

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Play It Safe with Cyberpals

**Jasmine** is a popular student who enjoys many friends at school. Her friends know that Jasmine has diabetes. Still, they can't really understand what it feels like to have this medical condition.

Jasmine finds an online chat room for kids with diabetes. Someone with the screen name "Nicole" has joined the chat group, too. Nicole and Jasmine really get along. They share their feelings about having diabetes.

Jasmine and Nicole exchange addresses in order to send birthday cards. One day, Nicole asks Jasmine to meet.

Was it a good idea to exchange addresses? Why or why not?

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Should Jasmine go meet Nicole? What else should she do?

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**Jason** enjoys playing an interactive Web game in which he creates his own character. The game involves players from all over the country. Sometimes, while playing, he chats with other players, usually swapping game strategies. He frequently runs into one particular player, who he recognizes by his character. The player asks him what school he attends and what sports teams he plays on. At what point should "alarm" bells go off in Jason's head? Why?

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What are some ways Jason might respond to stay safe?

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### A Pal in Cyberspace

Like Jason and Jasmine, you too might find a pal in cyberspace. Although you have never met this person face-to-face, you can have very good talks. You might share your thoughts about school, friends, and family. You might discuss a problem you have. Your cyberpal might give you good advice. Or, maybe, he or she is just a good listener. Or just someone with whom you enjoy playing a game online.



### Cyberpal or Face-to face Friend?

Think about it. Can you really know if your cyberpal is male or female? Do you really know how old he or she is? You can't know for sure with a pal in cyberspace. That's the difference between a cyberpal and a friend you know face to face. A cyberpal is still a stranger.



### Be CyberSmart!<sup>®</sup>

Don't share private identity information with cyberpals. If a cyberpal asks to meet face-to-face, get permission from your parent or guardian. If they say yes, take them along to the meeting.