

Minutes for Roth Parent Group Meeting

January 9, 2017

Attendees – 15 parents plus Ms. Zeh and 2 guest speakers

Q&A re: Impact of School Reconfiguration on Athletics Program

Guest Speaker: Tom Stewart, Director of Athletics & Physical Education

- Handout highlights athletics opportunities available for Jr. High students at Modified and JV level
 - Modified B is available to 7th & 8th graders
 - Modified A is available to 7th, 8th & 9th graders
 - For NYS, Modified A is the same as Modified B. Within Monroe County, the rules for Modified A may have slightly different from Modified B
 - “Freshman” team is available to 9th graders only; 7th & 8th graders can only participate based on Athletic Placement Process (APP), discussed later
- 9th graders are eligible for participation in Modified A, JV and Varsity – depending on their individual skill level and experience
- If student athletes wish to “play up”, they have to complete a fitness test and meet maturity requirements; the process is called the APP or Athletic Placement Process
 - If they pass the test, exceptional 7th & 8th athletes can play up in JV and Varsity
 - The earlier end time for Jr. High will be an advantage for kids that want to play up at the JV or Varsity level
- Modified A teams don’t exist for every sport

Logistics:

- The earlier end time for Jr. High will make it easier to travel to games at other schools
- Athletes will still be able to take advantage of study period at the end of the day; only exception might be if they have to travel to a game
- Practice for Mod A / JV / Varsity will start at around 3pm, similar to what it is now
- 9th graders participating JV / Varsity will be bused up to the SHS
- The current football field at Roth will become a soccer field
- With the earlier end time for Jr. High, parents raised a concern about whether pickups after practice were likely to occur before 5pm as this would pose a challenge for working parents and might exclude some student athletes from participating
 - Tom indicated that RH will consider their options; perhaps they will add a study hall after practice – this is yet TBD

General notes regarding specific sports:

- Soccer, baseball and softball participation numbers are up, year over year
- Next year, since the schools will be balanced in terms of attendance, soccer will have a Burger and a Roth team.
- Boys Modified A Soccer will be in place for next year 2017-18
 - These teams are being added back based on prior year participation rates; these teams were previously due to budget constraints
 - Modified A will be a combined team of 9th grades from Burger and Roth

Minutes for Roth Parent Group Meeting

January 9, 2017

- The RH Varsity Swim Coach is trying to get Jr. High students involved and interested in swimming; to encourage this, he has proposed a 4-6 week swimming experience for Jr. High students after the varsity swim season ends
- RH Track & RH Wrestling are not split by Burger and Roth; this decision is usually based on participation numbers
- Modified B football plays at the high school

Communications & Sports Schedules:

- Parents raised a concern about not having enough information about the APP process; Tom is intended to have a Parent Information meeting on a recurring basis (probably around May / June and through the year) to communicate with 8th grade parents regarding the APP process, the athletics opportunities available to 9th grade students, the tryout schedule, etc.
 - May also send robo call as a reminder during the summer re: start times for certain sports, sports clearance for fall sports, etc.
- Parents can access sports schedules online via Monroe County database and can “subscribe” to calendar
 - Link: http://www.mcpsac-ny.org/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=736&school_id=22
- Parents can also download the “Rschoool Activity Scheduler” app from the App Store to get access to the team schedules
- To help parents with planning for summer trips, the Athletics program will give parents a heads-up regarding the week that tryouts will most likely be held
- Parents suggested using the signage outside the high school to advertise dates & times for sports games, tryouts, etc.
- Tom mentioned that the Sports Boosters on Facebook is also a great channel for sharing information

Q&A re: Impact of School Reconfiguration on Athletics and Music & Arts Program

Donna Watts, Director of Music & Visual Arts Program

- 9th grade ensembles will be Concert Band / Concert Orchestra / Concert Chorus
 - NGA doesn't have performance space; that's why 9th graders currently bused to high school for ensembles
- When kids move up to 10th grade, they will “audition” for symphonic orchestra for seating purposes; this will occur in the spring before they move up to the high school
- 7th & 8th Grade chorus is NOT credit-bearing. Only credit-bearing in 9th grade.
- 9th graders will participate in Jr. High musical, not the Sr. High musical

Extra-curricular Music Ensembles:

- Timing of music clubs / ensembles dependent on teacher preference; likely to happen after the school day due to early start time
- Bel Canto has evolved over the past 5-7 years to become a rigorous extra-curricular ensemble. Bel Canto will continue to be offered at the Sr. High for grades 10-12.

