

HOME SCHOOL HELPER

Vol. 19, No. 2

April 2007

BJU PRESS

1.800.845.5731

www.bjupress.com

FEATURE ARTICLE

What's Inside

INSPIRATION – p. 4

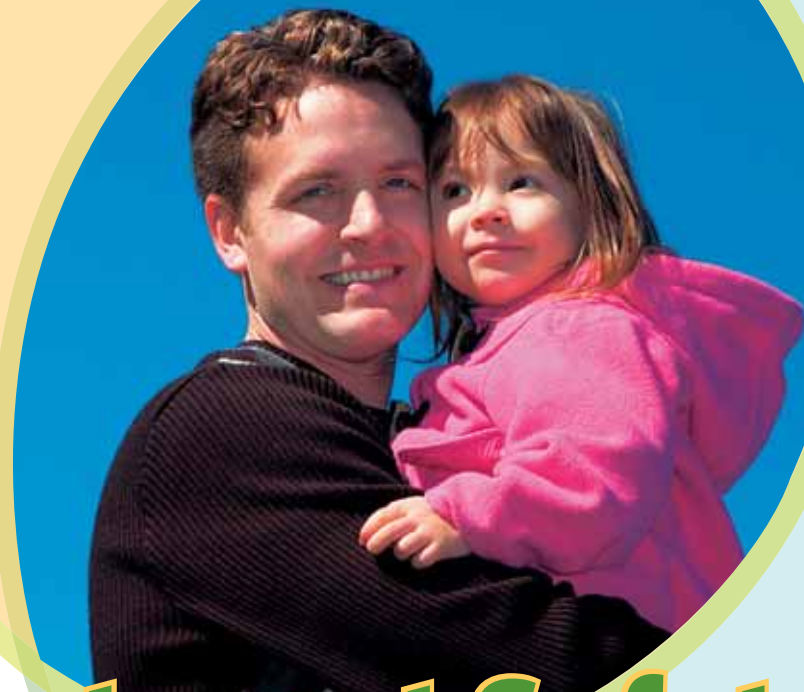
How am I doing on the I Peter 3 checklist?

SAFE SURFING – p. 6

Inform yourself with these links to many online resources.

WHAT'S NEW! – p. 8

See the latest in BJU Press materials!



Internet Safety

The Internet can be a great resource or a dangerous trap. Protect your children from the dangers lurking in cyberspace.

Like any other place in a fallen world, the Internet is not safe. That is, you should no more allow a child to roam the Internet unsupervised than you should drop him off in Times Square and tell him to have fun and meet you in three hours. There are pitfalls, and there are evil people who are probably more cunning than he is.

On the other hand, there are such people and places in your neighborhood, too, and you wouldn't refuse to let a child out of the house just because the world is a dangerous place. There are things he needs that you can't

provide if he never goes outside. Much of parenting and teaching is the careful balancing of risk and reward, of danger and duty.

The Internet is just like your neighborhood, only bigger. Yes, there are dangers, and we need to approach them responsibly. But supervised exposure to the Internet, even for very young children, is too valuable to avoid simply out of fear. The Internet provides free or nearly free access to virtually limitless information resources and allows communication at a capacity and speed unimaginable a generation ago.

So how do we access the Internet responsibly? The first step, obviously, is to be aware of the dangers; the second is to take steps to minimize, if not eliminate, the risk.

Objectionable Material

There's a lot of really bad stuff out there—pornography, bomb recipes, instructions on committing suicide, occult material, and more. Parents want to limit the access their charges—and they themselves—have to such things.¹

First, you have to decide what's acceptable and what isn't. For a discussion of the Christian's approach to objectionable materials in general, see the BJU Press white papers "A Biblical Approach to Objectionable Elements" (http://www.bjupress.com/resources/articles/objectionable_elements.html) and "The Christian Philosophy of Education" (http://www.bjupress.com/resources/articles/philosophy_of_ed.html). Then, you have to create a system that generally decreases your risk of being exposed to something spiritually unhealthy. That's not a one-step process; the best systems are just that—systems.

