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Family Security Today

EDUCATION IS GETTING SCHOOLED BY CYBERCRIMINALS



SCHOOLS ARE BEING HELD RANSOM

- **Schools** are now the **#1 targets of ransomware attacks**. Other popular threats include data breaches, DOS and phishing scams. (FBI)
- Ransomware attacks are **projected to grow 86% between 2020–2021**. (Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center – MS-ISAC)
- **59% of education workers** haven't received new cybersecurity tools or training on remote learning — half with no cyber training whatsoever. (IBM)
- More than 1/3 of K-12 districts employ **just 1-3 IT staffers** in total. (IBM)

Help Your Child Earn an **A** in Identity Protection

The global COVID-19 pandemic closed schools, forcing school systems to hastily create a new structure for the hundreds of thousands of students and teachers suddenly attending classes online. Even with schools reopened, a significant amount of the educational experience has remained digital. Outdated technical infrastructures, personnel, and students on unsecured networks, plus a lack of clear cybersecurity information and processes, have created the perfect opportunity for cybercriminals.

Education organizations are feeling the impact. In 2020, there was a **29% global increase in cyberattacks**, and U.S. **K-12 school data breaches increased by 36%**. In the hands of cybercriminals, information exposed in cyber incidents — name, date of birth, Social Security number, and more — can be used to commit identity fraud against faculty, staff, and students.

The increase in cyberattacks means identity theft is a risk for all age groups, but child identities are especially valuable to criminals. Child records are an attractive blank slate for scammers, as parents don't typically check their kids' credit reports, and the theft is often not discovered for years until their child applies for student loans or their first credit card.

THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION REPORTS A 50% INCREASE IN IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS UNDER THE AGE OF 19 IN 2020.

[Learn more here.](#)

Help Your Kid Ace the Security Test

You can thwart would-be hackers by taking easy proactive steps with your child to help ensure their information stays private and secure. From basic password hygiene to automatic software updates, small steps today will pay off big in the future.

8 Tips to Protect Children as They Head Back to School

1. Educate children on how to recognize what a phishing email looks like and advise them never to open or click on suspicious emails or text messages, no matter how convincing they look.
2. Use multi-factor authentication where possible.
3. Encourage students to develop safe password habits (see below).
4. Set your security software to update automatically.
5. Never leave devices unlocked and unattended.
6. Watch for signs of cyberbullying, including acting withdrawn, a sudden decline in grades, and changes in mood, or other signs of depression and anxiety.
7. Download parental control applications that allow you to approve or block apps and manage in-app purchases.
8. Put your child's name and number on the Do Not Call Registry to avoid phone calls from scammers.

The Password Security Checklist

- ✓ Create strong passwords that are 12+ characters long and a mix of upper and lower-case letters and numbers and symbols.
- ✓ Avoid reusing passwords for different accounts.
- ✓ Don't share passwords or meeting codes.
- ✓ Regularly change passwords to online accounts.
- ✓ Never write down your passwords and leave them out for others to see.

ABOUT SONTIQ

Sontiq, a TransUnion company, is an intelligent identity security company arming businesses and consumers with a full range of award-winning identity and cyber monitoring solutions, as well as best-in-class restoration and response offerings. Sontiq products empower millions of customers and organizations to be less vulnerable to the financial and emotional consequences of identity theft and cybercrimes. Sontiq has an outstanding track record for delivering high-touch support and fraud remediation services, demonstrated through its 99% customer satisfaction ratings. <https://www.sontiq.com>.



SONTIQ CAN HELP YOU PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN

Sontiq is committed to helping parents and guardians protect all the identities they are responsible for. Sontiq provides award-winning child identity protection, **ChildWatch**, which has earned the Parent Tested Parent Approved (PTPA) Seal of Approval for eight consecutive years. Sontiq's IdentityForce was first to market with child identity theft protection and restoration services.

ChildWatch includes:

- Thorough and ongoing identity monitoring
- Smart SSN Tracker, which alerts you if there is an unfamiliar name, alias, or address associated with your child's Social Security number
- Award-winning Social Media Identity Monitoring Suite
- \$1 million in identity theft insurance and fully managed recovery services