Minutes for Roth Parent Group Meeting

January 9, 2017

- There will continue to be extra-curricular ensemble opportunities offered for students in grades 7-9.
 - There will be extra-curricular opportunities for music but we will not know exactly what form they will take until the fall – most likely very similar to what is offered right now.
 - Jr. High students will participate in the extra-curricular ensembles that are available at the Jr. High. They will not participate in the SHS extra-curricular music ensembles at this time.

Music Lessons:

- Band and orchestra lessons operate on a 5-day rotation
- Pulling kids out of class to participate in lessons continues to be a challenge but it is the school's expectation that kids learn how to manage their schedule in a way that allows them to make up music lessons and/or classwork that they may have missed during a class day
- Parent of a 9th grade student this year indicated that it may now be less stressful for students to fit in their music lesson (since students will no longer have to go back and forth to the SHS)

Logistics & Instruments:

- For the next couple of years, most of the new instruments will be going to building up band instruments for 4th grade level
- For students that currently participate in extra-curricular music ensembles AND athletics, students will find it challenging to participate in both because most ensembles will likely meet after the school day

Principal's Report

Denise Zeh

- Parents should have received a letter from Dr. Graham recently regarding status of the reconfiguration
- Kerry Macko, the Principal of Roth Jr. High, will be the guest speaker at the March Parent Group meeting and will answer questions parents might have regarding the newly configured 7-9 building
- The role of Student Council will be changing in the 7-9 building; Ms. Zeh is asking the Student Council to come up with activities to occur in the 2nd semester
- There will be a lockdown drill the last weekend in January; will communicate to students
- Audition for the Roth Spring Musical begins January 10th; rehearsal schedule will be posted by the end of the week
 - Mrs. Lamica will have information about students interested in stage crew
- Digital Citizenship Night in November went well and included a demo of Google classroom and a discussion of the results from the parent and student surveys on digital citizenship

Minutes for Roth Parent Group Meeting

January 9, 2017

- Handouts from this night were shared at the meeting and are attached
- In next steps, the school is working on a survey of kids regarding cyber-bulling (what is their response when they receive texts from adults / kids that are mean-spirited, etc.); results will be reviewed with Student Council

October Minutes were approved

Treasurer's Report

- The account balance reflects the money that was made on the night of the Fall Fling
- Box Tops have been processed and will be split out by school (Roth / NGA / SHS)

District Committee Reports

- **Budget Advisory Committee** – will likely present at March meeting; school district expecting budget shortfall of ~\$2M; will use reserves to cover gap in short-term but expect to develop a plan of action long-term
- **District Parent Advisory Committee (DPAC)** – 4/26 is Candidate's Night; parents are invited to submit questions that we might want to ask candidates; no major feedback on letter from Dr. Graham; new parent education videos posted on website; at meeting, Travis Anderson shared information about the apps that teachers are using, such as Remind, etc.
- **Space Committee** – group has met 3 times to discuss Past Enrollment Projections vs. Current Enrollment and Future Projections vs. number of available classrooms for each building. It was decided that, with the reconfiguration, all of the schools have room if the projections hold true. The following 3 recommendations are being presented to the Board of Education at their next meeting on January 24, 2017:
 1. Shift the one K-3 self-contained Regents-track special education class from Fyle Elementary to Crane Elementary for the 2017-2018 school year, while keeping the 2 classes at Crane, instead of moving all 3 to Winslow, to free up additional classroom space at Winslow for anticipated enrollment growth.
 2. Monitor kindergarten registrations in spring 2017 and actual kindergarten enrollments in fall 2017 to inform potential subsequent projections of classroom space and staffing needs. The extent to which implementation of full-day kindergarten will impact family decisions to enroll in Rush-Henrietta is still not certain.
 3. Monitor projected growth in the Burger/Vollmer attendance zone over the next three to five years, to determine (a) whether k-3 attendance areas will need further adjustment, and/or (b) self-contained class assignments will need to be revised.
- **Urban-suburban program approved**; see full Board resolution at [http://www.boarddocs.com/ny/rhnet/Board.nsf/files/AFCLHH535E49/\\$file/Urban-Suburban%20Student%20Transfer%20Program%20Resolution.pdf](http://www.boarddocs.com/ny/rhnet/Board.nsf/files/AFCLHH535E49/$file/Urban-Suburban%20Student%20Transfer%20Program%20Resolution.pdf)