Supervision

By far the simplest and least expensive solution to these problems is proper supervision. If Mama is sitting next to Junior, helping him surf, Junior is not likely to get into mischief. If the adults control the login passwords, they can lower the likelihood that unsupervised access will occur (though, of course, a child can use someone else's login, if he knows it, to access the Net from a machine you are responsible for). Some couples split the access password, with the husband knowing one half and the wife knowing the other half. Thus neither can log in alone. This provides simple accountability under normal circumstances.

Some users have extended the concept of accountability in a creative way by using software that regularly e-mails their Internet use to an "accountability partner." For two such packages, see <http://www.covenanteyes.com/> and <http://www.safeeyes.com/>.

You can make your job of supervising easier by making sure the computer screen is in a prominent place and facing the traffic flow rather than in a corner of the room. It's better to have the computer set up in the kitchen or the living room rather than in a child's bedroom and with the monitor facing the doorway so that it can be seen by anyone passing by.

By far the simplest and least expensive solution to these problems is proper supervision.

Most Internet browsers maintain a site history file or folder on their hard drive where they store a list of all of the Internet sites visited.² Parents can easily look through this material and ask about questionable accesses. And if your children are smart enough to erase the history after using the browser, that act in itself is cause for suspicion and investigation.

For more detailed tracking, you can install software that tracks every user's keystrokes and monitors all Internet activity. For more information on such programs, see <http://familyinternet.about.com/cs/toppicks/tp/monitoringsoft.htm>.

Good supervision starts with good teaching, of course. Children using the Internet should be told what sort of behavior is not acceptable and what the penalties will be for infractions. You may want to look at what many schools today have developed: an official Acceptable Use



Executive Editor:
Steven N. Skaggs, M.Ed.
Assistant Editor:
Gail Yost
Homeschool Consultant:
Emily Largent
Creative Director:
Chris Hartzler
Art Director:
Craig Oesterling
Layout Artist:
Michael Boone
Ad Coordinator:
Lauren Hamblen
Photos:
© 2007 iStockphoto Inc. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7

© 2007 BJU Press,
Greenville, SC
29614-0060
Homeschool Helper is published quarterly.
U.S. subscriptions are free.
All rights reserved.

Send all correspondence and changes of address to *Homeschool Helper*, BJU Press, Greenville, SC 29614-0060 or to hshelper@bju.edu.

Policy. Searching for “Acceptable Use Policy” at any search engine, such as Yahoo or Google, will provide you with a good many examples from which you can work.

Much of the temptation to misbehave on the Internet, which both young people and adults may find difficult to resist, draws its strength from the misperception that activity on the Internet is private. In a bookstore, for example, someone who has trouble resisting pornography may restrain himself because he is in public and his actions might be seen, with future negative consequences. Many Internet users believe that similar actions on the Net are not as public, and because they are in “the privacy of their own home,” they fall to the temptation. They are simply wrong, however, not only in giving in to temptation but also in their understanding of the Internet. The Internet is a public place, and the user is naïve to believe that his actions are private. They can be monitored at the computer, of course. But they can also be monitored literally anywhere else in the world. Any site the user visits, whether pornographic or not, can track his activity and can even place a record of that activity on his computer (as a cookie) without his knowledge. Should the personnel at the target site choose to, they could make his activity public in a broader sense. In the

