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Children & Internet

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The Digital Millennium: Opportunities for Asian Media
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Children and Internet

New media technology seems to be taking rapid strides changing people’s lives and fast replacing activities they have hitherto been used to. The Internet seems to be the hottest medium today and going online seems to be the latest craze. Connectivity is the buzzword. Not only is this medium taking over the home entertainment front, it has also begun to intrude into every aspect of people’s lives. It has arrived boosting the pace of technology, widening vistas and expanding minds with information. As far as the internet is concerned, there is no big or small. All are equal. The year 2000 has shared significance to the world of technology, global commerce, industry and multinational corporations in the main dialect that rules it all, which is, ‘how much money can be made at the greatest speed’. And the one place where all this actually culminates, is on the Internet. This phenomenon which began in 1993, has today entrenched itself in the landscape of popular culture.

Cyber culture

When the first home computer began to appear around 1980, there was widespread fear that youngsters would be seduced by this new interactive medium, and see the computer as a partner that would simulate and replace social interaction with others. The Internet, though based on technology and information is in reality all about communication. Communication as it was never seen before is taking place today – bi-directional and uncensored with global participation. Communication is the basis, the radical ground and foundation on which any community thrives and the Internet is a community of chronic communicators, having been baptized into the new ‘cyber culture’. Today, we are seeing a whole new generation that is very comfortable with the machine. For child surfers who are constantly floating between the ‘real’ and ‘virtual’ worlds, it is only natural to be conditioned by this new system. Simple things like the flexibility with which they handle the mouse makes it seem as though it were an extension of their fingers, bringing to renewed reality what media pundit McLuhan said about media being an extension of the human body. Decoding the medium and comprehending the message is as easy and natural for children today, as reading a book is for an uninitiated person. This dynamic cyber culture that is fast evolving is something which American sociologist Sherry Turkle predicted way back in 1984. She wrote about the preoccupation that adolescent boys have with computer games and connected this with their mental and sexual development during puberty. She felt that obsession with computers could lead to preference for a well ordered, rule bound controllable universe compared to actual chaos in everyday society.

A new form of human consciousness, the ‘uncensored self’ seems to be establishing itself. Many children, especially adolescents are very unsure about revealing their true nature to the real world. But they do so in front of the machine. It is interesting and very significant to note that it is young people who constitute the vast majority of those who have ‘personal homepages’ on the net. Personal homepages seem to give an identity to children who may otherwise feel insignificant. Researchers and journalists have highlighted radical transformations of identity in chat systems and anonymous e-mail. The adolescents in particular seem to relate to this medium. Personal homepages help them to answer the very significant question – “Who am I”? It is also a medium that facilitates in changing relations between ‘public’ and ‘private’. Writing what is ‘personal’ is at the same time made public to the entire world and it is not uncommon to discover
such intimate diaries on the net. This is akin to what Michael Strangelove calls, the 'uncensored self' in his essays on the Anthropology of Cyberspace. Any cultural phenomena are dependent on living cultural, interpretative communities. How people understand and decode various meanings in society could well determine a particular culture. The important factor here is being able to decode. If you know the rules of the game you can decode the meaning. But once again, experiencing it is something else altogether. It is interesting to note that works of art and popular culture have their own characteristic codes, and only those who have prior knowledge can decode both. The adult of this decade and a child of this decade have had very different formative cultures. This is why Carsten Jessen gives a very valuable suggestion that instead of looking at the content of the media with our adult eyes, it would perhaps be wiser to look at how and why the media is being used by the child. This seems to agree very well with the uses and gratification's theory regarding television as well as Marshall McLuhan's statement that the "Medium is the message".

Benefits of the Information Superhighway

The vast array of services that one currently finds online is growing by leaps and bounds every day. Reference information such as news, weather, sports, stock quotes, movie reviews, encyclopaedias and even transport fares are available online. Users can conduct transactions such as trading stocks, making travel reservations, banking and shopping online. Vital health information with online treatment is certainly a boon. Millions of people communicate through the electronic mail, which has today become a virtual family space where friends and family can keep in touch even though many miles apart. Others use the public message board chat areas to make new friends. Entertainment is also plenty on the net. Not only can one play popular computer games, but can also visit a museum or scan through anything of interest. Watching videos and enjoying music over the net are other options. With rampant communication taking place online, one can foresee more socialization in cyberspace than in real space. How wise this is and what it does to a child is a point for debate.

