



Written by Sally Shill Linford Illustrations by Circles & Squares Animation

Faux Paw the Techno Cat Series® created by Jacalyn S. Leavitt

PEACE OF MIND FOR FAMILIES ONLINE



Written by Sally Shill Linford

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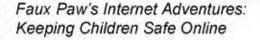
Faux Paw the Techno Cat® Series created by Jacalyn S. Leavitt



Meet Faux Paw the Techno Cat: the remarkable polydactyl (six-toed), web-surfing cat who has already thwarted the Internet villain, Kittyface, in two earlier Internet adventures:









Faux Paw Meets the First Lady: How to Handle Cyber-bullying



Lauren Nelson
Miss America 2007

"As a teen, my friends and I faced situations online that taught me the importance of always using the Internet and other technology in a safe and healthy way. As a former Miss America, I get to talk to youth about how to protect themselves and their reputations online. Enjoy reading about Faux Paw and her friends and the lessons they learn about using technology in a healthy way to balance real life and screen time."



**Deron Williams** 

Utah Jazz Basketball Team 2008 US Basketball Olympic Team Husband and Father of 2 Children

"Along with reading about the exciting Olympics, this book tells the vital message of using the Internet in a healthy way. My family uses computers to connect to many helpful and enjoyable places. Balancing real life and screen time is the way to get the best from computers and the digital world. Remember to follow the 3 KEEPs listed on the back page of the book: Keep Safe, Keep Away, & Keep Telling."



Hello, friends, I'm Faux Paw the Techno Cat. I love computers, but I can do other things too. . .



My friend, Tai Shan, is teaching me ping pong.







So, when I was invited to light the Great Flame at the opening ceremonies in Beijing . . .



. . . I ordered my plane ticket and started practicing right away.



Tai Shan, came along to help me. "Hi, Tai Shan! While we're in Beijing, let's see the Forbidden City and, of course, the Great Wall! But I have to be at the stadium tonight to practice lighting the flame with the other animals."



"Look at that, Tai Shan! You go on ahead. I'll just be a few minutes."



"Look at all these games! I'll just take a quick peek at Worlds of Cat Wars."



"Ooo-la-la. This is incredible!" I said.

Then I heard a familiar voice. "Hello, Faux Paw, I'd recognize your voice anywhere." It was Happy Fluffy Kittyface—he's no happy, fluffy kitty, that's for sure! "How about a game of CatWars?" he tempted.

"No thanks, Kittyface. I know better than to talk to Internet strangers."



"But I'm not a stranger," he replied. "You know exactly who I am. I'm not asking you to meet me in person. I just want to play a game."



"Well, . . . maybe just one little game."

As soon as I logged in, I knew I was a natural. Kittyface came after me, and I zapped him with my laser. This was much better than meeting in person!



In the game, I quickly earned superpowers. I could leap over big trucks and small buildings. My paws had nine claws each! I was strong. I was amazing. I was powerful.





"But I just won nine lives, and Kittyface is on my tail! Go on without me! I'll just be a little late!"

Back in the game, I captured whole cities. Other kitties online asked to join my army. I trained new recruits. We were invincible.







Back in the game, Kittyface had me surrounded, but we broke through to level three.



It was getting late, and I yawned.

"Tired, Faux Paw?" said Kittyface. "You're just a little kitty. Maybe you should rest." "In your dreams," I said. And I thought to myself, I'll just finish level three, then quit when I get to level four.





At level five, I could barely keep my eyes open. "I think I need a cat nap," I said to my troops. But, my team really needed me.

"You can't leave now," they said, "We'll be slaughtered!"

Kittyface laughed. "I can play all night, Faux Paw. Hee, hee."







I don't know when morning came. I didn't notice.





But worst of all, I didn't notice that the Games were about to begin. The crowd had gathered, and the penguins were worried. "Where is Faux Paw?" they said.

"She's too far away," said Tai Shan. "She'll never make it."



The cheetahs—who had heard enough of this nonsense—offered to help. "Beijing is very big, but we are very fast. Will you take us to her?" And, off they raced.



Back in the game . . . at the end of level nine . . . I did it! I captured Kittyface. I put him in our highest prison tower and surrounded him in seven rings of fire. "Mission accomplished!" I roared.



For just a moment, I thought I had done something very important.



Then behind me, I heard Tai Shan. "Faux Paw, your real friends need you, and your real life can't wait for the game to end. Take your paws off the keyboard, and look away from the screen!"



Turning away from the computer, I saw the clock on the wall. "Oh, no! We'll never make it. My friends! The flame! I've let everyone down! The world is watching, and I'm going to disgrace us all!"



And there he was—Kittyface towering over me. "Hello, Faux Paw, how delightful! Hee, hee, hee."