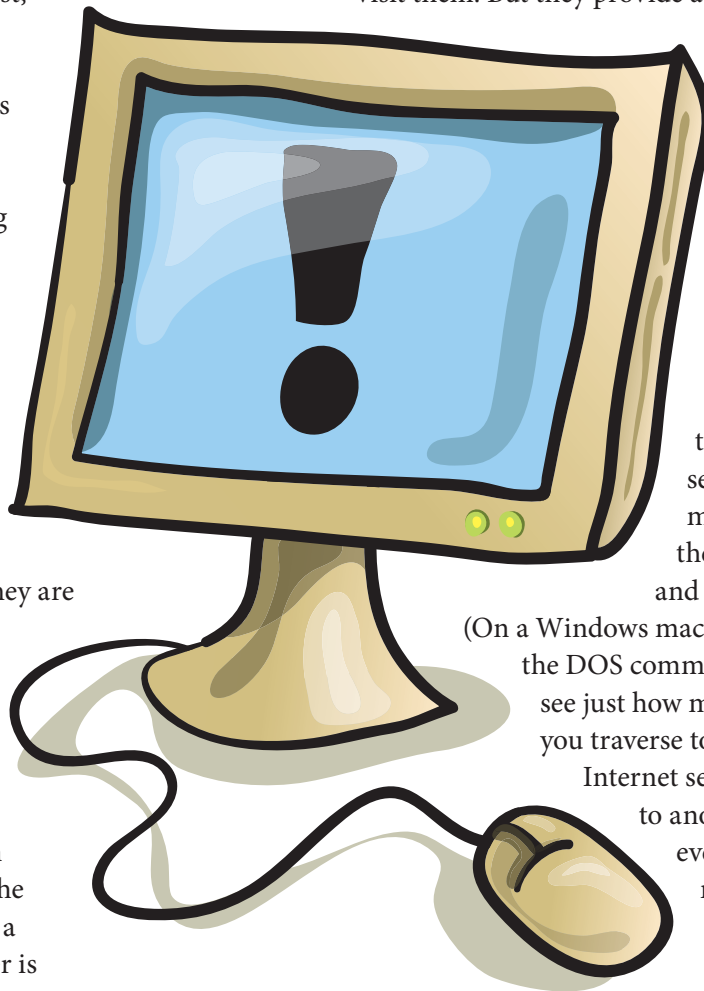
United States, certain laws protect a consumer’s privacy, but the Internet is an international medium, and sites offshore are not bound by U.S. laws.

There are “solutions” that prevent target sites from knowing the identity of those who visit them. But they provide a false sense of security; in order to access them, the user must send his request—say, to go to a pornographic site—to his Internet service provider and from there through (usually) several other host machines between the service provider and the anonymizer.

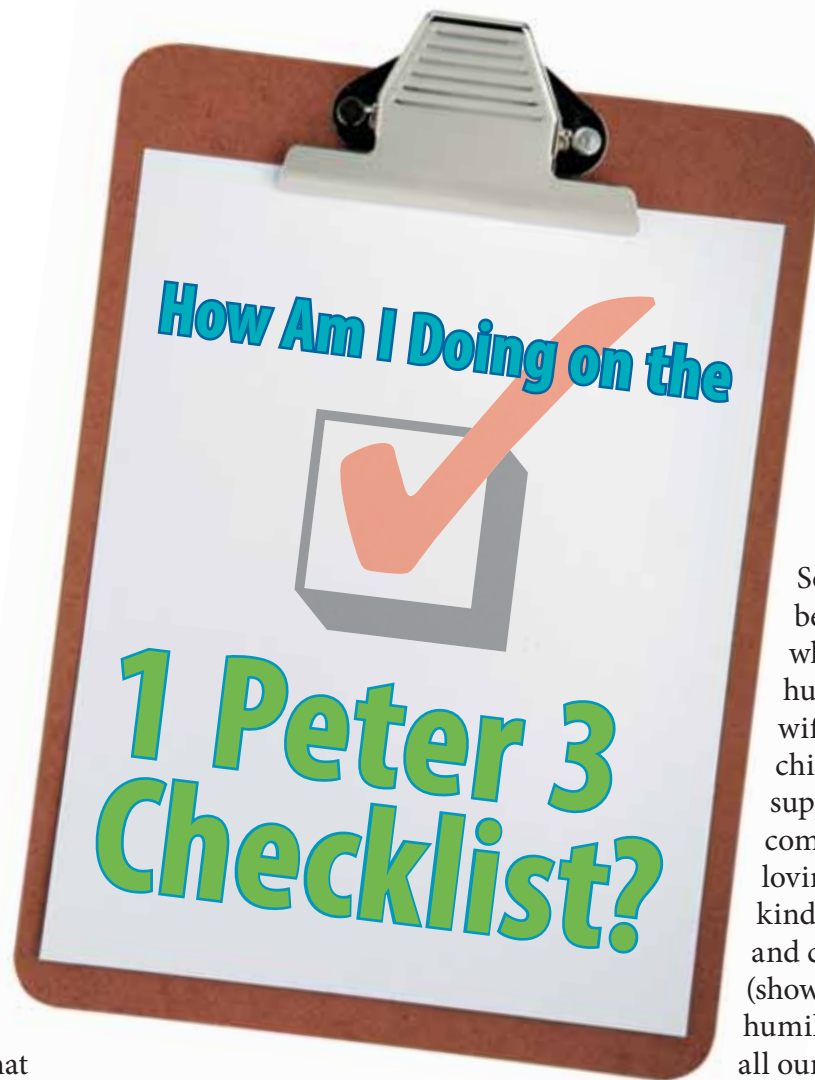
(On a Windows machine, try using the DOS command “tracert” to see just how many machines you traverse to get from your Internet service provider to another site.) On every one of these machines, there is then a record of the user’s request to access,