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January 9, 2017

- **Shared Decision-Making (SDM)** – first meeting 1/24

Volunteer Opportunities

- Activity nights dependent on Student Council discussion
- Looking for volunteer to chair Staff Appreciation breakfast

Open Discussion – Kudos / Concerns / Challenges

- Next year, Sam and Amy will be stepping down as Co-Chairs of Roth Parent Group; looking for parents who might be interested in taking a leadership role with the group

Next Meeting – March 6th, 6:30pm; Guest speaker: Kerry Macko (Principal of Roth Jr. High)

HS athletics program

High School Program Offerings: Varsity and JV

Fall	Winter	Spring
Football V/JV	(B/G) Basketball V/JV	(B/G) Lacrosse V/JV
(B/G) Soccer V/JV	Ice Hockey V	Baseball V/JV
(B/G) Volleyball V/JV	Wrestling V/JV	Softball V/JV
(B/G) X-Country V/JV	(B/G) Indoor Track V/JV	(B/G) Track V/JV
(G) Tennis V	Cheerleading V/JV	(B) Golf V/JV
(G) Swimming V/JV	(B/G) Bowling V	(B) Tennis V
(G) Gymnastics V	(B) Swimming V/JV	Unified Basketball
Cheerleading V/JV		

JHS athletics program (Mod A and B)

The Modified B athletic program is available to students in the seventh and eighth grades. Sports activities offered at this level are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, and relationship to the high school program. While our intention at R-H is to involve as many students as possible, the number and size of teams in any sport is determined by the availability of safe and suitable indoor and outdoor facilities, qualified and certified coaches, and financial resources. It may be necessary at this level to cut students based upon skill. The Modified B program focuses fundamentals, rules, training, skill development, team play and sportsmanship. Emphasis is not placed on winning and every effort will be made to maximize playing time. Monroe County Schools must follow the modified playing time format. Modified A is similar to Modified B, except ninth graders may also participate.

Modified B Program Offerings: Grades 7 & 8 Mod A includes Grade 9)

Fall	Winter	Spring
Football	(B/G) Basketball (A & B)	(B/G) Lacrosse
(B/G) Soccer (A & B)	Wrestling	Baseball (A & B)
(B/G) Volleyball		Softball (A & B)
(B/G) X-Country		(B/G) Track
G) Tennis (Mod A)		(B) Tennis (Mod A)

ROTH PARENT GROUP 2016/2017**January 9, 2017****TREASURER'S REPORT**Account Balance as of last report (October 17th, 2016) = \$2723.39

New Activity Details	Income	Expenses	Totals
Cash Box for Fall fling		370.00	
Perris Pizza for Fall fling		147.84	
Concessions for Fall fling (Costco)		94.27	
Cash deposit after Fall Fling	826.45		
Box Tops deposit	119.30		
Total Activity: 10-17-16 – 1-9-17	\$ 945.75	\$ 612.11	\$ 333.64

Profit from Fall Fling pizza and concessions is: **\$214.34**

2016 – 2017 SCHOOL YEAR ACTIVITY TO DATE			Totals
Beginning Balance as of 9/01/2016			\$ 2723.39
Income for 16/17 school year	945.75		\$ 945.75
Expenses for 16/17 school year		612.11	\$ 612.11
Balance as of 1/9/2017			\$ 3,057.03

9/01/2016 Balance = \$ 2,723.39

1/09/2017 Balance = \$ 3,057.03

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark C. Tanner
Treasurer

Parenting, Media, and Everything In Between

Talking About "Sexting"

Kids may "sex" to show off or prove their love. How to discuss the consequences.

Caroline Knorr • 2/5/2016

• Categories: [Cell Phone Parenting](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Social](#), [Sex in the Media](#)
 Senior Parenting Editor | Mom of one



Sexting among teens is, unfortunately, pretty common. Many parents are shocked to hear how casually teens discuss how prevalent it is. And, while experts differ on statistics, a 2009 study conducted by Pew Internet & American Life Project confirms sexting is a teen reality that's here to stay. Why do they do it? To show off, to entice someone, to show interest in someone, or to prove commitment. Or even as a joke. Teens' developing interest in sex, an impulse to experiment, and apps that make sexting easy -- and acceptable -- create an environment that some teens find irresistible.

