i-Buddy Times

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What is Instant messaging? Do You IM?

Just what is instant messaging? It is a way of communicating online in REAL time. Instant messaging uses software that creates a Buddy List. The Buddy List keeps track of your online friends and when they are on the Internet. If they are online, you can click on their name and write to them. The message will pop up on their screen. Then they can reply to you right away.

Instant messaging is known as IM. It can be lots of fun to "talk" to someone online. But you need to be careful. There are lots of dangers with instant messaging. Check them out below and learn how to stay safe while talking online!

Think about it

What are some good things about IM?

What are two ways to make sure you are safe when using IM?

Instant Messaging – Caution!

- **Be wise about strangers**. When you are online you can talk to lots of different people. But that doesn't mean you know them! Check with your parents before adding anyone to your Buddy List.
- **Respect people's online rights**. Just like offline—don't say mean things or make threats.
- **Viruses and More**. You can do lots of neat things with IM like download files, exchange stuff with friends and more. BUT, get help and permission first—otherwise your computer could end up "sick" with a computer virus.
- **NOT Secure**. IM isn't secure. This means that anything you write in IM can be seen and read by anyone if they look hard enough. Best advice—guard your personal information and only say things you would want anyone to read.

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- **Be responsible in IM**. Overall remember to be smart and follow all the rules you've learned from i-SAFE. The number one rule is: when in doubt, get an adult's help! They can help make sure you are safe and secure when using IM.

Instant Messaging – Sign Up Carefully

You need to be careful when signing up for an instant messaging service. Make sure you have an adult's help. That is because you will be asked to choose a screen name, password, and fill out a profile. As you do these things, it is important to be careful about what you tell about yourself. You want a screen name that is non identifying. Your password needs to be secure and something no one can guess. Finally, have an adult help you find the privacy settings and set them so that your profile is kept private from the public.

Instant Messaging Fun

WORD BANK:

BUDDY
DANGER
FUN
INSTANT
MESSAGE
PASSWORD
PROFILE
SCREENNAME
SECURE
STRANGER

R	N	U	F	I	P	H	E	B	S
R	E	A	D	P	M	G	R	C	T
S	Q	G	E	A	A	U	R	E	N
E	D	B	N	S	N	E	M	B	A
C	H	L	S	A	E	G	U	H	T
U	I	E	H	N	R	D	E	D	S
R	M	K	N	Q	D	T	U	R	N
E	Q	A	E	Y	T	G	S	X	I
V	M	P	R	O	F	I	L	E	X
E	D	R	O	W	S	S	A	P	Q

Screen Names

Selecting a good screen name is important in staying safe online. You want to make sure that the screen name you choose does not identify you or anything important about you. That way it can not be used by bullies or predators online to harm you.

Take a look at the screen names below. Circle the ones that are good safe screen names.

Girlygirl13	Soccerstar8	Sportynfun	TVqueen	JBrown
Louann11	SurfinFan	TyrelinFL	DogncatlOver	Dallas24302

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