in this case, pornography. If the administrators of those machines choose to log activity, there is a permanent record of that transaction, which might become public through any number of circumstances.

We’ve gone into this detail here simply to make the case that privacy on the Internet is a myth. The user’s actions are observable and



(continued on p. 5)



First Peter 3 is a familiar passage to most Christians: it deals with the wife's required submission to her husband (vv. 1–6) and the husband's responsibility to honor his wife (v. 7). However, if we keep reading, we find that the passage's applications broaden out to areas of the Christian walk that all family members would do well to obey.

Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? (1 Pet. 3:8–13)

So all believers—whether husband, wife, or child—are supposed to be compassionate, loving, kindhearted, and courteous (showing humility) toward all our Christian brothers and

sisters. In addition, we're not to seek revenge on those who wrong us but instead to bless those who treat us unfairly. A tall order!

Verses 10–12 are actually a quotation from the Old Testament—Psalm 34:12–16, which reads,

What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile”

How well do we evidence these characteristics in our families? Here’s a checklist that may be helpful, encouraging, and challenging to each of us.

- Do I strive to be “of one mind” with other members of my family?
- Would my family characterize me as loving? as kindhearted? courteous?
- Am I compassionate? Or am I so wrapped up in my concerns that I fail to see the importance of others’ needs?

- Am I bent on “getting even” or “defending myself” when I’m wronged? Am I willing to be a blessing even to those who have hurt my feelings?
- Are my words free from deceit and evil?
- Do I seek to be a peacemaker when family disagreements arise?

May the Lord give each of us the grace to obey Him in all of these areas! And let’s remember the encouragement of 1 Peter 3:13 as well: “Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?” 🙏

Steven N. Skaggs and his wife homeschool two of their five children. Steve serves as Director of Product Development for BJU Press and as editor of *Homeschool Helper*.

(continued from p. 3)

traceable. This knowledge should serve as a powerful deterrent to those who have difficulty overcoming the temptations that the Internet places before them. And to the extent that the knowledge does that, it’s a Good Thing.

Site Blocking

Several software packages are available to help parents block their children’s access to specific Internet areas, much as a channel blocker does on television. The software may be “client-based,” or installed on the user’s computer (where it may be more easily compromised or circumvented); or it may be “server-based,” installed on a host machine, to which the user logs in as his Internet service provider (ISP).