Sending these pictures or messages is problematic enough, but the real challenge comes when this content is shared broadly. As far too many teens have found out, the recipient of these messages is in possession of a highly compromising image or message that can be easily posted on a social networking site or sent to others via email or text.

In a technology world where anything can be copied, sent, posted, and seen by huge audiences, there's no such thing as being able to control information. The intention doesn't matter -- even if a photo was taken and sent as a token of love, for example, the technology makes it possible for everyone to see your child's most intimate self. In the hands of teens, when revealing photos are made public, the sexter almost always ends up feeling humiliated. Furthermore, sending sexual images to minors is against the law, and some states have begun prosecuting kids for child pornography or felony obscenity.

There have been some high profile cases of sexting. In 2015, a Colorado high school was rocked by a sexting scandal involving hundreds of students. In 2009, Cincinnati teen Jesse Logan committed suicide after a nude photo she'd sent to a boyfriend was circulated widely around her high school, resulting in harassment from her classmates.

DC 5 - 7

Parent Handout:

How to Teach Your Kids To Use Technology Wisely

Health Science 7th Grade 2015-16

INSTRUCTOR: MR. SCOTT STRADLEY

ssstradley@rhnet.org

What's the Issue?

We may think of our kids' online, mobile, and technological activities as "digital life," but to them, it's just part of life. Their world is as much about creating media as it is about consuming it. Media devices have converged and become extremely powerful and portable. Phones aren't simply for phone calls anymore but for listening to music, sending texts, filming videos, snapping and sharing photos, and accessing the Internet. Our kids use their computers to do their homework, but they also use them to socialize, stream video, and create movies and songs. And they can connect and communicate 24/7 from just about any location.

Why Does It Matter?

We want our kids to make good decisions so they can take advantage of the powerful technology that fills their lives. But in order to make good choices, kids must know how the digital world works. The very nature of the constantly connected culture means kids must understand the concept of privacy, so that what they post and create won't hurt or embarrass them at some point in the future. The fact that much of digital communication is anonymous means that consequences can be separated from actions, which can lead to irresponsible or disrespectful behavior. Much of the task of childhood and adolescence involves figuring out who you are. But in digital life, anything said or posted can live on indefinitely and create undesired consequences. The stakes are high because our kids' technological abilities can be greater than their maturity and judgment. Having unrestricted access to information and people can result in gaining a wealth of information and experiences. But it can also mean accessing inappropriate contact and content. The difference between a great experience and an iffy one lies in the decisions kids make. Just as kids learn to eat properly, swim safely, or drive a car carefully, they need to know how to live in the digital world responsibly and respectfully. Their ultimate success depends on their abilities to use digital media to create, collaborate, and communicate well with others. Those who master these skills in using digital tools will be able to harness the digital world's awesome power.

common sense says →

Teach kids the skills they need to use technology wisely and well. It's hard to be a gatekeeper in a world with no fences. Parents have little control over the flow of

DC 1-10

Parent Handout:

Common Sense on Cyberbullying

Health Science 7th Grade 2015-16

INSTRUCTOR: MR. STRADLEY sstradley@rhnet.org

What's the Issue?

Cyberbullying is the use of digital media tools, such as the Internet and cell phones, to deliberately humiliate and harass others, oftentimes repeatedly. Though most teens do not do this, those who do are often motivated by a desire for power, status, and attention – and their targets are often people they are competing with for social standing. Cyberbullies often take advantage of the Web's anonymity to antagonize someone without being recognized.

Cyberbullying can take a variety of forms, such as harassing someone, impersonating someone, spreading rumors, or forwarding embarrassing information about a person. A bully's mean-spirited comments can spread widely through instant messaging (IM), phone texting, and by posts on social networking sites. This can happen rapidly, with little time for teens to cool down between responses. And it can happen anytime — at school or at home — and oftentimes it involves large groups of teens.

Why Does It Matter?