As an educational tool, users can learn about virtually any topic. The Internet and the World Wide Web are wonderful information resources both for parents and children. The NOP Internet study suggests that in Britain, children seem to use the Internet more for accessing information or communicating with others, rather than just as a game. Almost one in three children between the ages of 7 and 16 have used the Internet at least once as of March 1998. The research reveals that two out of five children have a personal computer at home. The findings from NOP's main Internet User Profile Study show that households with children aged up to 14 years are nearly 50% more likely to have a PC than the national average. Among those children who said they had used the Internet,

- 58% said they had used it at school
- Two thirds said they had used it at one location only, i.e. at home or school or a friend/relative's home.
- 47% said they had used it 'for fun', such as playing games.
“A significant proportion of children in Britain are growing up now with the Internet as one of their principal information sources,” says Barbie Clarke, director, NOP family. In some instances, it is now complementing or even replacing printed information, as well as providing an important medium for the exchange of ideas.

One of the greatest advantages of this medium is that whatever you desire is available in an instant. This instantaneous global reach is incredible and mind boggling. The way this technology has taken over the routine functioning of everyday lives, makes it certain that this phenomenon could be ignored for the moment, but could never be escaped from. It is vital to give children who are curious and anxious to explore this new world of relationships, the right advise and parental supervision to be sure that their experiences in “cyberspace” are happy, healthy and productive.

There are a number of ways to get online. In addition to major commercial on line services, there are the thousands of Internet service Providers (ISPs) that provide Internet access. All an ISP can do is link you to the site but it cannot control the matter. Developed countries have telephone companies, cable TV companies, and even some local newspapers offering Internet services. This is being experimented successfully in many Asian countries as well. Although most people use personal computers to get online, it is now possible to purchase a special adapter that allows you to access the Internet from a TV set. Companies, governments, organizations – almost anyone can publish material on the Internet.

Sites Commonly Accessed by Children
The Internet has rightly been described as the Global Encyclopaedia. It is something even beyond that. It is a network of networks, into which one can enter with a mere click of a button. A child can enter this world and be totally enamoured. And like the real world, there are a lot of sites online, which are dangerous for children to venture. Rather than dangle the alluring apple in front of them, it is wiser to either block the particular site or else if mature enough, the child could be instructed on both the dangers and benefits of cyberspace. Unwanted exposure will create unwanted needs. However, there are certain safe sites where children can surf and learn and play. The sites are normally divided into Fun Sites and Educational Sites. The Fun sites include Cyber- Jr., Fun Zone, Girl Power, Nick Jr., Kids.Com, Surf Monk’s Kids Channel, Yuckiest site on the Internet and Zeeks. Among the many educational sites are Ask Jeeves for Kids, CIA World Fact Book 1999, Discovery Channel, History Channel, Info Please Almanac for Kids, LibrarySpot, Merriam-Webster’s Word and Central School House Rock. The popular Search Engines are Alfy, Ask Jeeves for Kids, Study Web, Yahooligans and Zeeks.

Given below are some of the search engines specially designed for kids.

Ask Jeeves for Kids: A natural search engine that is filtered. By natural language, you can enter in questions like, “Why do owls hoot at night?”

Yahooligans: A database of about 20,000 sites that are kid safe. You can search or select from a directory.

Lycos Safety Net: You must first register with this service, but once you do, any search done is filtered.

Super Snooper: A search engine with built in filters that screen out pornographic, violent and hate related sites.

One Key: A closed search engine that requires web sites to meet an editorial policy.
Education World: A database of 56,000 sites.
Classroom Connect: A search engine designed for K – 12 educators and students.
Study Web: 73,000 “research quality” web sites.
Kids Click: Put together by librarians for kids, the database as of July, 1998, contained about 2600 records. Well organized and easy to use though not as in-depth as others do.

A place where children spend a lot of time today is in the Chat Room. A chat room is a virtual “room” where a chat session takes place. Chat group participants may be grouped together either by interest or subject, such as a particular hobby or favourite TV show for example. This is a great way to meet friends from across the globe and learn more about any topic. People can talk to each other in privacy, or in a group without revealing their true identities. These chat sessions are among the most popular on the net. There are grave dangers however, in these rooms. There are ‘chat room predators’ who try to have a relationship with a child on the cyber world, something a child would perhaps never encounter in reality, and then on certain occasions even meet up with their chat room partners in the real world. Preventing such socialization on the net is something advocates of Internet safety are finding very difficult to do.

