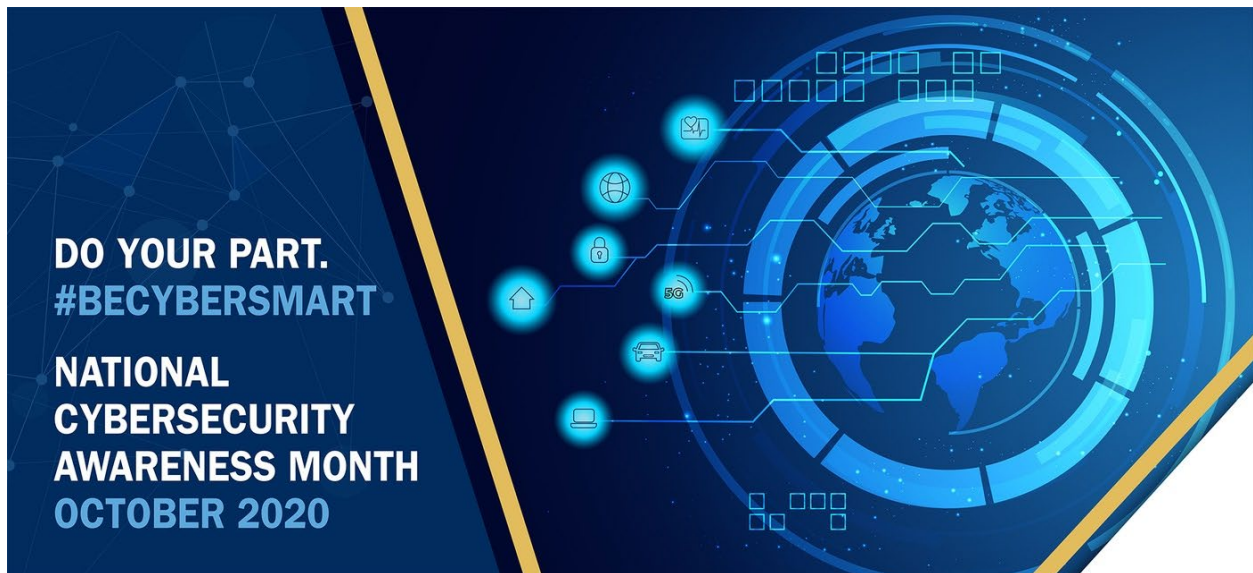


Your Health and Safety Matters!



As school, socializing, and many aspects of life have moved online this year, it's more important than ever that you protect your digital devices and steer clear of cybercriminals. So during [National Cyber Security Awareness Month](#) (NCSAM), observed each October, the FBI and partner agencies remind you to do your part and #BeCyberSmart all year long.

Now in its 19th year, NCSAM is a government and private sector partnership that raises awareness about cybersecurity and stresses the collective effort required to stop [cyber crimes](#), online thefts, and [scams](#).

As the premier cyber investigative agency, the FBI works to keep you safe online, but you should follow the cyber safety tips below to help protect yourself and your family. If you do become a victim of online crime, please report it.

Learn More and Know How to Report a Crime

- Visit the FBI's [Cyber page](#), list of [common scams](#), and the [Internet Crime Complaint Center \(IC3\)](#) to learn about current online risks.
- Help keep your kids safe online with the [FBI's Safe Online Surfing](#) program.
- Use the [IC3 complaint form](#) to report online crimes when they occur.



How to Talk With Your Child(ren) About Cybersecurity

From computers to phones and tablets, kids are surrounded by technology both in the classroom and at home. Cybersecurity experts say it's never too early to talk to your kids about cybersecurity.

“I don't think you should obsess over what to say to them the most important thing is to start somewhere, to have that conversation. And I don't believe in fear as a motivator, you know, telling them that somebody is out to get them on the internet,” Lisa Plaggemier, with the National Cyber Security Alliance, said.

Plaggemier says parents need to have an open conversation with their kids and set some basic ground rules.

“I think it's better to use a common-sense approach than it is to try and scare them into doing the right thing to be honest,” Plaggemier said. Plaggemier points to research which shows more than a third of teens have been a victim of cyberbullying, but only one in ten will tell a parent.



“In the old days we could run away, we could run home, we could run to a teacher on the playground. But we can't run away from a bully in cyberspace, it's a little bit more difficult,” Plaggemier said. Plaggemier believes you should be checking your kids phones and devices because the risk is too great not to.

“Some parents can be squeamish about checking their child's devices you know they feel like maybe they're violating their child's privacy, but to be honest, you know all the social media apps know exactly what your child is doing online,” Plaggemier said.

How often should you be checking? Plaggemier says it depends on your child.

“With my kids, there were times when, you know, the dreaded middle school years when they're subject to a lot of peer pressure where I checked my kids phones fairly frequently, and as they matured and as I trusted them more and as their brain chemistry settled down and they grew a little older, I didn't have to check their phones quite as often,” Plaggemier said.

If your child is a victim of cyberbullying, Plaggemier says there's a few things you need to do.

“Encourage them to take screenshots of the incident and block the bully, report the bully to the app if the bullying happened through a social media app, and just have an open dialogue with your children,” Plaggemier said.

Here's the four things she says parents can do to protect their kids online:

- Establish limits and boundaries early
- Teach your kids how to create strong passwords
- Keep antivirus software up-to-date
- Make sure your kids understand nothing is truly temporary or anonymous online

<https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month>

<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/cyber/national-cybersecurity-awareness-month>

<https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month>

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-cybersecurity-awareness-month/>

<https://www.optiv.com/insights/discover/downloads/cybersecurity-awareness-month-2021-daily-tips-calendar>

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