Cyberbullying is similar to face-to-face bullying, but online tools magnify the hurt, humiliation, and social drama in a very public way. Whether it's creating a fake Facebook or MySpace page to impersonate a fellow student, repeatedly sending hurtful text messages and images, or spreading rumors or posting cruel comments on the Internet, cyberbullying can result in severe emotional and even physical harm.

And though anyone can spot bullying behavior in the real world, it's much more difficult to detect it in the online world. Sometimes an entire social circle will get involved, and then it becomes harder for an individual teen to disengage from it. In fact, whole groups of teens may be actively or passively participating, and the target can feel that it is impossible to get away from the bullies. In addition, hurtful information posted on the Internet is extremely difficult to remove, and millions of people can see it.

The following tips can help you recognize the warning signs of cyberbullying and serve as a guide for talking to your teens about preventing it.



Digital Citizenship Lesson #3: Cyberbullying 2015-16

Every subject has its own language. Let's start with some vocabulary pertinent to this topic.

cyberbullying: using electronic devices to make another person feel angry, sad, or scared, usually again and again.

Examples: Taunting, harassing, or threatening someone by sending mean text messages or emails. Rumors sent by text or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

bystander: someone who sees cyberbullying happening, but does nothing to help 🙄

upstander: someone who helps when they see cyberbullying occur 😊

empathize: to imagine the feelings that someone else is experiencing 🤝

harassing: bombarding someone with messages over digital media, or repeated contact when it is least expected 😡

deceiving: using fake names, posing as someone else, or creating a fake profile about someone else 👁️👁️

hate speech: a verbal attack targeting someone because of their race, gender, religion, ability, or sexual orientation

flaming: saying mean things, usually in ALL CAPS, and often in a public forum with the intention to humiliate 🗣️

trolls: people who post mean comments online with the goal of angering other people to get a response out of them

Digital Life 101

Directions

Below are common words related to digital media. Test your family members on the definitions! If they are having trouble understanding the term, help them by reading the correct definition.

An **aggregator** is a website or Web application where headlines and other content are collected for easy viewing. Aggregators such as Google News compile news articles and posts.

An **avatar** is a two- or three-dimensional icon that represents a computer user or a gamer. An avatar can be a cartoonish graphic, a photograph, a screen name, or a fully-developed character.

A **blog**, from the term "weblog," is a type of website usually updated by an individual or a group of bloggers. Some blogs provide news or opinions on a specific subject, while others are more like online journals. Most blogs allow readers to leave comments on blog posts.

Flaming is the act of saying mean things online, usually in ALL CAPS, and often in a public forum with the intention to humiliate. **Flame wars** can occur easily online, as it can be difficult to figure out people's intentions or emotions online.

A **mash-up** is a remix or blend of multiple songs, videos, or other media content into one product. Fan fiction writing is one form of a mash-up, as writers take characters from a well-known video game, movie, or book, and rewrite their actions or relationships.

A **massively multiplayer online game (MMOG)** is usually an online virtual world that multiple players navigate and play in together. While in this virtual world, their avatars chat, cooperate, and quest together, oftentimes towards a goal.

A **P2P**, or **Peer-to-Peer**, network allows for sharing of mp3s, videos, and other digital files by transferring information directly between two computers rather than by going through a central server. P2P technology is also behind the popular Internet phone service Skype.

Phishing is the illegal act of sending emails or messages that appear to come from authentic sources, but really come from spammers. Phishers often try to get people to send them their personal information, everything from account numbers to passwords.

A **podcast** is a downloadable video or audio file. Podcasts can be verbal, based on a certain topic, or can include music, video, and commentary. Most podcasts are updated regularly through the addition of new episodes.

An **SMS**, or **text message**, is a short message of fewer than 160 characters sent from a cell phone. An **MMS** is a text message that contains an attached multimedia file, such as a picture or song.

