SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS
FOR PARENTS

As a parent, you have a responsibility to help teach your kids about online safety. But when they're using sites you've never heard of, what do you do?

DID YOU KNOW?

- **95 percent** of teens use the Internet.[1]

- **77 percent** of teens use Facebook.[2]

- **53 percent** of teens use Instagram.[3]

- **24 percent** of teens use Twitter.[4]

- **10 percent** of teens use Tumblr.[5]

- The average teen has approximately **300 friends on Facebook** and **79 followers on Twitter**.[6]

- Among Twitter users aged 12 to 17, **64 percent made their tweets public**.

- **19 percent of teen users have posted things they regret**, including photos, videos, status updates, tweets, or comments.[7]

- Only **18 percent** of young adults claim they are **comfortable with what their friends post about them online**, and **32 percent** say that the information about them online is what they choose for the public to see.[8]

BE AWARE OF WHAT YOUR KIDS POST ONLINE

Understand the cyber risks kids face when using social media. Talk to your kids about the following risks:

1. **What they are posting:** Talk to your kids about the information they post online. Many of them don't understand the damage they could do to their reputation or future prospects with unkind or angry posts, and compromising photos or videos. Ensure your kids are not sharing or posting:

   - Sensitive information: Sensitive information includes anything that can help a person steal your child's identity or find them, such as their/your full name, Social Security number, address, birthdate, phone number, or place of birth.

   - Compromising content: This includes photos or status updates that may damage your child's reputation or future prospects.

   - Unkind or angry content: This includes anything malicious directed at themselves or another person, as well as opinions that are probably better left unshared.

[1] Pew Research Center, "The Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project: Teen Fact Sheet." September 2012
[2] Ibid
[3] Pew Research Center, "Social Media Update 2014." January 2015
[4] Pew Research Center, "The Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project: Teen Fact Sheet." September 2012
[5] Pew Research Center, "Teens and Libraries in Today's Digital World." April 2014
[6] Pew Research Center, "Teens, Social Media, and Privacy." May 2013
[7] Ibid
[8] Ibid

2. **Who they are connecting with:** Social media allows kids to connect with their friends, but there is also a risk of connecting with someone they do not know or who is only pretending to be a kid.

3. **What level of privacy they are using:** Many social media platforms have privacy settings that allow users to limit who sees their content. There are also settings for location tracking and geo-tagging of photos or statuses.

SIMPLE TIPS FOR PARENTS

1. Talk to your children. Help your children understand the importance of owning their digital lives and only sharing things that will not put them in danger, negatively affect their future, or harm others.

2. Emphasize the concept of credibility to teens: not everything they see on the Internet is true and people on the Internet may not be who they appear to be.

3. Watch for changes in behavior. If your child suddenly avoids the computer, it may be a sign they are being bullied or stalked online.

4. Review security settings and privacy policies for the social media sites kids frequent. These settings are frequently updated so check back regularly.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

Cybersecurity Awareness Volunteer Education Program (C-SAVE)

The National Cyber Security Alliance developed the C-SAVE program to provide age-appropriate resources to discuss Internet safety with students.

OnguardOnline.gov

This website, run by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), is a one-stop shop for online safety resources available to parents, educators, kids, and others.

Project iGuardian

ICE Homeland Security Investigations is one of the leading law enforcement agencies that investigates crimes involving child pornography and the sexual exploitation of minors. Project iGuardian provides resources to help children and teens stay safe online.

Cybertipline.com

The Congressionally-mandated CyberTipline, which is part of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), receives online child solicitation reports 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Submit an online report or call 1-800-843-5678.

ConnectSafely.org

ConnectSafely is an organization for everyone engaged in and interested in the impact of social media and mobile technology. You'll find tips, safety advice, and other resources to promote the safe, effective use of connected technology.