

I Can't See You – You Can't See Me

How the Use of Information and Communication Technologies Can Impact Responsible Behavior

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To address issues of responsible use of the Internet, it is important to recognize how young people learn to engage in responsible behavior in the real world and then consider how information and communication technologies may be affect their decision-making regarding the appropriateness of certain choices. Based on this knowledge, strategies to promote more responsible choice can be developed.

External Forces that Promote Responsible Behavior

As young people grow in the real world, four external forces play a significant role in help them learn to engage in responsible behavior. These forces are:

1. Moral values and social expectations, which establish the standards by which behavior is to be measured

Parents are the primary source for the transmission of moral values and social expectations to young people. Child caring facilities, such as day care and schools, are another major source of such values and expectations, especially through the establishment and enforcement of rules or policies related to the standards young people are expected to abide by in relations with others within the child caring environment. For many families, religious beliefs provide a valuable source of values and expectations for behavior. Unfortunately, an additional major source of such values and expectations in the lives of our young people is advertising agencies and the media—television, movies, music, magazines, and video games. As children become teens, peer norms become an important part of the picture.

Given the potential for differences in moral values and social expectations from these different sources, there is an amazing global-wide agreement on many values and expectations emanating from parents, child caring facilities, and religious traditions. Moral values, especially, are grounded in a rather universal recognition of behavior that is necessary to support the health and well-being of people and our planet. It should be noted that every religious tradition has some version of a “golden rule” that seeks to encourage responsible behavior towards others.

Unfortunately, many of the advertising and media messages, especially those targeted to young people, promote values that do not encourage behavior that supports the health and well-being of others. The substance of many advertising messages is that personal value is directly related to physical appearance and acquisitions. Advertising messages often foster rebellion against authority or expectations. Advertisers in particular promote youth rebellion as a way to stimulate brand loyalty. An ad for a sugary cereal ends with kids jumping up with fists in the air shouting, “We eat what we like.” This kind of a message easily translates to a general attitude of “I’ll do what I want,” and “I’ll take what I want.”

There are ample concerns that entertainment media is fostering disrespectful attitudes and violence directed toward others, especially ‘different others.’ The very popular violent video game Grand Theft Auto, which allows users to gain points by killing hobos and Haitians, is an example of such promotion of disrespect and violence. Entertainment media in various forms of “reality shows” is also promoting the value of public disclosure of personal concerns. Ample evidence from extensive research reveals that these kinds of media strongly influence values, attitudes, and behavior of young people.

As young people grow, the values and expectations transmitted by others, and influenced by the following three factors, become internalized. A child’s understanding of moral values and social expectations is tied to their cognitive development, especially their ability to take the perspective of others. (Nucci, 1989) A major task of adolescence is the development of personal identity. (Erickson, 1963) This personal identity incorporates an internalized moral code—an internalized set of values and expectations that will guide decisions relating to ethical and responsible behavior.

The manner in which values or expectations may influence behavior also is influenced by an individual's characterization of the issue as involving a moral value, social expectation, or personal choice. (Turiel, 1983)

Moral values are categorical, universalizable, and structured by underlying conceptions of justice, rights, and welfare. Social expectations are arbitrary and agreed-upon uniformities in social behavior that are determined by the social system and which are alterable and context dependent—that is the expectations for behavior can vary depending on the environment. Personal choice issues are those issues, which impact only on the self. Some issues are multifaceted issues that implicate moral values, as well as social expectations or personal choices.

The manner in which an individual characterizes an issue will affect how the person makes decisions about personal behavior with respect to that issue. For example, one person may consider the issue of abortion in the context of a moral value, whereas another person may view the issue from the perspective of personal choice. A key factor that has been identified as important in an individual's characterization of an issue as involving a moral value, social expectation, or personal choice is the individual's determination of whether or not a certain action will result in harm to another.

Educational policies and interventions can also enhance the transmission of values and expectations for behavior. Most schools have developed approaches to address school safety. Fostering positive relationships between students and between staff and students are an essential component of any school safety plan.

