Internet Infrastructure Terms

The terms below were presented in module 2 of the NYC Digital Safety online training.

**Browser:** Software on the computer that displays web pages and web applications.

**Domain Name Server (DNS):** A service that maps numeric versions of web addresses to human-readable URLs. Can be thought of as the internet’s “phone book”

**Fiber optic cables:** A high-speed data transmission medium that carries light beams. Digital data is transmitted through the cable via rapid pulses of light

**Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP):** The prescribed method that clients and servers use to share information on the internet

**Local Area Network (LAN):** A locally connected computer system involving two or more computers

**Internet:** A physical infrastructure comprising computers, modems, routers, and cables

**Internet protocol address (IP address):** A unique number assigned to each device connected to a computer network or the internet, enabling it to exchange data with other devices on the network

**Internet service provider (ISP):** A communications company that provides subscribers with an internet connection

**Modem:** A device that converts data into a format that can travel along an Internet Service Provider’s cables

**Packet:** A container used to transmit data across a TCP/IP network. Comprised of both data and metadata, a typical example contains around 1,500 bytes

**Router:** A device that connects and “directs” internet traffic between computer networks

**Server:** A computer that stores and provides access to content and services on a network
**Shared Protocols:** An agreed upon, standard method of communication that all devices use on the internet. HTTP is only one of many of these.

**Third party:** A company or an actor that is neither the user or the content provider (e.g., an advertiser)

**Virtual Private Network (VPN):** A system that enables users to send and receive data across shared or public networks as if their computing devices were directly connected to a private network.

**Wi-Fi:** A protocol that enables network connectivity via radio waves so that devices can connect to computer networks.

**World Wide Web:** A system of linked content like digital pages, images, audio, and video.