



Protecting your **KIDS** on social media

Online social media services aren't new, but many of us are still learning how to use them without getting into trouble – especially children and teens. Use these tips to help your kids safely use any social media service from networking to image posting sites.

NetSmartz® Workshop

For more resources visit NetSmartz.org

A program of the



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Do you know...



What they're posting?

Check comments and images for personal information, like phone numbers and addresses, as well as inappropriate and illegal content such as hateful or threatening speech and nudity. Delete anything you think is too much information.



How they access social media?

Mobile devices, like cell phones and tablets, let children access social media apps away from adult supervision. Children may post content and even share their locations. Review app settings to help them keep information – like their location – private.



Who they're talking to?

Your child's online contact lists and followers may include people you don't know, or even people your child only knows online. Even if you don't know the contact, make sure you know what images, messages, and other content they're sharing.



What account settings they're using?

This is where you can control who has access to your child's information. Each social media service has a different setup, so take a look at each one your child uses. Always ask yourself – *what is on the profile and who can see it?*



Who has access to their information?

Most social media services have ads and applications from 3rd parties, like games and fan pages. If children click on these or add them to their profiles, they are allowing access to their personal information. Have a discussion about what's OK to add and what's not.



Where to report?

If anyone talks to your child about sex, shares or asks them to share sexual images, or is a victim of sexual exploitation, make a report to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® at www.CyberTipline.com or **1-800-THE-LOST®**.

PROTECTING YOUR KIDS ONLINE 2.0

CONNECT

Set some ground rules.

Establish clear guidelines like what types of sites kids can visit, apps they can download, and when they can have access to electronics. Consider “blackout” periods that require disconnection.

Research before you buy.

It’s important to learn about a device’s capabilities before you buy. Will it allow unknown people to communicate with my child? Will this allow children to make unchecked purchases?

Go beyond safeguards.

Installing monitoring software doesn’t guarantee your child will be safe online. Time, attention, and active conversation are the best tools to protect them.

REPORT!

If your kids are dealing with cyberbullies or potential online enticement, report it to the website, cell phone provider, law enforcement, or www.cybertipline.org

LEARN

Know the platforms.

Online enticement happens across all platforms, so be aware of the sites, games, and apps your children frequent. Ask them to show you how they use them.

Be proactive.

Teach your kids to spot common tricks used by online offenders. In NCMEC CyberTipline reports, the most common tactics used to entice a child online were:

- Engaging the child in sexual conversation/ roleplay as a grooming method.
- Directly asking the child for sexually explicit images of themselves, or offering to mutually exchange images.
- Developing a rapport with the child through compliments and other supportive behaviors such as “liking” their online posts.
- Sending unprompted sexually explicit images of themselves.
- Pretending to be younger.
- Offering incentives for explicit content.

Spot the Red Flags.

A child who is experiencing online enticement may be:

- Spending increasing time online.
- Getting upset when he or she is not allowed on their device.
- Taking extra steps to conceal what they are doing online.
- Receiving gifts from people you don’t know.

ENGAGE

Talk about it!

Your kids might not tell you everything, but ask anyway. Regular conversations about safety can go a long way in increasing trust and communication.

Get involved.

Challenge them to a duel. If you have kids who like to play online games, ask if you can play, too. When you respect their interests, they’re more likely to respect your rules.

Don’t pull the plug.

Taking away internet access because they may have made mistakes online doesn’t solve the problem. Talk to them about protecting themselves and respecting others online.

PARENTS' GUIDE TO SMART PHONE SAFETY

SMART OR SCARY?

Smartphones are essentially little computers, so you might be a little worried when handing one over to your child. Take some time to understand the risks and implement a few safeguards so that you can help your child use smartphones safely.



THE RISKS

▪ CYBERBULLYING

With the constant connectivity of smartphones, your child may be more susceptible to cyberbullying or have more opportunities to cyberbully others.

▪ GEOLOCATION

A GPS-enabled smartphone can reveal your child's location through online posts and uploaded photos.

▪ INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With smartphones, your child has mobile access to content you may consider inappropriate, such as pornography or violent videos.

▪ SEXTING

Your child may use the Internet and social apps to send, receive, or forward revealing photos.

▪ VIRUSES & MALWARE

Just like a computer, a smartphone is vulnerable to security attacks if your child accesses unsecured websites and apps.

5 WAYS TO BE SMARTER THAN THE SMARTPHONE!

1. Be a parent and a resource.

Establish clear guidelines, including time limits and consequences for inappropriate behavior, but be open so your child will come to you with any problems.

2. Set up password protection.

This will keep everyone but you and your child from accessing personal information stored on the phone.

3. Update the operating system.

New versions often contain important security fixes.

4. Approve apps before they are downloaded.

Make sure you understand their capabilities and approve their content.

5. Understand location services.

GPS features are useful when using maps, but you'll want to disable location-tagging when your child posts anything online.

For more resources visit NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

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