2. An empathic recognition that an action has caused harm, which leads to remorse.

When a young person engages in action that harms another and recognizes that his or her action has caused harm, this generally will result in empathic recognition—feeling bad inside because you have harmed another. Empathic recognition is recognized as a significant vehicle by which external or society-based values become internalized. (Hoffman, 1984, 1991)

Empathy has both an affective (feeling) component, as well as a cognitive (thinking) component. Affectively, people appear to differ in the degree to which they are sensitive to the emotional states of others. Differences appear to relate, in part, to biologically based personality traits. People appear to vary in the degree to which they are sensitive to others and to situations unfolding around them. Differences also appear to relate to life experiences. A child whose own feelings are not recognized or properly responded to will frequently have greater difficulty being emotionally sensitive to the feelings of another person.

Empathy is also connected with cognitive development. As young people grow, they gain greater abilities to recognize and understand the perspectives of others—to put themselves in another person's shoes. The ability to take the perspective of others impacts how one responds to the perceived distress of others. The early teen years are a time where there is a major cognitive development shift that leads to a significantly greater ability to take the perspectives of others.

When a younger child perceives that another child is hurt, this generally stimulates a direct empathic response—feeling hurt inside because they see that someone else is feeling hurt. Younger children are not as likely to have an empathic response if they are not directly in the presence of the child who is hurt. Simply being told that another child has been harmed or is feeling hurt will generally not stimulate significant internal empathic feelings in a younger child. The emerging ability to take the perspectives of another person increases the probability that a growing child or young teen will have an empathic response—feeling hurt inside—upon learning that an unseen other person has been harmed or is feeling hurt. This process is sometimes called predictive empathy.

Empathy-induced remorse is a bad feeling about oneself when one is aware of that his or her actions have harmed another. Empathy-induced remorse may lead to efforts to remedy the situation. Alternatively, the person who becomes aware that his or her actions have harmed another may seek to prevent feelings of remorse by rationalizing his or her actions. Rationalizations will be discussed below.

Educational interventions can enhance the potential that a young person will have an empathic response to another person who has been harmed or is feeling hurt. Violence and bullying programs used in schools today contain components that seek to enhance empathy, perspective taking, and recognition of the feelings of others. Increasing the potential that a young person will have an empathic response to the hurt of another and feel remorse if his or her actions caused this hurt is a critically important foundation for the prevention of violence and bullying.

3. Social disapproval, which leads to feelings of shame or 'loss of face.'

When a young person engages in irresponsible or harmful behavior and recognizes that others are aware of and disapprove this behavior, this recognition can lead to feelings of shame and 'loss of face.' Parents and peer are key providers of social approval or disapproval.

Because their survival depends on it, young people are clearly strongly influenced by the approval or disapproval of their behavior by their parents, or other adult serving in that capacity. Extensive research has demonstrated that active parental involvement including active supervision and appropriate responsiveness to behavior that is not in accord with values and expectations, is the key to a raising responsible young people.

Parental involvement also plays an important role with respect to peer influence. Active parents play a strong role in a young person's selection of friends and in moderating the impact of peer pressure. When parents are permissive or uninvolved, peer groups can assume what should be the role of parents approving or disapproving behavior.

4. Negative consequence imposed by person in authority, which can lead to remorse or shame, but can also lead to anger directed at the person in authority.

When a young person engages in irresponsible or harmful behavior that is detected by a person with authority over the young person, this will generally lead to a negative consequence. Parents and school officials are the most common authority figures to impose negative consequences on young people.

The nature of the negative consequence that is imposed in response to irresponsible or harmful behavior is of critical importance. A disciplinary response that forces the child or teen to recognize the harm that was caused, thus enhancing an internal empathic response and feelings of remorse, and focuses on how his or her actions were not in accord with established values and expectations, thus enhancing feelings of shame, can be very powerful in influencing future behavioral choices. Additionally, a very effective disciplinary response is one that requires the child or teen to take a positive action to cure any harm that was caused.

