

Dear Parents,

March 2011

Children at younger and younger ages seem to be using cell phones, I-pods, lap tops, etc. They are communicating on-line using AIM, Facebook and other forms of social media. They have access to music and images that are violent and sexually explicit. Just listen to some of the more popular songs that can be heard on the radio.

While the use of some of technologies could be considered age appropriate, others truly should be reserved for later use by more mature individuals.

If your child is permitted to visit these social media sites or allowed to navigate the internet we ask that you keep an eye on these correspondences to make sure that your child is not inadvertently getting involved in situations that are inappropriate. We have been made aware of instances of bullying and visits to websites that should be restricted for elementary aged students. Furthermore, kids are using their I-touch players and other devices to communicate with others late at night without parental permission or knowledge.

Make sure that your child understands that passing along emails or texts about others, making threatening statements or teasing are practices that they should not be involved in. These actions can be construed as cyber-bullying and there could be consequences for their actions. Often times we learn about these issues in school when problems arise between the students involved. As a result school personnel will intervene and in some cases consequences are assigned. Generally speaking children should understand that they should never write something about someone or something that they would not be willing to say in front of a parent or directly to that individual.

Additionally, more and more students are coming to school with cell phones. Students may not use their cell phones during the school day. They may never use their phones to photograph or record video or audio of other students or staff during the school day. If you do allow your child to have a cell phone, please impress upon him/her that they are never to be on and in use during the day, including the recess period.

We have arranged for a series of presentations for students in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 to discuss the topics of bullying and internet safety during the month of March. Presentations are of no cost to our school and will be provided by a Suffolk County police officer and staff members from CAPS (Child Abuse Prevention Services).

Our children are dealing with more and more complex situations as a result of the ever evolving technological world that we live in. By working together we can achieve our mutual goals to keep our children safe and healthy.

Sincerely,
Gail Casciano
Gail Casciano
Principal

Jim Williams
Jim Williams
Assistant Principal

