect them
- Closely watch their use of technology

**DISCLAIMER:** The information in this book should be used as a guide only, and we do not guarantee that following these suggestions will provide complete online safety. A certain level of risk exists with all Internet use. These guidelines may reduce risks, but we accept no responsibility for a child’s use of the Internet. We encourage active supervision of all children using the Internet, especially when they are in contact with other people.
KIDS AND TECHNOLOGY

Today’s kids are surrounded by technology, especially at home. Think about the technology you had as a child. Then compare that with these stats today for U.S. households with kids 8 years old and younger.

By the age of 8...
- 96% of children have watched TV
- 90% have used a computer
- 81% have played console video games
- 68% have had high-speed internet in their houses
- 60% have played games or used apps on a portable device

Every year, children’s access to media devices grows higher. The average amount of time spent using these devices has tripled in the last couple of years.

From Zero to Eight: Children’s Media Use in America 2013

In our story, Buckaroo Bolngg and his cousin Bella find out how quick it is to get online. It just took a touch of an icon on Buckaroo’s new smartphone. Before they knew it, they were orbiting in Digital Space.

Once in Digital Space, Buckaroo and Bella meet Qwerty and Url, two helpful characters who teach them about the online world and how to be good digital citizens.

The book defines words that all net-savvy kids should know:
- Icon
- Downloading
- Password
- Online BULlying
- Selfie

While Digital Space is a great place for kids to have fun, play games and keep in touch with friends, it’s not without its dangers.
ONLINE SAFETY: IT'S THE LAW

The U.S. Government came up with a special law to help protect kids online. This law is called the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). The aim of this law is to keep anyone from getting a child’s personal info—like name, age, address, phone number—unless a parent knows and agrees to it first.

With the COPPA law, websites have to make clear their privacy policies on the site and get a parent’s ok before they can collect a child’s info. The law also keeps sites from asking more personal info than needed to play a game or enter a contest.

Even with the COPPA law in place, you are your children’s best online protection. Talk to them about online dangers and keep an eye on their device use. Predators lurk online. But there are some useful tips to keep your kids safe while they surf the web.

TALK IT UP!

Chat with your child
Keeping some good dialogue open between you and your kids is key. Chat with them about what’s good and bad about the internet. Talk with them about what sites they like to visit online, what games they play and what their interests are. Don’t be afraid to ask your kids who they talk to online and what they talk about.

Discussion Starters
Q: Show me what you like to do online.
Q: What is personal info? Why should you keep it private?
Q: What could you do to be safer online?
Q: Where have you not felt safe online?
Q: What would you do if someone asked to meet you face-to-face?
Q: Other than me, who can you talk to if you feel scared or strange while online?

If anything ever makes you feel uncomfortable, tell an adult right away!
SOME BASIC RULES

Setting up some basic rules for your kids to follow when they’re online is the first step in keeping them safe.

Rules for you

- If your child has a new “friend” online, make sure you meet that friend, even if it’s just online or by phone.
- Never give out your date of birth or a Social Security number online.
- Keep your computer in a busy part of your home where use is easy to see.
- Set up limits for which sites your kids can visit and for how long.
- Let your kids know that they need to share their online activity with you when they’re on phones, tablets and laptops away from the home.
- Surf the web with your children and have them show you the sites they frequent.
- Know the people your kids connect with online.
- Set rules for social networking, instant messaging, texting, emailing, gaming and using webcams.
- Have ongoing talks with your kids about online safety.
- Keep an eye on your credit card and phone bills and watch for any account charges you don’t know about.
- Find out what online protection tools are in place on the computers your kids use at school, after-school care, friends’ homes or anywhere they may get online without your supervision. If none, don’t let your kids use those devices.
- If your child tells you about something online that upset him or her, listen, take him or her seriously and look into the matter.

Rules for them

Go over these rules with your kids and make sure they understand them.

- Never send personal photos or download these sent to you online.
- Never give out personal info, such as address, phone number, email, school name or hometown.
- Limit the amount of time for each online session. Don’t let your online time take away from time spent doing homework, chores, playing outside or enjoying activities with your family.
- Don’t reply to messages with threats. Alert a grown-up to these.
- Tell a trusted adult about any message that seems scary or wrong.
- Always keep in mind that what goes out over the net can live there forever.
- Don’t bring devices into your bedroom at night. Charge them in another room.

PROTECTION PLANET

A good citizen never gives personal info out about him or herself, or the information of others.