An ineffective negative consequence is that of punishment—a consequence that merely demonstrates the power of the person in authority to impose his or her will on the child

or teen and is unrelated to the action that was irresponsible or caused harm. A punitive response will frequently shift the young person's focus away from the harm that his or her action has caused to anger at the person in authority. While feelings of remorse or shame can influence future behavior, feelings of anger at the authority figure generally will not influence future behavior other than behavior that seeks to avoid future detection.

Unfortunately, a common negative consequence applied in schools can be applied in a manner that makes it an ineffective punitive response—suspension for a period of days. Suspension, in and of itself, does nothing to force a young person to confront the harm his or her actions caused to another. Suspension fails to provide a vehicle for the young person to take an action that will cure the harm. In cases of egregious behavior, suspension may be an appropriate response, but it will only be effective if combined with other consequences that force recognition of harm and allow for a cure of that harm.

Rationalizations

When we perceive that we acted in a way that is not in accord with established social expectations or our own internal moral code, we will generally feel guilty—unless we can rationalize our actions in some manner. It appears that we are all willing, under certain circumstances, act in ways that are not in accord with established social expectations or our internal moral code. We each appear to have an internalized limit about how far we are willing to waiver from the ideal set forth in our personal moral code. This limit protects against unlimited inappropriate activity (Nisan, 1991)

There are a number of factors that appear to influence behavior that waivers from our personal moral code. (Nisan, 1991; Bandura, 1991) We are more likely to waiver when our assessment is that:

- “I won’t get caught.” There is an extremely limited chance or no chance of detection and punishment.
- “It didn’t really hurt.” The inappropriate action will not cause any perceptible harm.
- “Look at what I got.” The harm may be perceptible, but is small in comparison with the personal benefit we will gain.
- “It is not a real person.” The harm is to a large entity, such as a corporation, and no specific or known person will suffer any loss.
- “Everyone does it.” Many people engage in such behavior, even though some may consider the behavior may be considered illegal or unethical.

- “They deserve it.” The entity or individual that is or could be harmed by the action has engaged in unfair or unjust actions.

Impact of Information and Communication Technologies

It is quite apparent that when people use the Internet they are often quite willing to do or say things that they would be much less likely to do or say in the "real world." This phenomenon has been termed "disinhibition." The following is a description of disinhibition:

With regard to individual's behavior on the Internet could be summarized as behavior that is less inhibited than comparative behavior in real life. Thus disinhibition on the Internet ... is seen as any behavior that is characterized by an apparent reduction in concerns for self-presentation and the judgment of others. (Joinson, 1998, p. 44)

Disinhibition on the Internet is a neutral aspect of online behavior. Disinhibition may lead to either a negative or positive result. Disinhibition in Internet communication may lead to hostile communication, or it may allow individuals who feel disenfranchised or disempowered in the real world to express their thoughts more effectively in an online environment. Disinhibition with respect to searching for information on the web may allow a person to more comfortably research information related to a sensitive health issue or may allow an individual to more freely visit sites with child pornography.

Information and communication technologies can have a profound impact on the external forces that influence behavior. Because the use of the Internet and other technology-facilitated communications is fairly new, researchers are still exploring various aspects of human behavior when using such technologies. In many respects the work of researchers in this area resembles the fable of blind wise men describing an elephant. Researchers bring their various perspectives on human behavior in general into this arena of study and interpret their findings in accord with these perspectives.

A review of the current research literature raises the following factors for consideration:

1. Technology creates the illusion that we are invisible or anonymous.

When using information and communication technologies, people perceive themselves to be anonymous or they can take specific steps to establish the condition of anonymity. The perception, or illusion, of invisibility can influence behavioral choices. (Joinson, 1998)

In fact, people are not totally invisible or anonymous when they use the information and communication technologies. In most cases, they leave "cyberfootprints" wherever they go. But despite this reality, the illusion of invisibility persists.

