Colleges and universities are a community unto themselves, with a multitude of offices, departments, and even small businesses on most campuses. There is employee and student information to be protected, as well as propriety (and even classified) research, financial records, and often health information. At the same time the campus network needs flexibility in allowing access for all manner of devices, software, and communication.

Campus administrators and IT security professionals are dedicated to providing a safe and secure online ecosystem in which students, faculty, and staff can work, learn, and pursue academic goals without worry. Whether used for class assignments, data collection, or communication, the Internet is a critical resource for today's higher education community.

National Cyber Security Awareness Month, held each October, is the perfect time to raise awareness among students, faculty, staff, and administrators about ways they can be safer and more secure online. No one person, company, or agency is responsible for the security of the Internet; everyone must do his or her part. Cybersecurity is our shared responsibility.

From implementing a large, coordinated campaign with collateral materials and events to simply sending out e-mail reminders, there are multiple ways to raise awareness:

- Post the National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) poster and/or the STOP. THINK. CONNECT. (national cyber security awareness campaign) posters around campus, including faculty lounges and student dormitories (http://www.staysafeonline.org/ncsam/promote-ncsam).
- E-mail the college/university president, the dean of students, academic deans, and other school administrators about National Cyber Security Awareness Month and encourage them to integrate messages about “our shared responsibility” in maintaining cybersecurity in their written communications, blogs, and presentations to students, faculty members, and other college/university personnel during the month and all year.
- Become an NCSAM Champion (http://www.staysafeonline.org/ncsam/champions).
- Launch a campus-wide awareness campaign, by (1) using social media vehicles (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube accounts, and blogs) to promote National Cyber Security Awareness Month (including to “friend” the STOP. THINK. CONNECT. campaign at http://www.facebook.com/stopthinkconnect), (2) posting information and banners on the campus website, (3) including cybersecurity tips (http://www.stopthinkconnect.org/tips-and-advice/) in the campus newspaper or newsletter in October, and (4) working with marketing, communications, or journalism students to produce a campus campaign, radio, or TV news series during October (http://www.staysafeonline.org/ncsam/resources/).
- Hold a cybersecurity in-service training for faculty and staff during the month of October and have IT personnel or computer sciences faculty give presentations on smart computer practices and online security measures.
- Hold a campus poster/video contest in which students create public-service announcements and other out-

**National Cyber Security Awareness Month** (NCSAM) is an annual observance founded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA), and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC). These partners work each year to promote cyber security awareness and expand involvement by individuals, communities, and organizations across the United States. (For more information, visit http://www.staysafeonline.org/ncsam/.)

The **National Cyber Security Alliance** is a non-profit organization that collaborates with the government, corporate, non-profit, and academic sectors to empower a digital citizenry to use the Internet safely and securely at home, work, and school. (Join us on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/staysafeonline.)

STOP. THINK. CONNECT. is the first-ever coordinated message to help all digital citizens stay safer and more secure online. The message was created by an unprecedented coalition of private companies, non-profits, and government organizations. The Anti-Phishing Working Group and National Cyber Security Alliance led the effort to find a unified online safety message that could be adopted across public and private sectors. The campaign hopes to achieve for online safety awareness what “Smokey Bear” did for forest fire safety and “Click It or Ticket” did for seatbelt safety. (Join the campaign for cybersecurity and awareness at http://www.stopthinkconnect.org.)
reach materials to educate their peers incorporating the STOP. THINK. CONNECT. campaign. Also, encourage students to enter the EDUCAUSE/Internet2 Higher Education Information Security Council (HEISC) Information Security Awareness Poster & Video Contest (http://www.educause.edu/focus-areas-and-initiatives/policy-and-security/cybersecurity-initiative/resources/information-security-awareness-poster-video).

- Review the institution’s “acceptable use policies” for consistency with current online technologies and revise as necessary. (For guidelines on “acceptable use policies,” visit https://wiki.internet2.edu/confluence/display/itsg2/Toolkits.)
- Include the STOP. THINK. CONNECT. tips in campus online newsletters and other communications to students, faculty, and staff and on the campus website.

National Cyber Security Awareness Month takes place in October, but colleges and universities need to maintain vigilance 365 days a year. The National Cyber Security Alliance, STOP. THINK. CONNECT. and EDUCAUSE have information and resources that can be used throughout the year to build awareness across campus.

Aimee Larsen Kirkpatrick (aimee@staysafeonline.org) is Director of Partnership Engagement and Strategic Initiatives for the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA).

© 2012 Aimee Larsen Kirkpatrick