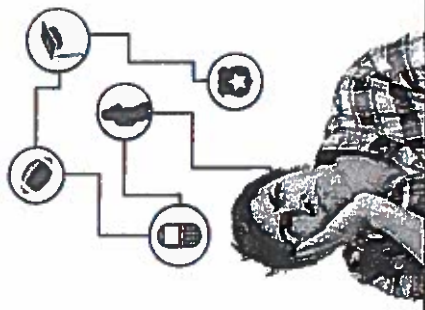
Digital Media: electronic devices and media platforms such as computers, cell phones, the Internet, digital video, social networking sites, video games, and virtual worlds that allow users to create, communicate, and interact with one another or with the device or application itself.

tips to prevent SEXTING FOR TEENS

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

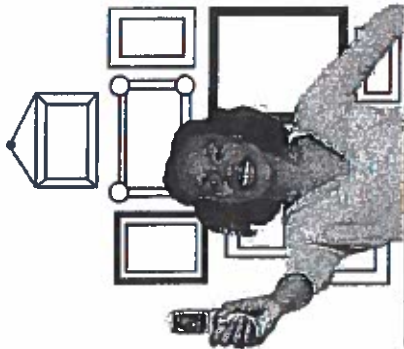
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NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN

Although it doesn't happen frequently, you also risk being arrested if you forward pics of someone who is considered "underage" (that's under 17 in NYS) and you could be labeled a "Sex Offender", possibly face jail. (strad)



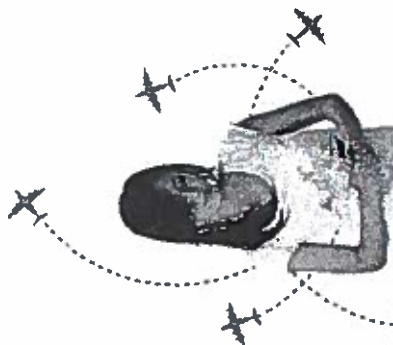
THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES

of taking, sending, or forwarding a sexual picture of someone else, even if it's of you. You could get kicked off of sports teams, face humiliation, lose educational opportunities, and even face a police investigation.



NEVER TAKE

images of yourself that you wouldn't want everyone—your classmates, your teachers, your family, or your employer—to see.



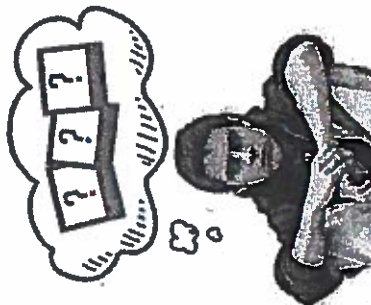
BEFORE HITTING SEND

remember that you can't control where this image may travel. What you send to a boyfriend or girlfriend could easily end up with their friends, and their friends' friends, and so on...



IF YOU FORWARD

a sexual picture of someone without their consent, you are violating their trust and exposing them to potential ridicule. It's not up to you to decide who should see their body, so don't forward the image to anyone.



IF ANYONE PRESSURES

you to send a sexual picture, don't give in and talk to an adult you trust. Remember that anyone who tries to get you to do something you are uncomfortable with is probably not trustworthy.

PROTECTING YOUR KIDS ONLINE



TAKE CHARGE

Set some ground rules.

Establish basic guidelines like when your kids can go online, what sites they can visit, and how many texts they can send a month, so everyone is on the same page.

Research before you buy.

Did you know that handheld games can connect to the Internet or that many laptops have built-in webcams? Understand what technology you're bringing into your home.

Don't just sit there—REPORT!

If your kids are dealing with cyberbullies or potential predators, report them to the website, cell phone service, law enforcement, or www.cybertipline.com.

MONITOR

Supervise Internet use.

If you can see what your kids are doing, they're less likely to get in trouble.

Safeguards ≠ Safe Kids.

Installing CIA-level monitoring software on your kids' computers does not guarantee they'll be safe online. Technology can't replace your time and attention as a parent or guardian.

Don't go overboard.

It's smart to keep an eye on your kids' social networking profiles, but it's never cool when you post embarrassing messages or pictures to their page.

COMMUNICATE

Talk to your kids; they're not as mysterious as you think.

Your kids might not tell you everything, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't ask. Get involved so you're not the last to know.

Challenge them to a duel.

If you have kids who like to play video or computer 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 your kids' Internet access because they've done something wrong doesn't solve the problem. Talk to them about protecting themselves and respecting others online.

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This resource brought to you by

Walmart

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NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

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®.



NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

THE FOLLOWING CHECKLIST CAN HELP YOU TAKE STEPS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFER ONLINE.

○ CHECK YOUR COMMENTS AND IMAGES.

Have you posted anything inappropriate or illegal, like threats, nudity, alcohol, or drugs?

○ TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT WHAT'S OK TO POST.

