

## **The Internet is not anonymous.**

When you sign online, others have access to you. Your e-mail address, screen name, and password serve as barriers between you and others. You need to maintain this barrier by not giving out private information.

**In order to protect your identity in the physical, “real” world, you need to protect your personal information in the cyberworld.**

*Online screen names should never include personal or identifying information such as:*

- o first and/or last name
- o address or town
- o phone number
- o date of birth (complete or partial)
- o age or grade in school
- o social security number
- o email address
- o descriptions of self such as gender,
- o school name, school mascot
- o favorite sport, favorite celebrity, favorite music, etc.
- o boy/girl friend names, family member names, etc.

*The following are strategies to keep your password safe; a password should be:*

- o be lengthy – at least 8 characters
- o contain a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols
- o be changed when its secrecy is in doubt
- o should not contain personal information
- o should not be shared
- o should not be easily guessed
- o should not be provided in an email, even if requested