Computer games are another addictive section of the cyber world that children simply love. For the uninitiated, there can hardly be anything more confusing and chaotic than this with the flashing speed and play of bright lights and piercing sound. The first computer games appeared on the market at the end of the 1970s, and then it was used, just as the rest of technology only by a minority of people. Carsten Jessen speaks of computer games or for that matter any digital phenomena being as hard to comprehend and read as an abstract painting or a modernist poem for example. All through the eighties and well into the nineties it was commonly understood that anyone with a strong interest in computers and computer games in particular were abnormal or extraordinary since they had this exaggerated desire for strictly structured surroundings. Such a view has become tougher to maintain today, as it is no longer a minority who is interested in computer games but a majority.

But it is uncanny to note that the ‘exaggerated’ desires are taken a bit too far. There are the so-called ‘electronic’ or ‘virtual’ pets; for example the Tamagotchi 9 founded by the Japanese in 1996 which are so popular with children today. The Tamagotchi has only a few formal features in common with a real pet, for example the fact that it has to be fed and disciplined, but it completely lacks the aspects that are important to children in their relationships to pets. If this isn’t a loss of natural childhood, what is?

Dangers and Risks

The World Wide Web offers “virtual libraries”, but not everything in these libraries are meant for a child. Most kids regard their computer as a machine they can use to play interactive games with, but when they begin to use it as a research tool, they quickly learn that it is more than just games. For example, a typical 6 or 8 year old would want to access the Lego company site, but by mistake, instead of typing ‘Lego’, if the child keyed in ‘Lega’, she/he would be taken into another world altogether, some of which might carry pornographic material. Given below are some of the common dangers a child could face online:

- Exposure to inappropriate material is the most obvious danger. When exposure is unlimited to a child, especially at the age when logical reasoning is not possible, then
the danger is all the more potent. Cyber sex is one of the grave dangers of too much exposure.

- Physical molestation is a risk because while online a child might provide information or arrange on an encounter that could risk safety not only of the child but also of the entire family. Teenagers are particularly at risk because they often use the Internet unsupervised and because they are more likely to participate in online discussions regarding relationships and the like. Moreover, they are at the vulnerable age, as mentioned earlier, when they are searching for an identity for themselves. In 1999, Oprah Winfrey, the savvy talk show host, had a series of shows on this very same topic.

- Harassment is yet another common danger. A child might encounter e-mail or chat/bulletin board messages that are harassing, demeaning or belligerent.

Surfwatch, a software provider that screens out inappropriate material from home and school computers, say that the most dangerous place a child could go into is the chat room, as ‘Pedophiles’ are known to frequent these rooms.

- Legal and Financial risks are also very noticeable today. A child could give out a parent’s credit card number or do something that violates another person’s rights. The FBI calculates that latchkey kids (the ones who are hardly monitored) are the ones that would face this risk the most.

We seem to have reached the peak of human civilization with the largest uncensored form of communication in history. If television with its time structured and strictly policed programming was considered dangerous, imagine the potency of an uncensored, interactive medium like the internet which provides an environment where a child old enough to punch in a few lines can literally access the whole world.

**Common Warning Signs**

There are certain warning signs that a child might be victimized.

- If the child spends long hours online, especially at night.
- If there are phone calls from unknown people.
- If unsolicited gifts arrive in the mail.
- If the computer is suddenly turned off when somebody else walks into the room.
- If there is withdrawal from routine family life, and
- Reluctance to discuss Internet activities.

**Safety Options**

It is wise to instruct the child on Internet usage to better safeguard itself in any potentially dangerous situation. The good news is that there are ways to censor or control a child’s activities on the net. Experts agree that the most important thing parents and caregivers can do is to not only monitor computer activity, but also educate the child on the risks on cyberspace. Nearly all online service providers (OSPs) and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) offer parental controls or blocking options. **Blocking Software** prohibits or blocks access to designated sites based on a “bad site” list composed by the computer owner and the ISP or OSP. The list updates vary by manufacturer. Another factor that ought to be kept in mind is that the number of web sites published daily far exceeds the ability of any software company to keep a “bad site” list current. There is also several Filtering Software, which uses certain key words to block sites.
containing those words alone or in context with other words. One of the criticisms of filtering is that it blocks sites that are not necessarily offensive. For example, if the word ‘sex’ were being blocked out, even the word ‘sextuplets’ would be blocked out. There is also Outgoing Filtering which helps in restricting personal information from being sent online. Internet safety advocates feel that it is far more dangerous to send personal information online than to access a pornographic site.

