CyberSmart!®

Name _____ Date _____

Safety with Cyberpals

Sita likes to visit an online chat room where kids talk about school and homework. She really likes one of the people in the chat room, who uses the screen name "CJ." When Sita shares a problem she has at school, CJ gives good ideas for handling the problem. Other times CJ is a good listener. On many days, Sita and CJ plan what time they will chat the next day. Sita thinks of CJ as a close friend.

One day, while chatting, CJ and Sita compare their two schools. Sita types, "My school principal is so strict. We have to walk through the halls in straight lines!"

CJ answers, "My school isn't so strict. What's the name of your school?"

Sita types back, "Uh, my school's name is too hard to spell."

CJ types, "So, where is your school?"

What should Sita answer?

_____

_____

What makes this answer a good one?

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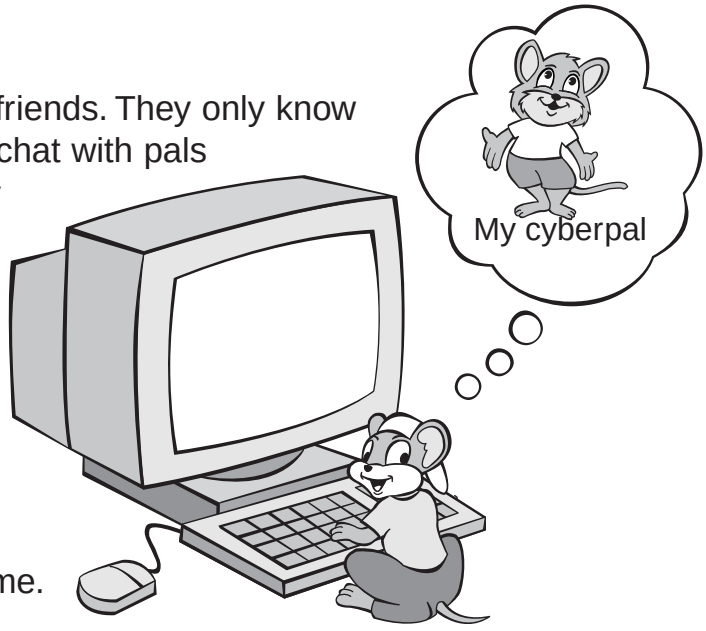
It's Okay to Chat

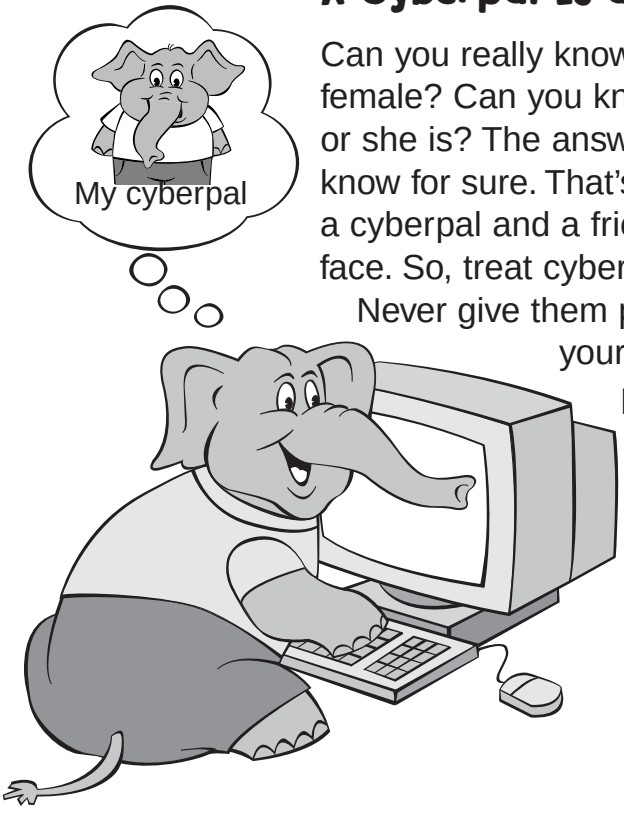
Sita and CJ are cyberpals, not face-to-face friends. They only know each other from chatting online. It's okay to chat with pals in cyberspace. Two cyberpals can have very good talks. They can share their feelings. They can talk about problems they might not share with friends at school.



Choose Chat Rooms Just for Kids

If you want to chat, visit chat rooms just for kids. Most of these chat rooms have adult monitors. A monitor is like a referee at a game. The monitor keeps the chat on topic. The monitor makes sure everyone uses good manners and stays safe.

A Cyberpal Is a Stranger



Can you really know if a cyberpal is male or female? Can you know for sure how old he or she is? The answer is NO—you can't know for sure. That's the difference between a cyberpal and a friend you know face to face. So, treat cyberpals like strangers.

Never give them private information about yourself without first asking permission of your parent or guardian.

Be CyberSmart!®

Know the kinds of information that are private:

- full name
- street address
- name of school
- school address
- E-mail address
- phone numbers
- passwords
- calling card number
- mother's maiden name
- parent's place of work
- photos in which you can be recognized

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