Agree that you won't post embarrassing or hurtful comments or images of each other. Be clear that you'll delete – or if needed, report – any posts that are inappropriate, illegal, or threatening or could get you in trouble.

○ REVIEW YOUR ACCOUNT SETTINGS.

Go through each option slowly. Always ask yourself – what is on my profile and who can see it?

○ KNOW YOUR FRIENDS, CONTACTS, AND FOLLOWERS.

These are the people who can see, share, and comment on what you post so you want to be sure you can trust them. Block and report anyone who makes harassing, threatening, or inappropriate comments.

○ KEEP AN EYE ON 3RD PARTY APPS.

Some of these apps will give companies access to your personal information. Always read the fine print before deciding to add one.

○ DON'T FORGET MOBILE.

When you use mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to post something or check in, you could also be sharing your location. Check your settings to make sure you're only sharing what you want to.

○ REPORT.

You have the right to be safe online. If anyone cyberbullies you, make a report to the website or app. If anyone shares or asks you to share sexual messages or images, make a report to www.CyberTipline.com.

A program of the

NATIONAL
CENTER FOR
**MISSING &
EXPLOITED
CHILDREN**

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For more resources visit NSTEENS.ORG

EVALUATING INTERNET SOURCES

Not everything you see online is true. That's why it's so important to screen websites before you use them to help with homework or for information in a school report.

Use this checklist ☒ to figure out if the online source you're using is reliable.

Evaluate the WEBSITE

- ☐ What is the domain? Look at the Web address for clues about what kind of website you're using.

☒ **Reliable**

.edu: a school, college, or university
.gov: a government agency

☐ **Check carefully**

.com: a commercial business
.net: a network
.org: an advocacy group

- ☐ Is it easy to navigate? A reliable website will make it easy to find what you need.
- ☐ Are there a lot of errors? Spelling and grammar mistakes probably mean it's not trustworthy.

Evaluate the AUTHOR

- ☐ Is there an author listed? The author should be easy to identify and contact.
- ☐ Is he/she an expert? The author should be qualified to write on this subject.
- ☐ What else has he/she published? An author is more reliable if he or she has published other works.

Evaluate the INFORMATION

- ☐ Is it current and accurate? The information should be up to date and include references.
- ☐ Can you find it on other sites? Make sure the information appears in other reliable sources, including websites, books, and articles.
- ☐ Is it fact or opinion? Be sure to note when you're using someone's opinion and when you're using proven facts.

Hint

Trust your gut! If something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't.

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Tips:

Gaming Safely

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

Parental involvement is critical when it comes to helping children game more safely. Take an active interest in the games that your child plays and wants to buy. You can research games' ratings and content on www.esrb.org. This website is maintained by the Entertainment Software Rating Board which rates thousands of games each year.



Know which safety features are available on the gaming equipment that your child uses—a headset may have voice-masking features, for example.



Keep gaming consoles in an easy-to-supervise location and be aware of other places where your child may be accessing games.



Tell your child never to give out personal information while gaming or agree to meet anyone outside of the game.



Set rules about how long your child may play, what types of games are appropriate, and who else may participate.



Have your child check with you before using a credit or debit card online.



Check to see if the games your child plays have reporting features or moderators.

Start a discussion with your child

- » Can we play some of your favorite games together?
- » How do you respond if someone bothers you while you are gaming?
- » How much do you let people know about you while gaming?
- » What kinds of people do you game with?
- » Do you feel safe while you are gaming online? Why or why not?

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NETSMARTZ

TECH TIPS

Want to learn how to check your child's browser history, use Facebook's privacy settings or report cyberbullying on Twitter? Check out these websites for information and how-to videos so you can be as tech savvy as your child.



INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS AND GUIDES

- **www.howcast.com/categories/2-tech**
Videos include "How to Use Twitter," "How to Use Facebook" and "How to Use an iPhone."
- **www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting**
Information and tips for parents about specific websites and apps.

