

# Packetville Press

Newsletter for Advisors

## Did you know?

There's a site dedicated to ensuring that women are fully represented in the influential world of information technology and computing?

The National Center for Women and Information Technology or NCWIT ([http://www.ncwit.org/what\\_mission.html](http://www.ncwit.org/what_mission.html)) tackles gender-related issues such as innovation and competitiveness, jobs, and social impact. The site includes a special section for K-12 schools, which provides guidelines related to role modeling, encouragement, recruitment, and classroom practices and pedagogy.

Check out *Women & IT in the News* for some great motivational stories for your students, and don't forget to introduce them to *Careers in IT* and NCWIT's *Digital Library*.

And you'll want to browse through NCWIT's blog. It's packed with articles and links that will help you lessen that great gender divide when it comes to IT careers.



## Think Differently

We read in the media that we need a new way of working with young people—that we should *think differently* about how girls and boys learn. For example, why aren't girls taking the courses they need in mathematics, science, and technology at the pre-college and college levels that will qualify them to move into career opportunities in these fields? Why do so many boys turn off to school and learning?

As for the girls, research tells us that most continue to enter what have long been considered *women's occupations*. If they select computer-related fields, their jobs usually feature clerical or secretarial-type skills. According to the Women's College Coalition, Mount Holyoke College ([academic.org/surprise.html](http://academic.org/surprise.html)), "Girls begin to go underground with their talents and abilities sometime between fifth and ninth grades." One reason for going underground could be that boys are demanding more attention. Another reason seems to be how girls view themselves. At the age when they need to start concentrating on taking more difficult courses in math, science and tech, they are faced with peer pressure. While peer pressure can sometimes propel them into excellent career preparation, often preteen and teen peer pressure leads more toward traditional female roles.

As for the boys, they know that they are expected to do well. But if they don't pay attention, they won't get the foundation



they need to move ahead. You'll probably find that the boys in your club enjoy fooling around and showing off for each other and for the girls. They'll pay attention if the topic interests them and if they see a reason for taking on an activity.

As an advisor, you'll probably be working with both girls and boys. The good news is that because your club targets technologies, you'll have the ability to individualize club projects so that they capture the attention of all your members. Your girls might focus upon community service, using technologies or women in engineering. Some of your boys may want to develop a club website, while others may tackle just how a router works. Using computers can help you and your members *think differently* about accomplishing goals.

## Helpful Sites

*Engineer Girl*  
[www.engineergirl.org/](http://www.engineergirl.org/)  
*Girls Go Tech*  
[www.girlsgotech.org](http://www.girlsgotech.org)  
*Raising Boys*  
[www.pbs.org/parents/raisingboys/school.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/raisingboys/school.html)  
*Practical Strategies for Working with Boys*  
[pbs.org/parents/raisingboys/school04.html](http://pbs.org/parents/raisingboys/school04.html)  
*Boyhood Articles*  
[www.boyhood.com.au/articles/document\\_view](http://www.boyhood.com.au/articles/document_view)  
*TAP Junior: Encouraging Girls & Teens*  
<http://cs-www.cs.yale.edu/homes/tap/tap-junior.html>

## What's new in Packetville as of Fall 2006?

- Lessons for **Penny's Search** are now available online. Use them to reinforce the learning in the Penny's Search game and to challenge the creative talents of your members. All Packetville lessons are tied to national technology standards and include resource materials and assessment ideas.
- You'll find the **Packetville Tour** a perfect quick guide to the site for your members and their parents. Download it in pdf format to hand out or put it to use online.
- **Ask Peter** has been updated with answers to your questions, and in the student sections of Packetville, the Internet IQ quiz is now interactive. Why not check your INet IQ?

# Global E-Learning

## *Preparing Tomorrow's Technology Leaders*

Consider:

1. Cisco's Packetville (for students ages 8-14) and Cisco's Networking Academy (for students in high school and college) are leading the way in global e-learning. Both are communities of learners who are on the path to the future—a future where their skills will be in demand.
2. Packetville offers students an excellent foundation both in understanding of the Internet and in learning about exciting careers in IT. It's packed with activities and content young people enjoy and is an ideal setting for encouraging girls to consider moving forward in curricular areas such as math, science, and technology. The Packet Riders and Hacker Busters of Packetville will be well prepared to move on into the more advanced learning in the Networking Academy.
3. The Networking Academy is designed to provide students with the Internet technology skills essential in a global economy. Academy curriculum features web-based content, online assessment, hands-on labs, instructor training and support, and preparation for industry standard certifications. Students in over 150 countries are studying Academy curriculum and over a million and a half students have entered the Academy since its inception in 1997.
4. Packetville and the Networking Academy are anytime, anywhere learning—what is needed to be competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Packetville

<http://www.cisco.com/go/packetville>

Networking Academy

<http://www.cisco.com/web/learning/netacad/index.html>

## Using Packetville Resources at Club Meetings

After signing up for Packetville, you are given access to everything on the site. You'll find the Advisor area the most valuable, but the student areas will also be useful to you because they include student activities. You may want to tap into the lesson and unit ideas in the Educator section. We know you won't want to conduct your club like a classroom, but you may find some of the lessons and the materials that go with them valuable.

The resources in Packetville are divided into two sections, *Packet Riders* for younger students (approximately 8-11 years old) and *Hacker Busters* for students a bit older (approximately 12-14 years old). The materials in each section, for the most part, target the same content but in a slightly different manner.

Packetville activities are designed so that you can modify them to fit your time constraints and the age/ability levels of your club members. There are activities that will take several club meetings, and there are some, like the Internet IQ, that can be completed in a few minutes. You might want to start out with the Internet IQ quiz that you'll find under Activities in the student areas (*Hacker Busters*, *Packet Riders*) of Packetville. Have your members take the quiz and get their own Internet IQ. It's fun, and it will introduce them to some of the Packetville content.

Next, let your members have fun playing the *Peter Packet* game, the first game in the Packetville series. It's best to download the game to club computers and then let your members enjoy the interaction. You can have your members play the whole game or concentrate upon one part (servers, routers, wireless) of the game.

After playing the game, they might have fun creating a project that enhances the learning from the game. How about making posters featuring information about packets and online dangers to packets? For their posters, they can download images of the Packetville characters. If they need ideas for text or background, they can go back into the game.

Or maybe they'll design tee shirts, stickers, or music?

If you have a group of club members who love drama and want to put on a play, check out Packetville's *Wildly Wireless Melodrama*. Using it, your members can produce a play for their parents and friends, or they can write their own play featuring characters from Packetville and their imaginations.

We hope you'll enjoy exploring Packetville for ideas for your club. We also know that once your club gets going, you'll have lots of your own ideas to share with us.