

Good Afternoon all you great Rotarians! (Slide 1)- Thank you so much for attending my presentation today. Today we will learn about Social Networks – The Good, The Bad and the Downright Dangerous. I will be speaking and using the Internet to show some great things about what our exchange students are doing out there and the good, the bad and the dangerous. Some of the issues we will talk about today will be adult subjects that teens are becoming involved with on a daily basis on their exchanges. I will talk about ideas that districts can have to watch over their students and why it is a MUST these days to have one foot in reality and one foot in the cyber world of social interaction.

Let's start off with a little story about defining what really is danger for our youth.

When I was being my training as a Child Social worker about 50 years ago – I attend a class on child abuse and neglect. We were learning about what safety dangerous need to be present in a home for a child to be removed. This could be compared to our home checks before we put a youth into a host home. If the host home is filthy or dangerous, of course we would never place them there. But what are the guidelines to a filthy home in terms of child welfare? Lets look at the first home (Slide 2) Now is this home filthy to your standards?

Let's look at the next slide and the next – is this filthy? Does it endanger a baby? Does it endanger a 5 year old or what a about a teenager? Well answers vary from person to person. You see – seeing dangers for a child or youth is very difficult.

So one day as I was sitting in my training to become an SSW (Social Service Worker), our instructor showed us slide after slide saying “Would you remove at this house?” and “Would you removed at this house?” Soon our answers became jumbled and not very strong. Honestly, we all felt way over our heads. Then he said, “Take out a pen and paper – I will give you the guidelines!” So we all took out our pens and I was extremely happy to be able to have some FIRM WRITTEN rules about what was dangerous and what was not for children. He started “Ok, if the home has 1 – 5 rats but not more than that – then a baby can stay. If the child is over 1 year than the house can have 6 rats.” He went on and on about dirty dishes and clothes piled on the floor and on about dirty toilets and showers. Our group knew after awhile that he was just being silly. There were no hard and structured rules about what a house could look like that could help us decide if a child could stay in a home or if it was safe. Our instructor told us safety is different for each child. It depends on many things about the top determining factors of safety for teens could be: (Slide 4)

(Slide 5)

Our youth are usually very suave and educated that decide to come on Rotary Youth Exchange. Their IQs are usually way above the borderline IQs and they are able to process information quickly and easily, especially in their native languages. And we all know that when our youth are on the internet – they are mostly surfing the web and chatting in their native language which does not help their language

skills in their host country. But sometimes our youth are struggling with their

Emotional IQs. Emotional IQs :

- 1. Perceiving emotions — the ability to detect and decipher emotions in faces, pictures, voices, and cultural artifacts- including the ability to identify one's own emotions. Perceiving emotions represents a basic aspect of emotional intelligence, as it makes all other processing of emotional information possible.**
- 2. Using emotions — the ability to harness emotions to facilitate various cognitive activities, such as thinking and problem solving. The emotionally intelligent person can capitalize fully upon his or her changing moods in order to best fit the task at hand.**
- 3. Understanding emotions — the ability to comprehend emotion language and to appreciate complicated relationships among emotions. For example, understanding emotions encompasses the ability to be sensitive to slight variations between emotions, and the ability to recognize and describe how emotions evolve over time.**
- 4. Managing emotions — the ability to regulate emotions in both ourselves and in others. Therefore, the emotionally intelligent person can harness emotions, even negative ones, and manage them to achieve intended goals.**

(Slide 6)

Location – Where is the youth? What is socially acceptable in that area? Ability to come and go as they want? Dating and socializing encouraged? Surroundings – Does youth have their own laptop? Chatting often and privately? Where is the computer located in the house?

(Slide 7)

Past Internet Exposure and Usage – Most students have been using the Internet for the past 5 or 6 years. They have had training at school and sometimes in the home. For students with less training and supervision – the internet is a wide open range of danger.