Some actions using technology are rather invisible, such as borrowing a friend's software program and installing it on your own computer. It is also possible to increase

the level of invisibility with the use of technology anonymizer tools. Establishing a pseudonymous account enhances invisibility. The fact that many people may be engaged in a similar activity also leads to a perception of invisibility because individual actions are such a "drop in the pond" that they are unlikely to be detected.

Invisibility undermines the potential impact of both the potential of a negative consequence administered by an authority and social disapproval. Invisibility also makes it easier to rationalize an irresponsible or harmful action due to the lack of potential for detection and punishment.

If a transgression cannot be detected and a person is unlikely to be punished, threats of punishment are not likely to have any impact whatsoever on behavior. Thus, strategies that seek to influence responsible behavior by threatening legal action or some other punishment, will likely not be influential unless there is clear information provided regarding how those engaged in irresponsible or harmful behavior will be identified.

An interesting analysis can be made regarding this aspect when evaluating issues related to the use of file-sharing technologies to download copyrighted music, software, and movies. The millions of individuals using file sharing for activities that are clearly illegal demonstrate the impact of the perception of invisibility on behavior. It is likely that prior to the lawsuits filed by the Recording Industry Association of America, many people simply did not think that they could be identified. It appears that there has been a reduction in file sharing activity, but it is unknown if the lawsuits, which demonstrated the lack of invisibility, were totally causative. This is because the lawsuits coincided with the introduction of legal distribution mechanisms. However, many millions individuals are still engaged in the illegal downloading of copyrighted music. It is likely that some perceive themselves to be safe due to the "drop in the pond" anonymity. Others are apparently seeking steps to become more anonymous when engaged in file-sharing. However, given that file-sharing programs also include "spyware," it appears that the search for anonymity may be in vain.

The issue of the impact of invisibility on human behavior is not a new consideration. Plato raised this very same issue in his story about the Ring of Gyges: In this story, a shepherd found a magical ring. When the stone was turned to the inside of his hand, the shepherd became invisible. Thus questions were raised: How will we choose to behave if we are invisible? Will we do whatever we want to do because we know that nobody can catch and punish us? Will we do something that could hurt someone because we know that nobody can tell who did this? Or will we do what we know is right?

Complicating this issue is the recognition that there are very good reasons for the creation of anonymity on the Internet. Certainly, steps taken to remain anonymous from potential spammers, such as creating an anonymous e-mail account that is used for registrations and other activities that are likely to lead to harvesting of that account for spammers, are beneficial. Being able to anonymously search for sensitive information, for example, a teen seeking information related to questions regarding their sexual orientation, is also of great value. From a global perspective, individuals living in

countries where there are repressive regimes that restrict access to information or seek to detect communications that are contrary to the interests of the regime have a strong interest in the use of technology tools that can create anonymity.

All young people should be taught to create an anonymous username for use in any public Internet environment, including profiles, blogs, and any communication activities. The use of anonymous usernames is an essential strategy to protect young people from anyone who might misuse their personal contact information, including predators, cult recruiters, cyber stalkers, and marketers. Further complicating this issue is the recognition that from a developmental perspective, young people are more heavily reliant on external forces that influence responsible behavior and have not fully developed an internal behavior control mechanism. Therefore, we are presented with a direct conflict. Actions that are deemed necessary to protect a child or teen's personal safety can directly lead to the perception of anonymity and thus can undermine the inclination to engage in responsible behavior due to lack of detection by authority.

2. Reduction of social and contextual cues and tangible feedback.

The reduction of social and contextual cues, such as body language and tone of voice, can have a variety of impacts. These impacts include a reduction in tangible, affective feedback if an online action has caused harm to another, reduction in the influence of social norms and constraints, resulting in behavior that is not in accord with those norms, and the reduction of social cues related to social status which leads to greater participation by those who are at a lower level in a social hierarchy. (Keisler et al., 1984; Seigal, et al, 1986)

When people use technology, there is a lack of tangible feedback about the consequences of actions on others. People are distanced from a perception of the harm that their behavior has caused. This lack of tangible feedback undermines the empathic response, and thus undermines feelings of remorse if one engages in irresponsible or harmful behavior. The lack of tangible feedback also makes it easier to rationalize an irresponsible or harmful action as not having caused harm to anyone.

