

Laws affecting Internet access, safety and, social networking in schools

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is the key federal law affecting Information and communications technologies ICT (Information and communications technologies) use in schools. The law requires any school district that receives E-Rate funding to filter or block visual depictions that are obscene, that contain child pornography, or material harmful to minors. The policy is required to address the following five components:

1. Access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
2. The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications (including instant messaging);
3. Unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities by minors online;
4. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and
5. Measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.

Protecting Children in the 21st Century, Title II of the Broadband Data Improvement Act, which became Public Law 110-385 on October 10, 2008. Section 215 is most relevant to schools and requires them, as part of their Internet safety policy, to educate minors about appropriate online behavior. This includes how to interact with others on social networking websites and in chat rooms as well as cyber bullying awareness and response.

Cyberbullying

- [105 ILCS 5/27-23.7](#) (2010) prohibits bullying (as defined in the statute) in the school environment and includes in its definition of bullying electronic communications. Bullying is specifically prohibited through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
- [105 ILCS 135/1-2](#) (2008) defines harassment through electronic communications. The definition includes "making any obscene comment, request, suggestion or proposal with an intent to offend," and "threatening injury to the person or to the property of the person to whom the electronic communication is directed or to any of his family or household members." Violation of the provisions of the statute will result in a class B misdemeanor.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA) - United States federal law, 15 U.S.C. §§ 6501–6506 (Pub.L. 105-277, 112 Stat. 2581-728, enacted October 21, 1998).

The act, effective April 21, 2000, applies to the online collection of personal information by persons or entities under U.S. jurisdiction from children under 13 years of age. It details what a website operator must include in a privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent or guardian, and what responsibilities an operator has to protect children's privacy and safety online including restrictions on the marketing to those under 13. While children under 13 can legally give out personal information with their parents' permission, many websites altogether disallow underage children from using their services due to the amount of paperwork involved.

Resources

[iKeepSafe](#)

[Social Media Guidelines for Schools](#)

Examples

[UP140 Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[Guidelines for Employee Use of Social](#)