

## Tip of the Month - April, 2011

### Spring Clean your Online Privacy

Spring is in the air so it's time to "spring clean" all facets of your life, including taking steps to tidy up on-line privacy. So while sprucing up your house you should also commit to creating a safer online experience by following these "spring cleaning" tips:-

#### **Keep four families safer online**

**Create a family pledge for online safety** – Clearly state what should and shouldn't be done online. Involve your family in the creation of the pledge. With this awareness and preparation, you can minimize any online risks.

**Choose a safer online ID for your child** – To use many sites, you must first register and it's important to create a safe online ID. Remember that this ID is how the online community will see your child and you should choose a name that doesn't reveal too much about them.

**Use parental control software** – Familiarize yourself with parental control software and any control features of your online service or ISP. There are programs that allow you to filter specific sites, or sites with inappropriate keywords in them. However, keep in mind that this software is not a substitute for true parental supervision.

**Protect personal information** – One of the most important things around online safety is safeguarding your identity by not posting personal information online. Personal details such as last name, address, phone numbers, photos, etc. can be used to identify you in real life.

**Revise your facebook profile** - Only record the information you really want to share with others.

#### **Protect your PC and your Privacy**

**Update your anti-virus software** – Another "cleaning" task is to protect your PC by making sure your anti-virus software is up-to-date. If you don't have anti-virus software on your computer, install it now! Most anti-virus software can automatically download updates, so check to be sure your software is downloading updates correctly.

**Refresh your passwords** – Protecting your privacy relies heavily on your password, as your password is more than just a key to your online account. Update your password regularly to protect your privacy and avoid someone impersonating you online. For example, if your password falls into the wrong hands, someone can easily sign your name to online service agreements or contracts, buy merchandise with your credit card, lock you out of accounts, etc. **Protect yourself from phishing**- It's also important to keep your email account safe and sound from "phishing".

Implement these good online habits into your spring cleaning to keep your computer and online identity safe.

For more information about this or any other aspect of the Data Protection, please e-mail us at [dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs)

***(Extracts from Yahoo.com)***