

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that your child will be learning about creating strong passwords through a lesson called Goldi and the Three Passwords. Like the story *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, Goldi encounters passwords that are too-easy, too-hard, and just-right.

A strong password is your first defense against online predators and imposters. A weak password can lead to identity theft and monetary theft. There have been numerous news stories about password leaks and hacking, even with big brand stores. It is important to tell children that a password is like a lock on private stuff. They should create passwords that are easy to remember and hard for predators to crack.

Your child will learn that it's very important to take the time to create a strong password. What are the costs and benefits of creating a strong password? The costs of time and thought are low when you consider the benefits of defending yourself against identity theft. In addition, the possible financial consequences of not having a strong password are great.

In this lesson (available at www.econedlink.org/teacher-lesson/1388) your child will learn about good passwords. First they watch a story presentation called *Goldilocks and the Three Passwords*, where they learn how to create a 'just-right' password. As a final activity, they will create a Public Service Announcement to teach about 'just-right' passwords.

So how do you make a great password? Experts say that the best passwords are at least eight characters long and combine upper and lower case letters with numbers and symbols. Even the best passwords have a shelf life and even really great passwords need to be changed at regular intervals. Use a password validator like <https://howsecureismypassword.net/>, to test how quickly your password could be guessed. Note how the time to crack a password increases the more symbols, numbers, and upper case characters are added. Passwords that are a sentence may take millions of years to guess. One type of password, mnemonic passwords, are created by selecting the first letter of each word of a secret sentence. For example, "My Friend Jane Eats 2 Apples Every Day to Stay Very Healthy!" would become MFJE2AEDTSVH!.

Ask your child to teach you about making just-right passwords. What is a too-easy password? What is a too-hard password? What is a just-right password? Ask your child why it is important to have a strong password. Try to make a password together. Here are some additional websites you can use to help make great passwords:

- Safe Kids.com: <http://www.safekids.com/tips-for-strong-secure-passwords/>
- Digizen Perfect Passwords: <http://www.digizen.org/digicentral/perfect-passwords.aspx>
- Media Smarts Dinner Table Talk About Passwords: <http://mediasmarts.ca/blog/dinner-table-talk-about-passwords>

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,