



One Call PC Solutions

IT Consulting, Maintenance and Repair



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Bits and Bytes...

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Bits and Bytes
and Technology
Today.

OneCall's Spring Break Tune-up: Mention Bits and Bytes when booking your appointment and receive a \$15 discount through the 20th of this month!

Kids and Computers, can it be safe?

It can be frightening to let your kids loose on your computer. With the dark side of the internet only a few clicks away, five years of your bank account records not backed up and that all too tempting control panel within reach, a lot could go wrong. And it often does. Even under supervision I'd bet that Junior can send your Quicken data to the Recycle Bin a lot faster than you could stop him. Lectures on backups aside, there are a few things you can do to make your computer a little more kid-friendly and protect your little ones at the same time.

Protecting the PC...

The easiest way to keep kids out of the control panel and the start menu is to simply get rid of them. For older kids you could setup a new user account through the proper icon in the control panel and simply make them a "user" as opposed to an "Administrator" this will limit the amount of changes they can make and damage they can do. For younger kids applications such as freeware KidsMenu (<http://glob.com.au/kidsmenu/>) can replace the windows shell completely in order to block access to any unapproved program or setting without the proper password. In other words, no start menu, no possibility of accidentally deleting your printer. The screen shots at the authors web site do a much better job of explaining how it works so if you have young kids it is certainly worth looking at.

Hear no evil, see no evil...

The internet has a dark side and getting there isn't all that hard. Sometimes even a mistyped address can land you somewhere you don't want to be. It's hard to tell if that link on Google is leading you to a virus, a phishing attack, or even an adult website. Free services like the OpenDNS project (<http://www.opendns.com>) work by changing your network settings in order to provide unavoidable filtering system-wide. Additionally, programs such as the subscription-optional KidZui (<http://www.kidzui.com/>) replace Internet Explorer with a program that is hard wired to avoid dangerous websites and can even block children from giving out personal information such as their address or last name. KidZui also offers a very protected and slimmed down version of social networking akin to FaceBook or MySpace without the risk of inappropriate "friends" due to the limited features and strong filtering software. The internet can be fun, safe, and educational when used properly.

Final Byte...

"You know the only people who are always sure about the proper way to raise children? Those who've never had any."
~Bill Cosby