Developmentally, it is important to recognize that the cognitive ability to take the perspective of another emerges in the teen years. This cognitive perception-taking is an essential foundation for a predictive empathic response to harm suffered by an unseen other. Therefore, children and younger teens are communicating with others online prior to and during the time when they are developing the cognitive perception abilities that enable them to detect or predict how another might feel in response to their communication.

In addition to impacting an empathic response, the reduction of social and contextual cues can influence behavior by reducing the impact of social disapproval. A negative aspect of such deregulated behavior may appear as hostile communication, also known as 'flaming.' Virtually everyone who has used Internet e-mail has had the experience of sending or receiving electronic communication that expressed thoughts in a more

vociferous manner than would have occurred in the context of in-person communication.

A positive aspect of the reduction of the impact of the reduction of social cues related to social status appears to result in greater online participation by those who are at a lower level in a social hierarchy. Researchers investigating computer mediated group communications found that the reduction of social cues related to social status appeared to lead to greater participation by those who are at a lower level in a social hierarchy. (Keisler et al., 1984; Seigal, et al, 1986) When engaged in face-to-face group communications, the “secretary” rarely contributes to the conversation when the “boss” is present. Whereas in computer-mediated communications, the “secretary” appears to be much more inclined to offer his or her opinions on matters under discussion.

Whereas a student who is at a lower status within the social hierarchy of a school, including a student who is being bullied by someone at a different status level, may be disinclined to speak up in the real world, the impact of the reduction of social cues may allow that lower status student to feel more comfortable in speaking up online. Thus, there is a research basis to understand how a lower status, bullied student could become the perpetrator of online harmful speech.

As discussed above, the ability to take the perspectives of others is also developmental in nature. Therefore, young people may be potentially even less sensitive to the perspectives or needs of others and, therefore, may fail to be adequately sensitive to the actual or potential consequences of their online speech especially when communicating or acting in an environment where there are reduced social cues.

3. Different social expectations for different online environments, expectations that range from responsible to irresponsible.

People tend to gravitate to certain online group environments. The social norms of these groups may vary widely. Within some groups, there are norms that support respectful online communication and responsible online behavior, whereas other environments support more volatile communication or other irresponsible or harmful behaviors. Therefore, while the influence of in-person social cues might be diminished, it appears that most online groups establish a mechanism whereby transmission of social cues regarding expectations within individual online environments occurs. (Reicher, et al, 1995)

This factor likely tends to work in combination with the above factor of sensitivity to social cues. Individuals differ with respect to the degree to which they are sensitive to the online transmission of social norms and cues, willing to abide by such norms, and have the self-control to do so.

4. The ability to establish and maintain multiple identities on the Internet, each of which may have motives and operating parameters that will interact differently within different online environments.

The technology environment also allows for experimentation with multiple identities. (Turkle, 1995) Turkle's work builds upon Erickson's (1963) stage theory of development. Erickson notes that during adolescence, teens are inclined to play out different roles and identities, which facilitates their development of a core sense of their own personal identity.

Internet technologies significantly enhance the ability to create and experiment with multiple identities. She draws an analogy to the "windows" environment of a computer, where different aspects of self can function simultaneously.

"Windows have become a powerful metaphor for thinking about the self as a multiple, distributed system. ... The self is no longer simply playing different roles in different settings at different times. The life practice of windows is that of a decentered self that exists in many worlds, that plays many roles at the same time. Now real life itself may be, ... just one more window." (Turkle, 1996. p?)