There are many good software programs online that can block certain websites, limit the amount of time spent online and track chats. Look into these at InternetSafety.com.
DEALING WITH CYBERBULLYING

BULLY-FREE ECOSPHERE

Never be a cyberbully! Stand up to cyberbullying when you see it.

Online Bullying: using text, email, chat or social media to say or post something mean or embarrassing to hurt another.

Kids who are cyberbullied are more likely to:

- Skip school
- Use drugs and alcohol
- Go through face-to-face bullying
- Get poor grades
- Have lower self-esteem
- Have more health problems

Make sure your kids know how not to be an online cyberbully. Tell them to never:

- Pretend to be someone else during a chat.
- Tease or scare someone during a chat.
- Send rude or scary things to someone.
- Post pics or comment about someone without their ok.
- Use bad language online.
- Post mean or hurtful things about someone on a social media site.

GET INVOLVED!

Take an active role in keeping your kids safe from online predators and explicit content. Make sure your kids know the laws you lay down and that they’re set in stone.

- If you’re not computer-wise, get that way!
  - Learn how to block objectionable online content.
  - Learn how to track websites visited.
  - Learn how to block the use of certain sites.
  - Learn how to disable tracking cookies on your computer so online marketers and scammers can’t get your name, email address or shopping habits.

- Keep the computer in a common place of the home where you can see what’s going on. Don’t allow computers in closed bedrooms.

- Spend time online with your kids. Show them the right way to behave themselves online. Be a role model in the way you use devices.

- Share an email address with your child so you can see the messages they send and get.

- Don’t allow your kids to enter private chat rooms. Use safety features from your service provider to block these sites.
OUR FAMILY CONTRACT

You can write up an agreement for online use in your home. Look at it as a family and change it as needed as your children get older. Adapt this simple contract to fit your rules and situation.

1. We will never give out personal info online. This would be: our last name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, Social Security numbers, the name of our school, our town, our brothers’ and sisters’ names and info or our parents’ places of work.

2. We will keep our passwords secret. We’ll stick to chosen user names and settings. Passwords will not be shared or changed without our parent’s okay. Our passwords will be hard to guess and never “1234.”

3. We agree to limit our online time so it doesn’t get in the way of other activities. We will follow the time limits that our family sets and not let time online take away from homework, sports or family time.

4. I will never meet an online friend in person. I will be careful about strangers online just like I stay away from strangers on the street. I will tell my parents right away if someone asks to meet me somewhere.

5. I will tell my parents right away if I come across something online that makes me feel unsafe.

6. I will not stay on or click on a page that says, “For over 18 years only.” I know these sites are not for kids and I will not visit them.

7. I will only download pictures and files with my parent’s ok. I know that some of these files may have bad pictures or viruses that could harm our computer.

8. I will not send pictures of my family or myself to anyone online. I will only do this if my parents say it’s okay to do so.

9. I will try to be safe each time I go online. I will obey the same safety rules at my friends’ houses, at school and at the library that I do while I’m at home.

10. I know that nothing is really private online. My mom or dad or any trusted adult can read my mail or check the sites that I have visited to make sure that I am safe. I know my words, pictures and comments may be seen by anyone in the world.

We agree to this family contract:

________________________________ (Parents)

________________________________ (Parents)

________________________________ (Kids)

________________________________ (Kids)
NOTHING BUT NET

The Internet is a great place for kids to learn new things, play games, research schoolwork and talk with friends. But with this great tool comes great responsibility.

When your kids have read The Adventures of Bolngg & Sprockette: Buckaroo & Wallabella Bolngg Explore Digit @l Sp@ce, have them take the test at the back of the book to see what they learned. Talk about their answers and make sure they grasp why the right answers are right.

With so much technology and so many devices on hand for kids today, they need to know there’s still a natural world out there, and that world is waiting for them to live in it and grow. Limit their device time and make sure they...

Go outside and play!

RESOURCES

Darby’s Kids Club
darbyskidsclub.com

INOBTR: I Know Better
inobtr.org

Cyberbullying Research Center
cyberbullying.us
StopBullying.gov

Family Online Safety Institute
fosi.org

Crimes Against Children Research Center
unh.edu/ccrc

iKeepSafe®
ikeepsafe.org

InternetSafety.com

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
(800) 843-5678
Missingkids.com/cybertipline/

Common Sense Media
commonsensemedia.org

Netsmartz
Netsmartz.org

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Did you know that by the age of 8, 90% of kids in the U.S. have used a computer? That number is only going higher.

Knowing that, it’s important to keep them safe when they go online. This booklet will help give you ideas for talking to your kids about online dangers, cyber-bullying and what it takes to be good digital citizens.