January 2015

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The rapidly evolving nature of technology presents parents with numerous challenges in supervising their children’s internet use. Given the interwoven complexity of the internet in our lives and its increasing accessibility from remote locations, the need to talk to your child about suitable online behavior and appropriate boundaries is more important than ever. To help you navigate these challenges, the Westport Public Schools and the Westport PTA Council have once again partnered to conduct Internet Safety workshops for parents.

These workshops are designed to increase your understanding of current issues, to provide you with the knowledge and tools to deal with them, and to help you initiate a reasonable, realistic and informed dialogue with your child around the topic of internet use.

Due to the use of blocking and filtering mechanisms on the networks in our schools, we encounter very few in-school incidents of inappropriate computer use. If and when incidents do occur we identify the students involved and take appropriate action. We also reinforce with all of our students, K-12, the rules for Internet Safety, including how to respond properly to cyber-bullying. However, as with all educational initiatives, these lessons are most effective when coupled with strong, informed support from parents.

We invite you to sign up and attend. These sessions are open to all parents, but are more appropriate to those with children in grades 2-12.

Agenda: To look at Internet Safety Issues facing parents and their children in relation to . . .

1. Social Networking
   - Google+
   - Teen Trends
2. Cyberbullying
3. Online Personal Safety
   - Apps and Devices
4. Parent Resources
   - Ways to keep up-to-date all year long

Daytime Session: Jan. 13 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
Evening Session: Jan. 13 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Both workshop sessions will be held at Staples High School in the Library Media Center Classrooms. They will be facilitated by Natalie Carrignan, Director of Technology; Jennifer Cirino, Coordinator of Information and Technology Literacy; and Dr. Valerie Babich, Coordinator of Psychological Services.

To register, please go to http://internetsafety.westport.k12.ct.us by January 9th. For questions, please contact the parent helpdesk at parenthelpdesk@westport.k12.ct.us.

For those who cannot attend one of the workshops, a helpful FBI internet summary for parents can be found at: http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/parent-guide/parent-guide.

Sincerely,

Elliott Landon
Superintendent of Schools