A new Internet “forensic tool” has been introduced that aim at helping educators, police and other law enforcement officials trace the past World Wide Web activity of computer users. It is called Net Threat Analyzer from New Technology Incorporated (NTI). This software analyses computers’ disk drives and other storage areas and thereby identifies past Internet browsing and email activity done on specific computers. The programme manager of NTI said the software was designed to help prevent situations like the tragedies at two schools in Columbia and Oregon, USA, where weapons were made by teenagers who had downloaded the instructions from the Internet.

**What Parents can do**

Etiquette on the net, otherwise called ‘netiquette’ is the responsibility of the parent. While children need a certain amount of privacy, they also need parental involvement and supervision in their daily lives. It may seem surprising but most of the same rules that apply in real life also appear in while dealing with children online. For example, being firm with them and letting them know who is in control. There are however a few tips that parents ought to follow:

- Should familiarize themselves by getting online and becoming net savvy.
- Knowledge and utilization of the blocking and filtering software is wise.
- Open communication with the child regarding usage, problems, etc.
- If the child faces any problem online, he/she should feel comfortable to discuss it with the parent.
- The best way to assure that the child is having positive experiences online is to stay in touch with what they are doing.
- Bookmark the child’s favourite sites for easy access.
- Keep the computer in a common area, where the child’s activity could be monitored.

If parents are really concerned about censorship of material on the net they should remember that adults also use the net and they will obviously use sites that may seem offensive to a child. Therefore it is primarily the parents’ role to be the chief censor by monitoring the child’s activities and using all the protection imbued through the various software. Moreover, even advocates who are against censorship on the net feel that the real solution is for parents to instill a strong sense of ethics and moral sense in their own children. According to them, “if you can’t trust your kids’ sense of morality, and feel that you have to rely on some third party’s judgement as to what information they should be able to access and deal with, you have bigger problems than the Internet”.

Privacy and safety go hand in hand. Many of the same rules that keep children safe in cyberspace also help them protect their privacy. Privacy does not mean just keeping the kid’s names, addresses and phone numbers out of the hand of criminals. It also means protecting the child’s privacy from anyone including companies trying to sell them something you might feel wrong. A study by the Federal Trade Commission revealed that “only 14 percent of the sample (647)
reflecting all US commercial web sites provide any notice of their information collection practices”. It also found that “fewer than 10 percent of the sites directed to children provide for some form of parental control over the collection of information from their children”. But according to the FTC, many of the big players today have privacy policies. Therefore, it is better to always look for the privacy policies when one goes into a site and not provide any personal information till it is read.

Internet Censorship

This is the only medium that has no censorship at the source, because though it all started at the United States of America, it is a network of networks with a global information infrastructure that traverses the entire globe and so no particular law of any land could be applied. Moreover, this is a virtual space where there are no barriers, whether national, economic, political or cultural. Blocking and Filtering can be done, and there is various software for this, but no law exists whereby censorship could apply to the web sites themselves.

The debate between those who defend the right to free speech in the US and the legislators who want to make sure that children do not have access to pornographic material is ongoing. The U.S. Supreme Court declared the 1996 Communications Decency Act, though designed largely for this purpose, unconstitutional. More recently, the Child Online Protection Act, largely designed for this purpose, was slated to go into effect in November, 1998. That has also been challenged in court.

There are various advocates who are against this entire concept of Internet censorship. As respected tech journalist, Don Crabb in a recent ZDNet column says, “Internet did not invent bomb making manuals, or kiddie porn, or discussions of violence, death and mayhem”. All the Internet does is make that information available, like thousands of the other noble material, just as it is found in the hundreds of art galleries, museums, film archives and the like. As he says, “the Internet is all about the egalitarian access to information. Its not about cause and effect for crimes”. The Internet does definitely democratize information. Information of all sorts and from all sources is available on the net. And as mentioned earlier, everyone is equal in front of the machine. All you need is to get connected.

