

Great alternative to My Space, My Praise! (Peter Berkman)

A couple of months ago I was sitting with my son while he was "surfing" on the web site MySpace.com. At first, it seemed like a reasonable service - it allows members to chat, recommend other sites, etc. However, first looks are VERY deceiving. This site is not monitored or moderated, nor is it focused on a particular age group. Meaning that, you can post pretty much anything and anything goes. This includes pictures, etc. and the site does not rate them for content or age group. Much of what I saw was okay, but there is also much that is completely inappropriate for teenagers - much less anyone trying to follow Christ.

So, some points are that it is completely open, non-moderated chat rooms, pictures that borderline on pornography, and the ability for anyone to chat with you (without you allowing them to "see" you). Needless to say, my sons are no longer allowed on this site and I have explained to them the down sides of open, un-moderated chat rooms and spending time looking at barely dressed girls. I know that there are many C.O.D. teens on this site. I would strongly encourage you away from this. If you need to chat, sign up on Yahoo! (<http://messenger.yahoo.com> - my ID is "pberkman") or similar services where you can restrict who "sees" them.

There is a great alternative to MySpace that I have discovered called MyPraise. I've signed myself up for it and have been poking around for a while. The absolute best part about it is that it has all the features, but is completely Christian focused and is completely moderated (eg: no half-dressed pictures, inappropriate messages, etc.). Check it out at: www.mypraise.com - my ID is "pberkman". C.O.D. also has a group under churches called "+ Church of the Open Door"

However you choose to communicate over the internet, you still need to be careful about what information you put in your profiles (anyone can read this) and who you let become a "buddy". Sexual predators frequent these sites regularly and will put false information on their profiles so you think they are the same age as you, but in reality they are not. **BE CAREFUL ON THE INTERNET!**

The bottom line is we want you to be safe and to be raising the moral standard to a Christian level.