Further, most packages use “can’t-list” technology; that is, they maintain lists of sites to which users “can’t” go. The trouble with this approach, however, is that objectionable sites are created virtually every day, and an old site can always change its name every so often. Thus, many software companies also provide an updating service, free or for a reasonable fee; they usually allow registered users to download updates at regular intervals. (If you are using a server-based program, as described above, these updates take place constantly on the host computer, so the user need not do anything.)

A few packages are available that use a “can-list” approach; that is, the filter maintains a list of approved sites, and everything else is out

(continued on p. 7)



Here are some tools that will help you Practice Safer Surfing

Access filters (client-based)

SafeEyes—<http://www.SafeEyes.com/> (PC or Mac) (This is officially recommended by Bob Jones University.)

ContentProtect—<http://www.contentwatch.com/>

Cyber Patrol—<http://www.cyberpatrol.com/>

Cyber Sentinel—<http://www.cybersentinel.com/>

CYBERSitter—<http://www.cybersitter.com/>

Filterpak—<http://www.familyconnect.com/>

Internet Filter—<http://www.8e6home.com/> (network version also available)

iProtectYou—<http://www.softforyou.com/>

iShield—<http://www.pornblocker.com/ishield/>

NetMop—<http://www.netmop.com/>

NetNanny—<http://www.netnanny.com/>

Sentry PC—<http://www.sentrypc.com/>

TuEagles Anti-Porn—
<http://www.tueagles.com/anti-porn/>

Here's a review of many of the current offerings:
<http://internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/>

Access filters for networks

SmartFilter BESS Edition—
<http://www.securecomputing.com/index.cfm?sKey=1209>
(This is used to filter Internet access on campus at Bob Jones University.)

iAssist—www.maxum.com/iAssist (This one is for Mac networks.)

iPrism—<http://internet-filters.stbernard.com/>

Pearl Echo—
<http://www.pearlsw.com/products/pearlEcho/index.html>

R3000 Enterprise Internet Filter—
<http://www.8e6.com/products/R3000/index.htm>

SurfControl—
<http://www.surfcontrol.com/Default.aspx?id=375&mnuid=1.1>

Websense Enterprise—<http://www.websense.com/global/en/ProductsServices/WebsenseEnterprise/>

Filtered ISPs (server-based)

SafeBrowse—<http://www.safebrowse.com/>
(This is officially recommended by Bob Jones University.)

Character-Link—
<http://www.characterlink.net/protection/main.asp>

Christian-Net—<http://www.cnonline.net/default.asp>

CovPro—<http://www.pornblocker.com/dial/>

Family.Net—<http://www.family.net/>

Family Safe Viewing—<http://familysafeviewing.net/>

Integrity Online—
<http://www.integrity.com>

iSelect—http://www.iselect.net/internet_access.htm

S@fe Access—<http://www.safeaccess.com/>

Safeplace—<http://www.safeplace.net/>

Filters for approved sites only ("can list")

Character-Link—
<http://www.characterlink.net/protection/main.asp>

IF-Only—
<http://www.internetfilter.com/w/products/if2k-only>

Internet Safety Organizations

Center for Democracy and Technology—
<http://www.cdt.org/>
(Generally left-of-center privacy advocate)

CyberAngels—<http://www.cyberangels.org/>

GetNetWise—<http://www.getnetwise.org/>

National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families—<http://www.nationalcoalition.org/>

Site / Software Rating Systems

Entertainment Software Rating Board—
<http://www.esrb.org/>

Internet Content Rating Association—
<http://www.icra.org/>

Platform for Internet Content Selection (PICS)—
<http://www.w3.org/pub/WWW/PICS/>

SafeSurf—<http://www.safesurf.com/>

Other discussions of Internet Safety

FBI Internet Safety page—
<http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm>

i-Safe—<http://www.isafe.org/>

NetSmartz—<http://www.netsmartz.org/>

SafeKids—<http://www.safekids.com/>

The Internet Advocate Resource Guide—
<http://www.monroe.lib.in.us/~lchampel/netadv.html>

Where to Report Internet-Related Problems—
<http://www.safetyed.org/help/wherereport.html>

For interactive links, download the PDF of this newsletter from www.bjupress.com.