To expect ISPs to act as surrogate nannies for children is unfair according to these advocates. President Bill Clinton was lauded when he made an appeal to parents to exercise more control over youth access to violent material on TV as well as the Internet, in the wake of the school massacre in Littleton, Colorado. It is rightfully the parents’ responsibility and not the ISPs’,

The Indian Situation

Since this is a fairly new phenomenon in India, not many articles or studies have appeared in any media as formal information to the public. Nevertheless, in day to day conversations and observations, it is becoming obvious that the “netphenomenon” is here to stay and proliferating pushed along by the rapid pace of technological development. And very naturally children are the ones most associated with this medium, being initiated to it at an early age.

The Mudra Institute of Communication, Ahmedabad has come out with its study on usage patterns of Internet among students in nine Indian cities. Unlike TV, cinema or radio, the Internet is used more for instrumental rather than ritualistic purposes. The research was conducted among
336 students in Bangalore, Calcutta, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Indore, Mumbai, Nagpur and Pune.
From this study it was gathered that 45% had computers of their own or had been using the machine for 2 years or more. Out of this 45%, 65% were graduates and the rest had completed some professional course or the other. 50% of the viewers allocated more than one hour per day for net usage.
The reasons for Internet usage were cited as follows:
- 72% for E-mail
- 50% for playing games
- 50% for incremental education
- 45% for curriculum related work

The study found that most students sought Internet connectivity either for syllabus related or casual information. Only 40% clicked on net advertisements. There was also a direct, positive relationship between computer ownership and socio-economic status, with a high percentage of computer owners being from households with a monthly income of over Rs. 25,000. When questioned about the causes that influenced them towards net surfing, 26% said they had parents who were computer users and 23% had siblings who were similarly habituated.
Regarding Internet’s influence on other media usage, it was interesting to note that TV was negatively influenced with almost half the students indicating a drop in TV or video viewing since they began using computers and 40% stopped listening to radio.

**Chennai Survey**
Another survey conducted in the city of Chennai, by the researcher, with the sample size of 150, targeting children in their late childhood and early adolescence, revealed the following results.
The majority of those that browsed the net belonged to the upper income bracket with almost 76.7% quoting their parents annual salary to be above Rs. 50,000. When asked as to where they access the net, while 50% of them said that they had access directly from home, almost 33.6% said they used the Internet browsing centers. Regarding the content that triggered net browsing, the following were the findings:
- 50% for E-mail and chat
- 13.4% for Movies and Entertainment News
- 23.4% for Games

The frequency of net browsing varied according to the income bracket of the particular child. However, 48.7% of the entire sample admitted to browsing the net around three times a week. Although 31.3% were driven into browsing the net solely due to sibling and peer pressure, almost 42% still belonged to the category that used and accessed the net solely out of personal interest.
When asked as to what everyday activities suffered as a result of this browsing, the results were as follows. A majority of 22% were of the opinion that their letter writing skills suffered due to the increasing dependence on e-mail for communication. Surprisingly, only 18% felt that their studies were being neglected in the process. While on the one hand, 20% of the children felt they spent less time watching TV, on the other nearly 19.3% felt that they had begun to spend less time with family.
In a subsidiary study conducted to include the parents of the net users, the results showed valuable insights into the socio-psychological system that we form a part of. Almost 47% of the parents were unaware of the content that was surfed by their children. Asked as to whether or not their children were monitored during net use, only 27% agreed to have monitored net usage, sometime or the other while the rest admitted only to enjoying or sharing a few experiences with the child, as in chatting or e-mailing relatives abroad.

It was shocking to know how ignorant parents were regarding dangers posed by the net. Knowledge regarding violence and pornography constituted to only 27%, the rest assuming net threats to be related to hardware problems. Only 20% of the parents were aware of the filtering and blocking software available today. Out of these only a handful actually made use of them. 70% did not feel the need to install such software, implying that their wards did not access such sites.

The focus of the questioning was then shifted to the children themselves. Almost 15% were unaware that they actually had access to such sites. A sweeping 35% admitted to secretly accessing such sites, which were almost always pornography or cybersex via chat. 10% of the children acknowledged the existence of such sites, but exhibited no interest personally, reasoning strong ties to one's cultural and moral beliefs and upbringing. Questioned on monitoring, only 10% admitted to being monitored. It was also noticed that most kids who accessed adult sites did so at home, rather than in net browsing centres; especially when parents and guardians were not monitoring.

