

Statement from the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah Regarding Internet Use
Posted by Kedusha - 07 Dec 2010 17:58

Update: The Statement from the Gedolim has been taken down temporarily, because we have just been informed that it has not been officially released yet, and will be undergoing some final revisions.

If you have sent the text of the Statement to anyone, please send them this clarification.

We hope to post the final Statement in the near future.

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Re: Statement from the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah Regarding Internet Use
Posted by Kedusha - 16 Jan 2011 03:25

Big news! The Moetzes has released their Statement, which was almost six months in the making. It can be found in this week's Hamodia, page C17. The historical ramifications of this Statement are discussed below.

Shevat 5771

We are all aware of the grave danger internet has brought to the kedusha (sanctity) of the Jewish home and the Jewish family. Internet has made the worst kind of media, offensive images and other issurim chamurim (serious transgressions of Torah prohibitions) readily available to both children and adults.

Internet usage should by all means be avoided in homes and, wherever possible, also in business offices. In any event, children should not be given internet access. (In circumstances where children are compelled to use the internet, this should be done only under the strictest parental supervision.)

For those who must have internet access in their business offices or homes, it is ossur (prohibited) to have internet access without effective filters. In addition, it is also strongly recommended that internet users install software that reports their internet usage to a third party.

Rabbi Aaron Moshe Schechter

Rabbi Yosef Harari-Raful

Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky

Rabbi Aharon Feldman

Rabbi Dovid Feinstein

Rabbi Yaakov Perlow

Rabbi Simcha Bunim Ehrenfeld

Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Levin

Rabbi Aryeh Malkiel Kotler

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Feigelstock

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Re: Statement from the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah Regarding Internet Use
Posted by Kedusha - 16 Jan 2011 03:33

This is not another anti-Internet proclamation. In the past, the Internet was banned altogether. Not anymore.

This Statement is historical for two reasons:

1.) While Internet use continues to be strongly discouraged, the Gedolei Yisrael have recognized that forbidding it completely is a Gezeira She'ein Rov HaTzibbur Yecholim La'amod Ba (the Novominsker Rebbe said this in a recent Hamodia Magazine interview). In hindsight (which is always 20-20), completely banning the Internet had an unintended effect: countless

people, from the most frum circles, not only did not abide by the ban, but they had no incentive to install filters or other safeguards, because they were in violation of the ban in any event. Not anymore. Today, having Internet access, while not recommended, is permissible for those who need it, provided that an effective filter is used; without a filter, it is assur.

The Gedolim spent many hours, over a period of almost six months, working on the text of this Statement. Their goal, as I understand it, was to get the message across, but without having to spell out all the details. For example, the reason an "effective filter" is required is to ensure that a third party holds the password - otherwise, it's quite ineffective. An effective filter further requires that the settings be strong enough to block as much inappropriate material as possible, while still allowing necessary use of the Internet.

2.) For those who must use Internet, it is now clearly required al pi Halacha to install an effective filter, with monitoring software strongly recommended as well.

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Re: Statement from the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah Regarding Internet Use
Posted by Kedusha - 16 Jan 2011 03:35

[Frumfiend The star wrote on 07 Dec 2010 21:00:](#)

The ban on in internet has saved thousands of people. Most of my friends have never seen internet. It is the stupid people like us that havent listened and got burned. So please dont talk about the ban being a mistake.

I never said it was a mistake, but that it had the unintended effect of causing people to use the Internet unprotected, instead of with good safeguards in place.

Banning the Internet was never a long term solution. The new Statement recognizes that the Internet cannot effectively be banned, but that those who need it must have certain safeguards

in place.

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