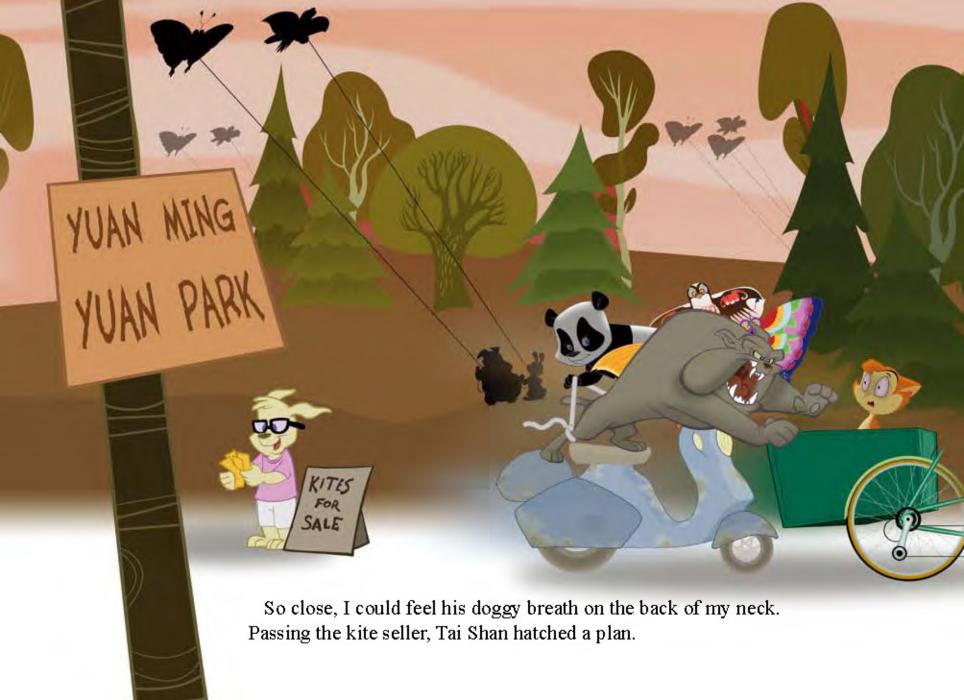


I tried to run, but my legs wouldn't work. "Help! Tai Shan!" "Follow me!" he said. "The Cheetahs are waiting."





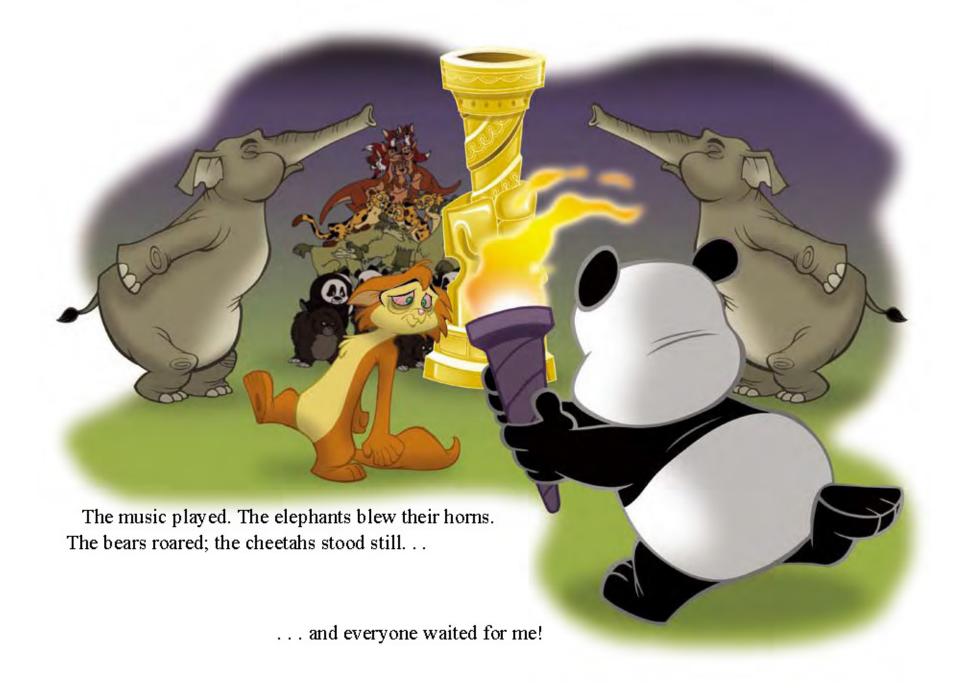
So close, I could hear the buzz of his scooter.





He took quick action just as the kites caught a favorable wind and yanked Kittyface up into the sky.







Tai Shan wiped his brow, "Hurry, Faux Paw, you still have time! Go light the flame." "You were at the practice; you should do it." I said.

"We'll light it together," he said.