It is interesting to note from both the studies mentioned above that the novelty of net surfing is just catching on, just as it did for satellite television in 1991. Media impact studies have all along revealed that more often than not, media is only a stimulus and not the cause. An individual's psyche, home background, societal influences, peer group pressures and hours devoted to the medium are vital determinants of any kind of impact. But if parents are going to continue in their ignorance, spend less time with their children, and feel that the new media are excellent replacements for other natural companions, then we will see a dangerous society emerging, where machines will take over all natural governance patterns. But as of now, in most developing Asian countries, it is only the elite and the upper middle class that have PCs or who can afford to send their children to cybercafes and the like. Things are changing with technology prices crashing down, but that is still in the future.

References
2- Lessen, Carsten; Interpretative Communication: The reception of computer games by children and the young, 1998, Turkles, Views are still important and very influential. And her latest book from 1996, she repeats a similar argument about digital phenomena as a substitute for social relations in connection with the internet.
4- Lessen, Carsten; Interpretative Communication: The reception of computer games by children and the young.
6- McQuail, Dennis; Mass Communication Theory, An Introduction: 1994, Sage Publications
Appendix

Blocking/Filtering Software

Several software programs exist that aid parents in controlling the Internet content available to their children. Most of these programs, listed below, perform one or more of the following functions: block access to adult sites, rate sites based on adult content (pornography, violence/profanity, intolerance, and militant extremists, gambling, drug culture, etc.) establish time controls for individual users (for example blocking usage after a particular time at night, or during established home work times) and log surfing activities (allowing parents to see which sites a child has visited).

Bees http://www.n2h2.com

Bees http://www.n2h2.com

Bees http://www.n2h2.com

Bees http://www.n2h2.com

Bees http://www.n2h2.com

Bees http://www.n2h2.com
Browse safe □ HYPERLINK http://www.browsesafe.com
□ http://www.browsesafe.com□


Click & Browse, Jr. □ HYPERLINK http://www.netwavelink.com/html/junior.html

Click & Choice □ HYPERLINK http://www.clickchoice.com
□ http://www.clickchoice.com□

Crayon Crawler □ HYPERLINK http://www.crayoncrawler.com
□ http://www.crayoncrawler.com□

Cyber Patrol □ HYPERLINK http://www.cyberpatrol.com
□ http://www.cyberpatrol.com□


Cyber Snoop □ HYPERLINK http://www.cyberSnoop.com
□ http://www.cyberSnoop.com□


Family Connect □ HYPERLINK http://www.familyconnect.com
□ http://www.familyconnect.com□

Green Box □ HYPERLINK http://greenbox.com □ http://greenbox.com□

Guardianet □ HYPERLINK http://www.guardianet.com
□ http://www.guardianet.com□


Integrity Online □ HYPERLINK http://www.integrityonline.com
□ http://www.integrityonline.com□

Inter gate web filtering service □ HYPERLINK http://www.internetproducts.com
□ http://www.internetproducts.com□
InterQuick's smart filter  HYPERLINK http://www.smartfilter.interquick.com

The Internet Filter  HYPERLINK http://www.turnercom.com

Surfwatch  HYPERLINK http://www.surfwatch.com

Virtual Gate  HYPERLINK http://www.virtual-gate.com

Web Sense  HYPERLINK http://www.websense.com

Zeek Safe  HYPERLINK http://www.zeeksafe.com

Guardone  HYPERLINK http://www.guardone.com

Alternative Resources
In addition to blocking and filtering software, there are alternative ways to monitor children’s online activities. The sites listed below can help you gather more information about some of these products.

ComputerCop  HYPERLINK http://www.toughcop.com

Save Mail  HYPERLINK http://www.savemail.com

Sentry Cam  HYPERLINK http://www.sentrycam.com

Mom  HYPERLINK http://www.avsweb.com

Line Loc  HYPERLINK http://www.memberstripod.com

Chat Minder  HYPERLINK http://www.chatminder.com

Chat Nanny  HYPERLINK http://www.chatnanny.com

Soft Eyes  HYPERLINK http://www.softeyes.com

Internet Censorship debate
Several organizations have been established to support freedom of speech on the internet. The sites listed below provide information, links and news about the internet censorship debate.
The Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (1998)

The Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act authorizes the Federal Trade Commission to develop rules for regulating data collection on communication web sites targeted at children. [www.cme.org/coppa.html](http://www.cme.org/coppa.html)
ASIAN SOCIETIES IN THE DIGITAL WORLD

By:

Alain Modoux
Communication Information & Informatics,
UNESCO
France

Paper Presented by:
Wijayananda Jayaweera
UNESCO Representative to Malaysia
Malaysia