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## The Student Internet Safety Newsletter *Spring 2005*

### >> The Download on Downloading

By Kelsey, 14, Minnesota

Do you download copyrighted movies, music videos, or music sound tracks without legal permission? If you do, you are taking part in illegal downloading, but you are not the only teen that's doing this. There are millions across the nation doing the very same thing.

On January 25, 2005 in Washington D.C., music industry professionals, state Attorneys General and educators, as well as U.S. Solicitor General Paul Clement, filed briefs with the Supreme Court asking to have the record labels and movie studios vs. Grokster and Morpheus file-sharing case overturned. The lower courts decided that the users of the file-sharing sites were to blame, and not the owners of the sites. This case affects everyone involved, especially the students.

Federal laws say that it is illegal to upload and download copyrighted music without permission. Copyright laws in the United States provide protection to artists preventing such illegal activities. Criminal penalties for first-time offenders can be as high as five years in prison and \$250,000 in fines.

Some legal alternatives to illegal downloading are to buy the CD instead of downloading it or subscribe to a downloading service and pay a monthly fee. Many of these fees are very small compared to the potential fines.

If you are downloading illegally, you are committing a crime. By doing so you may be punished as a criminal if you are caught. It's that simple. Remember, copyright laws protect music and visual art materials. It is our responsibility to honor these laws and respect the artists and the music.



### >> Illegal Downloading, One Student's Opinion

By Kelly, 17, Colorado

I don't download illegally. I figure I can listen to Launch for free or borrow CDs from my friends. I can understand how kids with limited finances don't have money to spend, or don't want to spend their money on music, but I can also understand how companies would want to receive money for what they made.

Part of the problem may be that students don't know or understand the law. What is the law on copyrighted material? US Copyright law (Title 17, U.S.C. section 101 et seq., Title 18, U.S.C. section 2319) protects copyright owners from the unauthorized reproduction, adaptation, and distribution of sound and video recordings, as well as certain digital performances to the public. In other words, you cannot download copyrighted music or movies without permission from the owner.

Typical of students, if a law isn't in their favor they tend to simply ignore it. They don't realize the consequences of their actions. Unfortunately, technology comes quicker than we are prepared for; too quickly to decide what's right and wrong or how to deal with it. Students should realize that downloading copyrighted music off the Internet is illegal. Right now there aren't many ways of punishing people for "stealing" the music other than lawsuits. Suing may seem overboard but how else

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is the music industry supposed to earn money for things they've created? Some students say that music companies get enough money out of CDs that they sell in the stores, but the day is almost here where more people get their music online than from a physical store.

I really don't know what alternatives would work but something needs to be figured out. Maybe the laws need to change, or there needs to be a better solution that fits our high-tech world. I think the best alternatives that are out there right now are the sites that you pay a monthly fee to download as much music you want. Both parties are happy that way.

### Quick Tips



#### Finding Legal Music Download Sites

• Downloading illegally from P2P file-sharing sites may put you at risk of receiving unwanted viruses and/or unwanted lawsuits. Play it safe and avoid downloading illegally by using reputable legal downloading sites. Check out the [Recording Industry Association of America website](#) for a list of legal music download sites.

### We Welcome Your Input

If you would like to submit an article for the newsletter or tell us your story, please contact us at:

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