The Internet can be a wonderful tool for children and youth. Kids can use the most current news, entertainment and education information for research projects. They can use email and public message boards to keep in touch with family and friends, go to chat rooms, play games, etc. It's a great way to discover new hobbies and interests, and for kids who are online savvy young people to be computer-safe.

But the Internet can also be dangerous. Here are some things families can do to encourage today's computer-savvy young people to be computer-safe.

1. Set rules when signing up for any service online. Many services (e.g., chat rooms) ask for personal information when signing up. If you don't know if the website is legitimate, you may be at risk of receiving products that are contaminated, counterfeit, or not approved by the FDA—or you may pay and receive nothing at all.

2. Be familiar with the medication you take—recording the dose, side effects, and when to take it helps prevent mistakes.

3. Never purchase prescription drugs without your doctor's prescription. Here are some tips for buying prescription drugs online:

   - Never purchase prescription drugs without your doctor's prescription.
   - Only buy prescription medications from a licensed pharmacy—make sure the prescription information they've used matches your prescription information (including the color, size, shape, and taste). If you receive a counterfeit medication, you may be able to identify it more easily.
   - Always read the label on the prescription medication or package to make sure you're buying the right medication. If the label on the product is altered or the label has been changed, the medication is not legitimate and may not be safe to take.
   - Check the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) website (www.nabp.net, 847-698-6227) to determine if a website is a licensed pharmacy in good standing. Check with your state's board of pharmacy for other websites that offer greater convenience and lower prices than the corner drugstore, but if you don't know for sure if the seller you're dealing with is legitimate, you may be at risk of receiving products that are online pharmacies. Many online pharmacies offer greater convenience and lower prices than the corner drugstore, but if you don't know what's available, it may be illegal to import the product into the U.S. and your child may violate a law. If you or another responsible adult should be present. It should be in a safe public place, and explain that people met online may not be who they say they are. As a general rule, children should never plan to meet anybody in person whom they have encountered online.