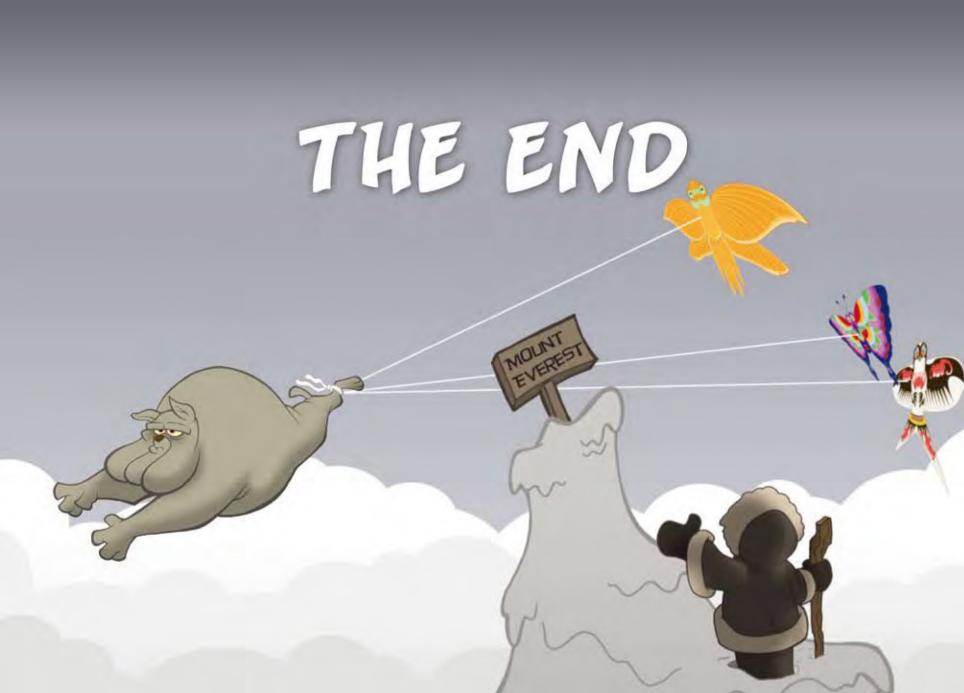
And that's the last thing I remember.



"Thanks, Tai Shan, I owe you . . . and the cheetahs. I got my *real* life mixed up with my *online* life, and I almost missed the opening ceremonies."

"It's okay to play games once in a while, but don't let the Internet—games, chat, or surfing—get in the way of your real life goals . . . like being a good student."





#### PARENTING IN THE AGE OF THE INTERNET

Dr. Kimberly Young

The Internet has fast become a tool that children, at younger and younger ages, are utilizing. Children need to learn how to use computers and be comfortable with the ever changing and emerging forms that the technology develops. However, with the click of a mouse, they can enter a different world where the problems of their real life are no longer present, and all the things one wishes he or she could be or experience are possible. Some children go online and cling to the Internet as a way of coping with problems in their lives. Socially, they learn to instant message friends rather than develop face-to-face relationships, which can impact their way of relating to peers.

#### What Can Parents Do?

#### Address the problem.

In a two-parent household, it is critical that both parents present a united front. As parents, each must take the issue seriously and agree on common goals. Discuss the situation together and if necessary, compromise on desired goals so that when you approach your child, you will be coming from the same page. If you do not, your child will appeal to the more skeptical parent and create division between you.

In a single-parent household, the parent needs to take some time to think about what needs to be said and to prepare for the likely emotional response from the child. A single parent needs to be prepared for an emotional outburst laden with accus atory phrases designed to make the parent feel guilty or inadequate. It is important not to respond to the emotion—orworse yet, get sidetracked with a lecture on disrespect. Acknowledge your child's feelings but stay focused on the topic of his or her Internet use.

#### Show you care.

It will help to begin your discussion by seminding your

child that you love him or her and that you care about his or her happiness and well-being. Reassure your child that you are not condemning him or her. Rather, tell your child you are concerned about some of the changes you have seen in his or her behavior and refer to those changes in specific terms: fatigue, declining grades, giving up hobbies, social withdrawal, etc. Assign an Internet time log—tell your child that you would like to see an accounting of just how much time he or she spends online each day and which Internet activities they engage in.

#### Become more computer-savvy.

Checking history folders and Internet logs, learning about monitoring software, and installing filters all require a degree of computer savvy. It is important for every parent to learn the terms (both technical and popular) and be comfortable with the computer, at least enough to know what your child is doing online. Take an active interest in the Internet and learn about where your child goes online.

#### Set reasonable rules.

Work with your child to establish clear boundaries for limited Internetusage. Allow perhaps an hour per night after homework, with a few extra weekend hours. Stick to your rules and remember that you're not simply trying to control him or her — you are working to free them of a psychological dependence.

