

## **Parents, Kids & Technology 1:06:20**

Funding for NetSafe is provided by the Utah State Legislature through a grant on the Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice. In proud partnership with these other organizations...

### NARRATOR

When it comes to today's technology, it's no exaggeration to say that teenagers use the Internet very differently from their parents and grandparents. For many adults, the Internet is used primarily as a means to retrieve information whereas teenagers use it to connect with their peers. Not surprisingly, the growth in use of the Internet mirrors the general growth of the population. According to a recent poll, the total number of people who use the Internet numbers in the millions.

### HUGH BROWN

As far as researching, my goodness, I remember going up to the library and trying to research for my master's and it just took you forever and now you just google it and you find the information. And kids are much more learned as a result of that source of information.

### NARRATOR

In fact, being online on the job is, in many cases vital to the individual's performance and job specifications.

### RICK CLINE

The Internet and my job are very important. Everyday I come in, the first thing I do is I get on the internet, I check email, I am also responding to many requests from people, teachers others with regard to the Internet. It's integral. Its part of my life. Without it I wouldn't be able to do my job.

### NARRATOR

The number of adults using the Internet at work be it in an office building, work site or home office, continues to grow at a steady pace.

### JO-ANN WONG

Well every morning first thing I come in and I turn on my computer and see the list of things that my boss has for me to do. I do a lot of contract work through the Internet corresponding with companies. And for example, next week we have a big meeting here and I am planning the meeting, taking lunch orders and doing all of that on the Internet with 24 people. And we don't do it on the phone anymore; we do it on the internet.

### NARRATOR

When asked why and how they use the Internet, adults say they use it for gathering information, to communicate with others, keep up with the news, find travel deals or simply to shop.

JANE BROWN

On our recent trips I usually took the laptop with me, it's very easy to take and that's how we communicate. We didn't use a cell phone we'd use email cause it was easier and we could go out of the country with it and I could take pictures and send pictures to our friends and our family. It was very nice to stay in touch. We were gone a month and we felt quite comfortable because we could communicate.

NARRATOR

Adults also go online to find the latest information about health and nutrition.

HUGH BROWN

I'm going to need a kidney transplant so I go on the Internet and I look up medical tourism. I try to understand more about the kidney so when I go in and see a Dr. that they explain to me what's going on. But I've got some information ahead of time so, there's so much information on the Internet it's just, it's amazing.

NARRATOR

Most of this really comes as no surprise.

Young Girl

"Hey mom, I'm getting on the internet"

NARRATOR

But what is surprising is that when these Internet savvy adults are asked what they think their kids are doing online; this is what they say;

DAVE BELL

My kids luckily are pretty good. I mean my son is mostly looking up "cheats", for video games. And my daughter mostly is using it for schoolwork. I mean she doesn't do a lot of email and stuff like that so she's using it for schoolwork to research papers, take practice tests; which the schools have set up, which I think is a great idea. So, I think that's a lot of what she's doing and I hope that's all she's doing!

NARRATOR

Children, teenagers and young adults are by far the biggest users of the Internet. This is not surprising when you consider that most of them have literally grown up online. According to recent studies, over 93% of teenagers use the Internet.

JUSTIN

I'm on the Internet probably about an hour everyday. It's like when I have nothing to do I just look around and find something to read or look at, play.

COURTNEY

I usually get on youtube or nabolister.com to watch movies because it's like 100% cheaper than going to rent them or see them in theatres. I also go on my MySpace or check my email or go on MS messenger if I have people online.

COLTON

Well being online is not a dire need to me but it is a big deal in my social life. I could live without it but I prefer having it.

NARRATOR

Currently, millions of online teens have shared information about themselves on social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace. By creating profiles about themselves, kids can develop their identity, seek validation from others, and share their artistic creations, photos, and feelings.

KELLYN

On MySpace I mostly we'll just do comments with each other with, it's mostly just my friends from school or my cousins and some of my friends from other schools that I don't see as much.

MADISON

Texting and instant messaging is definitely a prevalent thing, I don't know if you can necessarily say important. For me I enjoy instant messaging because it keeps me in contact with my friends and/or my family throughout the day.

NARRATOR

In some ways kids are much better communicators than adults give them credit for. These multi-tasking, multi-channel teens will use any tool to communicate with friends. Except, unlike their parents, today's teens are finding communicating by email to be one of the least popular methods for keeping up with friends. Instant participation is key to the online lives of kids.

KARA

Well talking on the phone, usually when I'm talking on the phone I can do maybe like a couple of things at the same time but, like if you're texting someone you can text them but you can also be online I/M ing someone else or being on Facebook or watching TV.

ELIZABETH

There is a huge generation gap when it comes to technology. We had none of this when we were younger. And it's so difficult and frustrating to not know what these children are doing all the time.

DAD

“So Melissa, why don’t you explain to me – how do you instant message?”

MELISSA

“You sign in...”

NARRATOR

The generation gap be it online or otherwise, is not going away anytime soon. The best thing parents, grandparents and guardians can do is to keep an open line of communication with children and teenagers about their online activity. Talk to them about the dangers of the Internet and ask to see some of the things they do online and sites they visit. You’ll probably find your child is most anxious to help get you up to speed when it comes to matters of technology.

Without question, the Internet is one of the most useful and fascinating tools of technology available today – for people of all ages. Regardless of how you spend your time online, keep it safe, protect your identity and never share personal information with anyone.

For more information go to [netsafeutah.org](http://netsafeutah.org)

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