Think before you click!

August is a peak summer month when most children and some adults will be enjoying the long summer break. This provides more time for online browsing and the old saying that "Curiosity killed the cat."

People tend to "click" first and ask questions later when it's too late because at this stage your computer is already infected by a number of viruses, worms, and intrusive programs. Maybe we are inspired by the false belief that firewalls, antivirus software, and anti-spyware programs provide the protection we need. This false sense of security ropes us in, resulting in unwanted access to our social networking sights and even more alarming our bank accounts.

Below are a few internet tips you should think about before you "click" that mouse:

> 1. Don't click e-mail attachments unless you know who the sender is. Most viruses and worms arrive on your PC in the form of e-mail attachments.
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> 2. Don't believe the return address. If you have any suspicion about the content or the subject, try to get confirmation that it really came from the sender.
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> 3. Don't believe the message. Responsible organizations don't ask for your personal information, password and username in order to "fix a problem" with the system!
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> 4. Don't believe the link either. A link in an e-mail that claims to point to your bankers, for example, may not really go there. Beware of devious phishing scanners who seek to snooker you into uploading your National Insurance Number, PIN, credit card number, or other sensitive data to their website.
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> 5. Don't download the browser code. You're browsing the Web and all of a sudden an official-looking dialog box pops up asking if you want to download a browser play-in; delete it as quickly as you can!

Finally, teenagers should pay particular attention to the following and think very carefully before they click:

> • Disclosing too much personal information can put you at increased risk;
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> • Your best friend may be the one to release that photo you don't want Mom and Dad to see!
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> • Uploading sensitive informative as a teenager can come back to haunt you on a job application later on in life.

Remember Privacy is the Best Policy.

For more information about the above or any other aspect of Data Protection, please e-mail us at dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs or visit our website at www.bahamas.gov.bs/dataprotection