

Net Safety Common Sense

Search suggestions for Parents checking Inappropriate material on the home computer

Are you concerned about the content of files coming into your home on your internet computer?
Are you concerned about possible stored files that may be inappropriate for young computer users?

Check your computer for files that may be stored on your computer.

Do a find or search on the following file extensions:

.jpg .gif .mpg .mov .ram

.avi .asx .wmv .mp3

These file extensions are typically web based files found on web pages. The .mpg, .mov, .avi, .asx, .wmv and .ram are video clips. The .jpg and .gif are graphics. .mp3 files are music files, typically downloaded from file sharing services (Kazaa, Morpheus, Gnutella, Limewire) or paid services such as Music Box or the iTunes Music Store.

When a web page is viewed, the application you are using to view the page (web browser like Internet Explorer or Netscape or AOL) caches or saves the files in a folder. On a windows based computer these are normally found in a folder named temp. On a Macintosh, they are in a cache folder.

If the user "saves" the files to the hard drive, they can be found by searching on the above file extensions such as .jpg. The file may have obvious names or have a numerical name. Double click on the file and it will open in some form of graphics previewer on your computer.

A History file is also typically saved within the browser application. This history file shows the viewing habits of the user over a period of time. Many "savvy" users will clear the history file prior exiting the program in an attempt to "clean up a trail" of use.

There are many sites on the net to help parents with web safety issues. Here is a list from a keyword search on "inappropriate content" :

http://www.familyfriendlysites.com/FamilyFriendly/viewcat_ws.asp?ID=237

<http://www.nfpainc.org/ref/netSafety.cfm?page=5>

<http://www.microweb.com/pepsite/Software/filters.html>

<http://www.gwi.net/parents/safety.html>

<http://www.garfieldisland.com/internetSafety.asp?page=emailSafety>

<http://www.iearn.org/internetsafety.htm>