#### Make the computer visible.

Move your child's personal computer out of his or her bedroom. Walking by now and then in the course of your normal home activities sends the message that the Internet is not something that can be used on the sly.

#### Encourage other activities.

When you cut down your child's Internet time, he or she will be looking for something to do, not only to fill in the hours but to achieve a comparable "high." Help him or her find alternative endeavors, whether it be something they used to enjoy or something new, like a chess club at school. Talk to them about what they most enjoy on the Net so you can steer them toward a healthy alternative. If they especially enjoyed taking on many different handles online and acting in the character of those different personalities, encourage them to go out for the school play.

#### Support, don't enable.

Parents often fall into an enabling role. They coverup or make excuses for their children when they miss school or fail to meet deadlines, and in the name of keeping peace, they give in to their children's demands. If your child does rebel against your intervention efforts let the first storm subside. Acknowledge their feelings, but stick to your goals. Validate any effort they make to work with you. Above all, let them know that you support them in making these difficult changes.

#### Use outside resources when needed.

If your child is unable to moderate his or her Internet usage and the initial problems persist, along with new hostility in your relationship, it's best to seek outside help. School counselors can help alert you to your child's behavior at school. Ultimately, family therapy may be your best bet to help guide your child's recovery, address family strife, and heal wounds old and new.

Dr. Kimberly Young is the Clinical Director of the Center for Internet Addiction Recovery (www.netaddiction.com). For more information on how to help children maintains afe and healthy use of the Internet, see Dr. Young's ground-breaking book: Caught in the Net.



Find Dr. Young's four-minute online test for assessing your child's dependence on the Internet at: www.iKeepSafe.org/Parent-childTest

## HI FRIENDS! REMEMBER THE 3 KEEPS OF INTERNET SAFETY WHEN YOU GO ONLINE:

**Keep Safe my personal information-all of it!** I never give my real name, address, phone number, the name of my school, or a picture of myself to anyone online.

\*\* I Keep Away from Internet strangers— no matter what they tell me, because I have no way of knowing who they really are. I don't talk with them online, and I never meet them face-to-face.

\*\* I Keep Telling my parents or a trusted adult about everything I

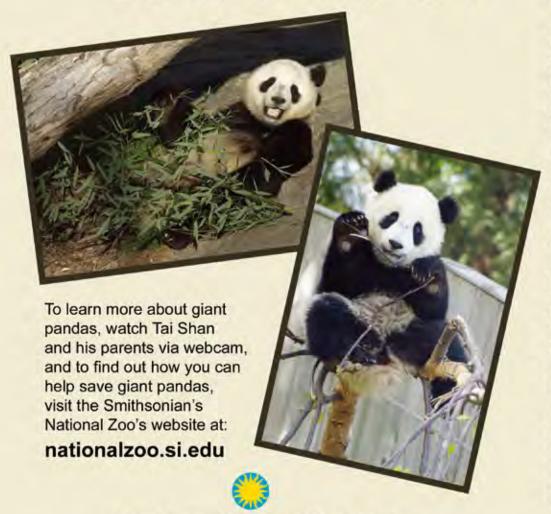
see on the Internet. I always tell them when something makes me uncomfortable.



If you want to read more about Faux Paw the Techno Cat and Internet safety, go to:

www.iKeepSafe.org

# TAI SHAN



The real Tai Shan is a male giant panda born at the Smithsonian's National Zoo on July 9, 2005. The Zoo lent his name to Faux Paw's friend in China because giant pandas are native to that Asian country. Tai Shan means "peaceful mountain" in Chinese.

Just as Tai Shan helps save Faux Paw from the dangers of the Internet, scientists at the National Zoo are helping to save giant pandas from extinction. Giant pandas are endangered in China, where only about 1,600 individuals survive in the wild. About 220 live in zoos worldwide, including at the National Zoo. Scientists at the Zoo are leaders in studying and conserving giant pandas in zoos and in the wild.

Tai Shan and every zoo-born giant panda represent a significant step toward saving this beloved species. Tai Shan is also a conservation ambassador, helping to inspire people to care about the future of giant pandas and all endangered species and habitats.

Tai Shan's parents, father Tian Tian and mother Mei Xiang, came to the National Zoo from the Wolong Nature Reserve in China's Sichuan Province. China loaned these pandas so Zoo scientists could learn more about them, especially about their reproduction. What they learned led to the birth of Tai Shan following artificial insemination. Their scientific advances have also helped boost the number of giant pandas born at Wolong and other Chinese breeding centers.

It's important to breed pandas in zoos just in case their wild relatives should disappear. But Zoo scientists are working to prevent that. They are studying the giant panda's bamboo habitat in the mountains of central China and training Chinese conservationists to study and protect the black-and-white bears and their habitat.

Smithsonian Institution

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