



SOCIAL MEDIA 101

a quick guide for parents and educators

Virtual communities open up a new world for kids to chat, network, stay connected and share common interests. However, these opportunities to socially interact can also be used by others to target and harm kids.

Social Media Dangers and Concerns

- Child may share or receive risqué or sexually explicit pictures or videos (sharing an explicit image of a minor is a crime!)
- Social media apps provide anonymous platforms for sexual predators and traffickers to groom unsuspecting youth
- Can use space to humiliate others or post inappropriate content (cyberbullying)
- Can connect with or receive a message from a stranger
- May attempt to physically meet with a stranger
- Can be harassed by peers/cyberbullied
- Is meant for ages 13+, but a lack of age-verification allows anyone to sign up
- Can lead to excessive or addictive use, or a substitute for face-to-face interactions
- Access to unhealthy peer “groups” (cutting, cults, gambling, drugs, etc.)
- No information shared is truly “private” in the digital world
- Over exposure can lead to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts

Teach Teens These Safety Precautions:

- Think before you post. Remind them that there are no takebacks.
- Never send, post or share a sexually suggestive picture or video; tell your parent if someone sends and/or requests explicit images.
- Don't accept any online activity meant to intimidate, threaten, tease, or harm you or anyone else; Let parent/trusted adult know if this occurs.
- Tell you immediately if they receive a threatening, mean or sexual message. Block further communications.
- Get parent approval before opening or downloading new apps.
- Respect others online; Never send or share information that might hurt or embarrass someone.
- Never use vulgar or sexually-explicit language.
- Make sure they understand that they cannot recognize a disguised predator who may pose as a kid or trusted adult to begin the grooming process
- Predators often take conversations outside the app where interactions can't be easily monitored.
- Teach them how to recognize the grooming tactics of predators and traffickers, including trust and relationship building, offering love/romance, gifts, jobs, and the promise of a better life.
- Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, WhatsApp, Discord are among apps predators frequently use to connect with children and teens.

safety & prevention 101
RULES N' TOOLS®

No child is immune to online threats: Parents are the "first line of defense."

- Review app before allowing your child to use it; Review app with your child.
- Do not allow child to download apps; passwords allowing download should be kept by the parent only.
- Teach your child to never share personally identifiable information (PII) including date of birth, address, full name, school or any image that can be used to identify to track your child down.
- Know your child's user names and passwords.
- Follow/Friend your child so you can monitor posts and activity. Friending your child will require your child adding you to their 'friend list'.
- Encourage your child to "Think before you post." Is he/she comfortable with everyone seeing the information shared?
- If anyone shares or asks your child to share sexual messages or images, make a report to CyberTipline.org.
- Check all devices used by your child to see what apps are installed; Look for "hidden" apps (ie. app that looks like calculator but is a front for another app to hide files, photos and videos).
- Be mindful of 3rd party and connected apps - some will allow the user to log into one app using account information from another, which may allow access to profile information.
- When using mobile devices to post or check in, your child may be providing location-sharing information. Check settings to ensure only desired information is being shared.
- Set privacy and security settings on all apps to keep your child as safe as possible.
- Social media accounts are for use by children that 13 years old or older as set by the federal law.
- Implement Safety Rules and Software tools ("Rules 'N Tools®") on all internet-enabled devices and platforms used by your child. See the **Enough Is Enough® "Rules 'N Tools®"** guide at internetsafety101.org/safety-intro
- Essential software tools include setting age-appropriate filters, monitoring and time management software.
- Have your child sign the **Internet Safety Youth Pledge: Laptop, Device and Phone Contract** at internetsafety101.org/youthpledge

Enough Is Enough® (EIE) Quick Guides are based on EIE's **Internet Safety 101®** Emmy Award-winning multi-media program and website designed to educate, equip and empower parents, educators and other adults with information needed to protect children from internet dangers.

For more information, visit internetsafety101.org and enough.org.