

June 2010

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Today, your child's school is sending home a DVD containing four films to help your family learn about using the Internet safely. We encourage you to watch these videos with your child. Please note that the videos were created for children in middle school and older, so use caution in showing them to younger children.

The Internet is an invaluable resource for our students, allowing them instant access to information that can broaden their minds and enrich their studies. However, we must all remember that the Internet provides unfiltered access to information and to strangers, and can therefore pose risks to those who do not know how to use it properly. These videos, created especially for New York City middle school students, are designed to teach our students and their families how to surf the Internet safely.

The videos cover the following topics:

- **Online Sexual Predators:** Young people must be cautious when using chat rooms or social networking sites. This video shows children how to protect themselves from people they meet on these Web sites who may be dangerous.
- **Cyber Bullying:** Students often do not realize that the Internet—through Web sites, blogs, e-mail, and instant messaging—can escalate bullying behavior. This video shows students the consequences of cyber bullying and how they should handle these situations.
- **Maintaining Anonymity:** Teenagers tend to reveal personal information online without realizing it. Watching this video will help your child avoid accidentally sharing personal information with strangers that could put him or her at risk.
- **Online Gaming:** Internet gaming has become a popular hobby for students, but it is important to remind teenagers that excessive gaming can be harmful. This video also reminds students to beware of cyber bullying and of sharing personal information while they enjoy online gaming.

These films were created by kids for kids, in partnership with Microsoft and Reel Works Teen Filmmaking—an organization that helps teenagers express themselves through film production. All four videos are available in English, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese as well as with closed-captions. Your family can also access them online at (website), or watch them on NYC TV channel X on X date.

As a reminder, if you believe your child is being bullied or harassed online, please notify your child's school or call 311.

We urge you to watch these videos with your child and use them to discuss strategies for keeping your entire family safe online. The Internet is a wonderful learning tool as long as children know how to use it responsibly.

Sincerely,

Joel I. Klein
Chancellor

John Feinblatt
Criminal Justice Coordinator