



Forum Keeps Parents Aware of New, Dangerous Tech Trends

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by Allison Hunt

Knoxville (WVLT) - If you have kids in their teens, chances are you've heard of the website myspace, but are you able to make sure they're using the site, or even the internet safely?

Volunteer TV's Allison Hunt attended a meeting tonight where parents learned the ways of the digital world. For some parents, the internet can be a difficult world to travel through.

"I can get on the computer, I can look up the website, but my children get through the computer so quickly, I don't know what they're doing," parent Kelli Sexton said.

So parents came to Bearden High School to learn the ropes.

"I think it always helps to be proactive about computers and safety and just issues that deal with our children in general," parent Rosalie Hadley said.

Although 22 hundred emails were sent to parents, only 15 showed up, and they all knew the popular website myspace. Rosalie Hadley's 16 year old daughter has a space.

"She lets me go onto her space, and I see it, so I think that's good that there's communication there," Hadley said.

She thinks it's important to educate children and be educated, which is the reason parents wanted this meeting.

"If they have that concern they ought to be able to have the knowledge to be able to obtain that information," said Christina Greenway from the Parent Network Forum.

Parents were shown how to check the history on their computers and given handouts on how to decipher more than 200 thousand acronyms used by teens to communicate with their online friends.

"Whether it's through the internet or texting through the phone it has been amazing to me how these tools are being used in a really bad way, in a negative way," Greenway said.

That's why Kelli Sexton checked out myspace and decided it was too dangerous for her children.

"It's almost anything goes, some of the photos that were posted just looked real provocative," Sexton said.

She says checking out where your children have been on the internet isn't spying. It's staying informed.

"When you chose to do that, try to think of creative ways to talk to them, well, how, what is this person like, after you read their history, what is this person like?" Sexton said.

More on internet/text acronyms:

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