Name _____ Date _____

Safe Talking in Cyberspace

One of Michael's favorite activities is visiting a Web site where he plays games. He also visits a chat room to swap game tips and learn new gaming strategies. One day he chats with someone called "Gamester13." They trade game tips, and after a while the conversation turns to other subjects. It turns out they both like science fiction books. They also saw and liked the same movie recently.

After about 30 minutes of chat, "Gamester13" asks, "Do you like to play sports?"

Michael answers, "Yes."

Gamester13 asks, "Which sport do you like best?"

"Soccer," Michael replies.

Gamester13 then asks, "What's the name of your team?"

Before Michael can answer, Gamester13 says, "Gotta go. My boss is coming."

Michael is surprised and upset. Worried, he stays away from cyberspace for a few days.

Michael believed he was talking to a boy his own age. What made him think that?

_____

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Michael's team is called the Tenafly Tigers. Tenafly is the name of the town he lives in. Why shouldn't he give out his team name in cyberspace?

_____

_____

What should Michael do when he feels uncomfortable in cyberspace?

_____

_____

You Can't Be Sure

Michael was very upset when he realized that "Gamester13" was not a 13-year-old but a grown-up with a job. People in cyberspace aren't always who you think they are. Maybe "Gamester13" was pretending to be a kid. Maybe he was up to no good. Then, again, maybe he just likes to play online games for fun. The point is, with strangers in cyberspace, you can't be sure.

Get Ready to Chat Safely

Chat and messaging are fun ways to talk to friends and family. Sometimes, it's enjoyable to chat in cyberspace with kids you don't know, too. If you can check all the boxes on the next page, you're ready to chat safely.

Be CyberSmart!®

Don't go into cyberspace until you know the kinds of information that are private: full name, street address, name of school, school address, sports team name, E-mail address, phone numbers, passwords, and photos of yourself.

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Name _____ Date _____

Cyberspace Chatting Checklist

- ☐ My parents say it's okay for me to chat in cyberspace.
- ☐ I will only go into chat rooms for kids that have monitors.
- ☐ I will never reply to, or click on a link in an IM from someone who is not a face-to-face friend.
- ☐ I will pick chat and messaging screen names that are different from my E-mail address.
- ☐ My screen name does not tell my name, age, or whether I am a boy or girl.
- ☐ I know what kinds of information are private.
- ☐ I will not give out private information when chatting.
- ☐ I will not answer questions that make me uncomfortable.
- ☐ I will tell a trusted adult if someone bothers me in cyberspace.
- ☐ I will never meet someone face to face that I met in a chat room without bringing a parent with me.

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