



# SafeSurfer

## SafeSurfer

### Product Backgrounder

The Internet is the most powerful resource that we will encounter in our lifetime. A tool that has helped to create a global village while sharing knowledge and media, the web has become a staple in our lives and something in which we rely on. With the online community reaching epic proportions, it's important for people to get the most out of their Internet experience, and more importantly, to do so safely. ParetoLogic's SafeSurfer.org is a website that was created with this as inspiration.

SafeSurfer.org is a unique, free website that is tailored specifically to kids from the ages of 8-14 that offers them a forum, games, video and computer game reviews, entertainment updates and news about the newest websites and applications, all with an underlying theme of responsible and safe Internet use. A safe place for kids to access the information they crave, this website is continually updated with user generated information and is constantly fed with discussions and tips on how to keep safe on the Internet. The site provides rich information that can be passed on to parents.

#### For kids:

SafeSurfer is designed with kids' safety as the number one concern. It's easy to take a few wrong turns on the Internet and wind up exposed to unsavory sites or characters while browsing the web.

*A report published by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the University of New Hampshire revealed that of a sample of children & teens who use the Internet:*

- 1 in 5 children - Solicited for sex in the past year.
- 1 in 33 children - Aggressively solicited sexual, meaning that the child was threatened, asked to meet, called on the phone, or received mail or gifts.
- 1 in 4 children - Exposed to photos of people having sex, even though about 1/3 of households reported using "Internet blocking software."
- 1 in 17 children - Threatened or harassed on the Internet, including threats of harm to the child, friends or other family members.

It's stats like these that inspired the creation of SafeSurfer.org. While the site is a safe haven for kids to come and be creative, share thoughts and ideas and play games, it is also a place for kids to learn about the dangers that do exist online, while promoting safety and awareness at the same time.



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## **Kids help provide the content:**

SafeSurfer also recognizes that kids are the experts. With this in mind, the site will be constantly fed with rich content provided by kids themselves. This keeps the site interactive and allows kids the chance to provide satisfying contributions that will keep the site fresh and current, all while remaining anonymous.

## **For parents:**

Although the site is designed for kids, there is also a strong parent component as well.

*A survey commissioned by Cox Communications and NCMEC3 found that:*

- Over half (51%) of parents either do not have or do not know if they have software on their computer(s) that monitors where their teenager(s) go online and with whom they interact.
- 42% of parents do not review the content of what their teenager(s) read and/or type in chat rooms or via Instant Messaging.
- Teenagers who Instant Message use chat lingo to communicate and parents don't know the meanings of some of the most commonly used phrases. 57% don't know LOL (Laughing Out Loud), 68% don't know BRB (Be Right Back), and 92% don't know A/S/L (Age/Sex/Location).

Stats like the ones above indicated the importance of providing a one-stop place where parents can and get all the Internet safety information that they need.

Parents can obtain a thorough understanding of Internet safety in the extensive 'websafe' section that provides parents with all the ins and outs of how to make sure their children are staying on the right path while online, and to provide a lot of useful information that parents might not have known themselves.

## **The future:**

SafeSurfer.org is an ongoing project. Updates of graphics and useful information will be a constant in order to provide an as enriching experience as possible. Although the initial foundation has been laid, it is going to be the kids' involvement in the site that will ensure its popularity, success, and relevancy. ParetoLogic is committed to listening to our youngest computer experts and addressing their concerns and needs as their Internet experience continues to evolve. We believe that Internet safety for children is a global responsibility and one that requires a collaborative approach between business, parents/caregivers, educators, and the kids themselves. We are honoured to do our part to protect kids online and encourage all computer users to do the same.