(Slide 8)

For youth with mental health issues – the internet and social networks can help them reach out and find others who are going through the same things as them or it can help them hook up with those who will exploit their pain and lead them to more issues. The internet has no supervision like therapists can put into place. Internet can be filled with strange and bizarre ‘facts’ about mental illness and literally harm the youth more than anything else.

Sexual Issues such as youth who have sexual offended or have been sexually abused in the past are the highest risk of reoffending or being offend through internet and social networks. Predators and sex offenders can easily access these youth through thousands of different venues on the Internet. The porn available to youth who have offended is easily available and sometimes even free.

(Slide 9)

Predators – what do they do?

- Currently, there are over 644,865 Registered Sex Offenders in the United States; an estimated 10,000 have been lost in the system (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2008).**
- The predominant sex crime scenario doesn't involve violence or stranger molesters posing online as children; only 5 percent of offenders concealed the fact they were adults from their victims. Almost 80 percent of offenders were explicit about their intentions with youth. In 73 percent of crimes, youth go to meet the offender on multiple occasions for multiple sexual encounters (NJOV Study, 2007).**
- Teens are willing to meet with strangers: 16 percent of teens considered meeting someone they've only talked to online and 8 percent have actually met someone they only knew online (Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later. 2006).**
- Four percent of all youth Internet users received aggressive sexual solicitations, which threatened to spill over into "real life". These solicitors asked to meet the youth in person, called them on the**

telephone, or sent offline mail, money, or gifts. Also 4 percent of youth Internet users had distressing sexual solicitations that left them feeling upset or extremely afraid (Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later, 2006).

(Slide 10)

Sex trade and trafficking

"Each year an estimated 800,000 to 900,000 human beings are bought, sold, or forced across the world's borders [2003 U.S. State Department estimate]. Among them are hundreds of thousands of teenage girls, and others as young as 5, who fall victim to the sex trade.

There's a special evil in the abuse and exploitation of the most innocent and vulnerable. The victims of [the] sex trade see little of life before they see the very worst of life, an underground of brutality and lonely fear. Those who create these victims and profit from their suffering must be severely punished. Those who patronize this industry debase themselves and deepen the misery of others."

- Former President Bush, addressing the U.N. General Assembly, September 23, 2003

Can our youth somehow get involved or be caught up in these dangers?

ABSOLUTELY! It is just a connection away with a predator on the Internet.

(Slide 11)

Porn- I have spoken about Pornography on the Internet and the dangers in Brazilian Conference in Gramado in November and honestly, everyone knows about

the easy access of porn on the internet. But I do need to speak about innocent way that teens stumble into porn sites. They stumble into porn through mass spam emails, links on social networks and pops up. Sometimes they join groups through social networks or just receive links from friends. Sometimes the trails of the porn they are accessing are not easy to find. Some porn is easily accessible through common websites such as Facebook, MySpace, Orkut and other sites visited by teens.

(Slide 12 and 13)

Social networks – Gaming Worlds – Lounges – Self created Worlds – Dating Sites

- Social Networks – are people coming together from different parts of the world to communicate, chat, date and have ‘relationships.’**
- Dating sites- exactly how it sounds. Youth go through to find other people to date, chat and have relationships with.**
- Virtual Communities - A virtual community is a social network of individuals who interact through specific media, potentially crossing geographical and political boundaries in order to pursue mutual interests or goals. AKA – they build their second worlds and they live in it through avatars and literal computer worlds. Sometimes these worlds include games, marriages, cyber sexual ‘relationships.’**
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(Handout lists and Elationships)

(Slide 14)

Let’s go out to the Internet and see the things that you want to see and learn about:

- Where would you guys like to go look?**
- What would you like to see?**
- Where do you think that our youth may be going?**

(Slide 15)

So How do WE protect our Youth in our District? Can we ?

- Through agreements and policies with youth**
- Training**
- Understanding your social network is YOU**
- Random Checks – how do you feel about it?**
- Understanding PUBLIC information**

(Slide 16)

Wrap up with question and answers

(Slide 17)

Personal Information