It is probable that the ability and inclination of teens to maintain multiple, identities on the Internet provides the basis for a new rationalization to support irresponsible or harmful behavior that should be added to the above list:

- "It wasn't me, it was my online persona." I can deny responsibility for actions taken by one of my online persona.

Strategies to Address the Negative Influences of Information and Communication Technologies on Behavioral Choice

It is important to recognize that the strategies are dependent on certain levels of cognitive development. Younger children simply do not have the cognitive ability to take various perspectives of others. However, as teens are the ones more likely to engage in irresponsible or harmful behavior, these strategies are more addressed towards the teen audience. However, there are important foundations for these strategies that can be addressed in childhood.

1. Emphasize the importance of avoidance of harm to others in the transmission and enforcement of moral values and social expectations.

As discussed above, the manner in which an individual characterizes a behavioral choice—whether involving a moral value, social expectation, or personal choice—is dependent on recognition of the degree to which that action may harm another. The greater the degree the possible action will cause harm to another, the higher the potential that the action will be considered to involve a moral value, rather than a social expectation that might not be relevant in a particular situation or a personal choice.

Moral values and social expectations are frequently transmitted to children in the form of rules, "Do not call other children names" or "Do not take another child's toy." A concern

with this approach to the transmission of values is that the expressed rule fails to include the reason for the rule. That reason is grounded in the value of not causing harm to another. This information must be conveyed to children in the context of discussions of the rules.

If rules are enforced using a punitive approach, rather than a disciplinary approach, the child's focus is shifted from recognition of the harm caused to another to anger at the adult authority who is enforcing the rule. If you ask a child "Why should you not hit another child?" and that child responds, "Because it is against the rules," or "Because I will get into trouble," the child's responses indicate a failure to connect the rule with the underlying value of not harming another.

A child who learns to base his or her behavioral choices on whether or not he or she will get into trouble is a child who will be more likely to misbehave when in an online environment that allows for invisibility. Grounding rules, values, and expectations in the concept of the importance of avoiding harm to others is a strategy to enhance responsible behavior under conditions when one perceives oneself to be invisible.

2. Help young people recognize and understand how actions can cause harm to people they cannot see.

As young people grow, they gain the ability to understand cognitively how other people think and feel. They can learn to look at things from the perspectives of others. This is the thinking part of empathy. The lack of social and contextual cues and tangible feedback when using information and communication technologies impairs the feeling component of empathy. We must help young people learn to rely on the thinking part of empathy when they use information and communication technologies.

Encouraging young people to think about and consider the perspective of others they cannot see is an educational strategy that can increase their ability to recognize harm caused to an unseen other.

3. Help young people learn to do what is right in accord with their own personal values, regardless of the potential of detection and punishment (and recognizing that this is a developmental task, maintain adequate supervision and monitoring, see #5 below).

We must enhance the reliance of young people on their own internalized personal moral code, recognizing that young people are in the process of developing this code. Shifting the focus away from rules and threats of punishments is an important strategy to accomplish this. Threats of punishment are simply an ineffective approach when the likelihood of detection and punishment is so remote. The message: "Don't do this because it is against the rules" has limited impact if you believe that you are invisible and that your actions cannot and will not be detected and punished.

The key to such preparation is education and appropriate discipline. We must focus the attention of young people on the *reasons* for the rules, rather than the potential of detection and punishment. By focusing on the reasons for the rules, we can help young people develop a more understanding and caring moral code and increase their reliance on this internal code rather than external enforcement measures.

A second important factor is enhancing the role of a young person's emerging personal identity and moral code as the primary focus of their attention in making behavioral choices. A consistent reminder that "the choices you make speak loudly to the kind of person you are" is a message that should be imparted to children as they grow.

4. Help young people learn to use effective decision-making strategies to help guide their behavior in a responsible way.

These strategies must be effective even though young people do not have tangible feedback and may perceive themselves to be invisible. Effective decision-making strategies, written in language that can be used to communicate with young people include:

- Golden Rule *How would you feel if someone did the same thing to you? If you would not want to have someone do the same thing to you, then the action is probably wrong.*

A version of the Golden Rule is found in every religion in the world. Encouraging young people to consider how they would feel if someone did the same thing to them is a powerful ethical decision-making strategy.