(continued from p. 5)

of bounds. The problem with this approach, obviously, is that much of the appeal of the Internet is its seemingly infinite size and the resulting serendipitous surfing.

A more insidious problem with any filtering approach is that such packages block sites based on the publisher's standards, which may or may not be the same as yours. Many packages allow you some control over these standards—for example, you may choose to block nudity and profanity but not violence, and you may also add specific sites to the list—but even at that, you are bound to some degree by the publisher's standards. Many filters, for example, allow access to children's sites even though rock music pervades the site. To parents who find such music objectionable, the filter has a lower standard than their own and allows their children access to sites the parents deem objectionable. Similarly, if the publisher decides to block sites mentioning the word *abortion*, the user will be prevented from accessing both pro-life and pro-choice sites, a result that the parent may not have intended at all.

As a



relatively silly example, a science professor at Bob Jones University, Dr. Bill *Lovegrove*, has site-blocking software on his home computer. The program he's using originally wouldn't allow him to search for his own name or even to access his personal home page; it found the name *Lovegrove* just a little too sensual, apparently.

Your family should have a comprehensive Internet safety policy.

The problem is compounded by the fact that for competitive reasons, the publishers of filtering software do not disclose the details of their blocking policy. They have justifiable economic reasons for this, of course, but it makes the user's job more difficult.

Another problem with filtering software is that it's fairly simple to circumvent. Anyone can sit down at your computer with a boot disk and one of those ubiquitous "Free 30 Days" disks from a national ISP and get around many of the most popular filters, both client- and server-based. It's foolish for a user to rely on filtering software as his sole means of monitoring usage and preventing abuse.

Your family should have a comprehensive Internet safety policy that includes all the techniques mentioned above.

Within that larger picture, filtering software can play a useful role. 🗣️

Dr. Dan Olinger teaches in the Seminary at Bob Jones University.

¹Rand Hummel of The WILDS has authored a helpful book on this subject, entitled *The Dark Side of the Internet*. A condensed audio version is available free at <http://www.bjupress.com> or by calling 1.800.845.5731.

²In Windows XP, the history is stored at c:\Documents and Settings\[login-name]\Local Settings\History.



Bob Jones University
BJU Press
Greenville, SC 29614-0060



247833

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GREENVILLE, S.C.
PERMIT #823

What's New!

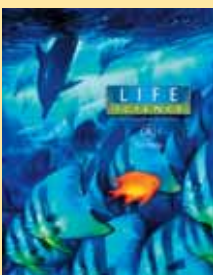
SECONDARY LEVEL



Explorations in Literature 7 (3rd ed.)—Teaches a biblical perspective on six unit themes—courage, nature and man, generosity, our land, humility, and family. Students are encouraged through structured study to interpret, analyze, and evaluate authors, works,

themes, and terms in light of Scripture.

Student Text (231589, \$40.00)



Life Science (3rd ed.)—Introduces the living world with all of its wonders. Updated content on organism classification, cellular biology, genetics, and the differences between creation and evolution provide a firm foundation for the chapters on microbiology, botany,

zoology, ecology, and human anatomy that follow.

Student Text (228163, \$47.50)



World History 10 (3rd ed.)—Helps your students see historical events from Creation to modern times in the light of God's Word. This updated and revised edition features new first and last chapters, many new photographs and feature boxes, greater Bible integration, and additional questions designed to enhance

Bible integration and higher-order thinking skills.

Student Text (225052, \$45.00)

Teacher's Edition (3rd ed.)—In this survey of world history, the Teacher's Edition develops grade-level-appropriate skills and includes much additional information and many new activities.

Teacher's Edition (244681, \$49.50)