



Did You Know?

October 2021

Cybersecurity Awareness Month: This October marked the 18th annual Cybersecurity Awareness Month! This initiative aims to, “raise awareness about the importance of cybersecurity across our Nation, ensuring that all Americans have the resources they need to be safer and more secure online.” This year more than ever we have relied on the virtual and cyber world to help keep us connected to our loved ones, our jobs, and community resources. This increased need and widespread accessibility to the internet, calls for an evaluation of online safety and security. Even as October comes to a close, we must continually work to create barriers that protect our personal information and virtual data.

What You Should Know:

- A 2021 study conducted by Pew Research Center shares that, “85% of Americans say they go online on a daily basis. That figure includes the 31% who report going online almost constantly, as well as 48% who say they go online several times a day.”
- There are estimates that the online workforce in the USA reached a high of 164.6 million people in 2020 prior to the pandemic. That number has surely increased.
- The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency shares:
 - There are currently an estimated 5.2 billion Internet users.
 - In 2019 more than \$3.5 billion was lost globally to cybercrime.
 - 7 million data records are compromised daily.
 - The first three months of 2020 saw a 20% increase in cyber fraud as cybercriminals took advantage of the global pandemic.
- A study from the University of Maryland found that the average computer is faces a cyber-attack every 39 second of use.

What You Can Do:

- **Self Asses:** Reflect on the status of your home/business cyber security level. Is your data that is meant to be confidential identified, separated and protected? Are your devices up-to-date? Are there security measures, like passwords, set on sensitive data? How often do you change/update those passwords and security measures?
- **Use Good Judgement:** If something online seems too good to be true, it probably is and should be avoided. If you think something could be a scam, do not interact with it online. Also, limit the amount of personal information being share online. Make sure the sites you are accessing online are secure (e.g. “https://”). Stay away from sites that have invalid certificates.
- **Have Back Ups:** Take time to set a recovery plan. Regularly back up your data, so in case of emergency noting important is lost. Secure important data or files on a backup USB drive.
- **Protect Yourself:** Be sure to have anti-virus and anti-malware protection installed on your devices. And remember to use those services to check for instances of malware.
- **Seek assistance:** If you or your business is handling sensitive or confidential information please reach out to an information technology (IT) company for assistance in creating a plan of attack for the safety for all of your virtual work.

Information obtained from: apollotechnical.com; pewresearch.org; eady.gov

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The Prevention Council of Erie County, publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. The Prevention Council • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.thepreventioncouncil.org