- Trusted Adult *What would your mom or dad, guardian, or another adult who is important in your life think? Your parents, guardians, or other adults who are important to you may not understand the Internet, but they know a lot about deciding whether an action is right or wrong. Considering how your parents, guardians, or other important adult would judge your actions, you will help you to act in accord with your family's values.*

Philosophers call this the Moral Exemplar. Young people can be encouraged to model the behavior of those whose opinions are important to them. This strategy also brings in the importance of acting in accord with the values that have been established by the family.

- Is There a Rule? *Generally, rules or laws have been created to protect the rights of people and to serve the common good. Rules and laws provide good guidance on whether or not an action is right or wrong.*

It is important for young people to recognize the basis upon which rules have been created. Rules are created to protect the rights of people and to serve the common good. The focus must always be on the reason for the rule, not the rule itself. This is a

very important distinction. Young people may think that if they are invisible and no one can punish them for violating a rule, then the rule is of no importance.

- Front Page *If your action were reported on the front page of the newspaper, what would other people think? One way to make good decisions is to act as if the whole world can see what you are doing.*

The Front Page strategy is another decision-making strategy that can help to address the perceptions of invisibility. There have been a number of widely reported incidents where an individual thought his or her actions were private, only to find them ultimately reported on the front pages of various newspapers. When such articles appear, they provide a valuable “teachable moment.”

- If Everybody Did It *What would happen if everybody made a decision to do this? Consider what kind of world this would be if everyone did what you are thinking of doing. You might think that you are only causing a "little bit of harm." But if everyone else is also doing a little bit of harm, then someone else might be suffering a lot of hurt.*

This strategy is an updated version of Kant's Moral Imperative. Encourage young people to add up the large amount of harm caused by many people engaging in small acts of harm.

- Real World *Would it be OK if you did this action, or a similar action, in the real world? Just because you do something in cyberspace, does not mean that you cannot hurt someone. Actions in cyberspace can cause just as much harm to someone else as actions in the real world.*

Considering actions in the context of the "real world" can help to create a better understanding of the consequences of actions on unseen others. The Real World thinking strategy will help to bring about a better understanding of the real harm caused to real people.

- Reflection *On the Net, what you do, reflects on you. How does this action reflect on who you are and want to be.*

This strategy ties into a teen's emerging personal identity and personal moral code. All actions taken on the Internet are a reflection of the values of the individual taking those actions.

5. Ensure accountability by remaining "hand's on" while young people are learning these lessons.

The children of parents who are "hand's on"—that is know where their children are, what they are doing, and who they are doing it with—and who keep lines of communication open, are much less likely to engage in risky behavior. When young

people are using the Internet, responsible adults in their environment need to remain "hand's on." Effective supervision and monitoring are essential strategies to remain "hand's on."

It is necessary to recognize that the development of an internalized personal moral code is a task that is accomplished primarily during the teen years, with the foundation laid in earlier years, and requires a certain stage of cognitive development. We should, therefore, not be surprised if, in an unsupervised environment, teens fail to act in accord with the values that are hopefully part of their emerging internal personal moral code. Active adult involvement in the form of supervision, monitoring, and appropriate discipline is still necessary.

Within the school environment, there clearly should be a lack of invisibility due to effective supervision and monitoring. Within schools, students need to be fully aware that they have limited privacy with respect to their online activities and files, that routine monitoring including technical monitoring is occurring, and that individualized investigations may occur if there is a reasonable suspicion that they may have engaged in misuse.

Parents should also be advised about the importance of keeping the computer in a public place in the home and the need for ongoing supervision. It is also important to establish a ground rule that parents have access to files on any computer in the home—i.e. teens may not establish personal file protection on their home computer—because parents are legally responsible for any injury to others caused by teen's online behavior.

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