

TIME : 20 to 25 minutes

OVERVIEW

Students learn how difficult it is to tell when someone is misrepresenting themselves online and play a game to reinforce this.

PROGRAM GOAL

Enhance the ability of children to recognize dangers on the Internet.

MATERIALS

- computer lab or computer connected to an LCD projector or television monitor
- "UYN: The Boy Who Loved IM" show
- "Who's Your Friend on the Internet?" game
- paper and pen or pencil for each student

ACTIVITY

Display the NetSmartz game "Who's Your Friend on the Internet?" in the classroom for all to see. Taking cues from Nettie, play the game as a class, having students guess who they would like for a friend.

Show "UYN: The Boy Who Loved IM."

After the cartoon is finished, ask the students if they have ever told a lie when they were online. (For example, I told my friend that I had to log off because my mom wanted me to do chores, but I really just didn't want to chat anymore. In a chatroom I said that I play basketball all the time, because they all did and I didn't want to seem uncool. But I can't remember the last time I played basketball.)

It's pretty easy to lie online because you're not in the same room as someone. They don't see your body language and can't tell if you are telling the truth or not. But this means that it's also really easy for people who might like to hurt or take advantage of you to lie about who they are.

Have each student take out a piece of paper. Tell them to write three items on the paper: two things about themselves that even their best friend probably doesn't know and one thing that is completely made up. Tell the students not to tell anyone which is which, and to mix up the order of the items on their sheet.

Write the names of each child on a small slip of paper, and put the papers in a bowl. Randomly pull out a slip of paper and invite that student to read each of the three items, making sure not to let on which ones are true and which are false. After all three are read, have the students guess which item they think is the false one. If they are right, the class wins; if they are wrong, the student wins. Repeat this until time is over or until the class loses interest. Emphasize how difficult it is to tell the truth from fiction.



INTERNET SAFETY MESSAGE

I will never share personal information such as my address, my telephone number, my parents' or guardian's work address/ telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' or guardian's permission.