Thinking About Internet Safety

Read these scenarios and answer the questions that follow.

**Scenario #1**

Nancy Newbie is 10 years old and just moved to town. She doesn’t know anyone and it is mid-school year. She has enrolled in your program, and you notice that she is having a difficult time making new friends. You think that is to be expected when someone moves to a new city. When she first arrived, she was always on the computer and looked excited to be checking her email. But now she rarely takes computer time. When she does, her demeanor changes and she seems nervous and frightened. Every time a text message on her phone comes, she seems jumpy and scared to look at it. At pick-up time, she appears to be hesitant about leaving.

1. What is going on in this scenario?

2. What warning signs is she exhibiting that you should be aware of?

3. What are some things that you could do for Nancy?
**Scenario #2**

Sally Simmons has been in your program for four years. She just turned 11. She often takes her computer time, and she just got a smartphone for her birthday. You notice that she seems to be giggly and happy over text messages and emails for the past couple of weeks. When you question her about this she gets quiet. You hear her talking about gifts and e-mails that she is receiving from “a boyfriend.” Her wardrobe begins to change and she is becoming more interested in sex. You hear rumors from other girls that she is going to meet someone that she has been talking to online.

1. What might be going on in this scenario?

2. What are the warning signs?

3. What do you do?

4. Who should you talk to?
Scenario #3

Peter Popper is 7 years old. He loves to go on the Internet. He has signed your program Internet policy Agreement. The agreement is placed above the computer station. Every day when he comes in the room, he is first to sign up and go on the Internet. Most of the time when you see Peter playing games on the Internet, they seem to be appropriate, for example Poptropica or sites like PBS, Lego or Disney. But lately, when you look over in the direction of the computer station, you notice that he is changing to another Web page and is getting agitated or anxious when you question him about his online activities. You eventually find out that he has begun to play war and violent computer games. This is against your policy and agreement.

1. What is going on in this scenario?

2. What have you done correctly so far?