WEBSITE HELP CENTERS

- **www.facebook.com/help**
Learn how to manage your child's account and report problems.
- **support.twitter.com**
Find out how to use Twitter and protect your child's privacy.
- **<https://support.google.com/youtube>**
Read about YouTube's safety policies and how to report inappropriate content.
- **www.google.com/safetycenter**
Browse through videos and articles for advice on using Google's safety tools and how to manage your family's safety online.
- **help.instagram.com**
Learn about the basics of this popular app and get tips for parents.
- **<https://support.snapchat.com>**
Understand how to use the app and what to do if your child is using it inappropriately.
- **<https://kikinteractive.zendesk.com>**
Read about the app and how to report problems.
- **<https://support.skype.com>**
Browse articles about securing your child's account and managing their privacy settings.
- **www.tumblr.com/help**
Learn about this blogging platform and how to manage your child's account settings.
- **<https://help.pinterest.com>**
Find out how to use Pinterest and secure your child's account.
- **help.meetme.com**
Get answers to your questions about controlling who sees your child's profile and how to report problems.
- **help.disney.com/clubpenguin**
Read about this popular game's rules and safety features.



Didn't find the answer to your question?
Visit www.NetSmartz.org

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Cyberbullying Unplugged

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to tease, humiliate, threaten and/or harass someone. It can take place through text messaging or social media. Cyberbullies might send mean comments, post embarrassing photos, or share private information about someone to humiliate or mock them online. Even if your child isn't being cyberbullied, remind them that it is everyone's job to prevent bullying and encourage them to take a stand.

Spot It



A child who is being cyberbullied may

- ▶ Avoid using the Internet
- ▶ Seem stressed when getting an email, instant message, or text
- ▶ Withdraw from family and friends
- ▶ Resist attending school and social events
- ▶ Show signs of low self-esteem like depression or fear
- ▶ Have declining grades
- ▶ Stop eating or sleeping
- ▶ In serious cases, consider suicide

Deal With It



If your child is being cyberbullied, teach them to

- ▶ Not respond
- ▶ Save the evidence
- ▶ Report it to the website or app

If your child is being cyberbullied, you should

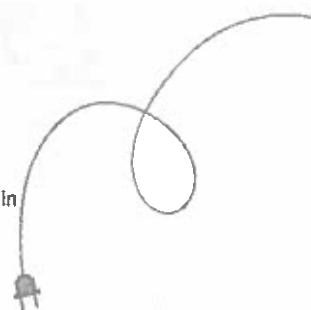
- ▶ Meet with school administrators to discuss a plan of action and their bullying/cyberbullying policy
- ▶ Talk about the situation with the bully's parent or guardian

Stand Up To It



If your child sees someone being cyberbullied, tell them to

- ▶ Not forward embarrassing photos or messages
- ▶ Not comment on insulting or harassing posts
- ▶ Report it to the website or app
- ▶ Tell a teacher at school if it involves a classmate
- ▶ Support the victim by being a good friend and showing the cyberbullies they won't join in



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CYBERSECURITY MADE CLEAR

While the Internet can make your life easier, it can also expose you to cybersecurity threats like scams and identity theft. Here's what you need to know before you go online.

PHARMING

A scheme that sends you to fake websites where hackers secretly collect personal information and passwords.

PHISHING

Fake e-mails that appear to come from a legitimate source looking to "verify" personal or financial information.

TROJANS

Programs that look useful, but actually cause damage to your computer.

VIRUSES

Self-replicating programs that damage hard drives and affect the normal operation of your computer.

SPYWARE

Malicious code that secretly watches what you do on your computer and sends the information over the Internet.



Things You Can Do To Protect Yourself & Your Computer

1. Install firewall, anti-spyware, and antivirus software, and update them often.
2. Don't open e-mails from someone you don't know, download software from a source you don't trust, or enter "free" contests from companies you don't recognize.
3. Guard your passwords – don't share them over e-mail or instant message, and change them often.
4. Type in the website address instead of clicking on a link.
5. Look for "https" or a picture of a lock in your browser window before buying anything or opening an account on a website.

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CYBERBULLYING

AVOID GOSSIP.

Everyone's bound to get a little excited by those oh-so-dramatic high school scandals, but that doesn't mean you have to text the latest rumor to everyone you know.

DON'T FEED THE CYBERBULLIES.

Ignore mean or threatening messages. Block the sender and file a report with the website, cell phone service, or police.

BYSTANDERS ARE GUILTY, TOO.

If your friends are cyberbullying someone and you stay silent, you're just as guilty as they are. Speak up and keep your friends in check.



ONLINE PREDATORS

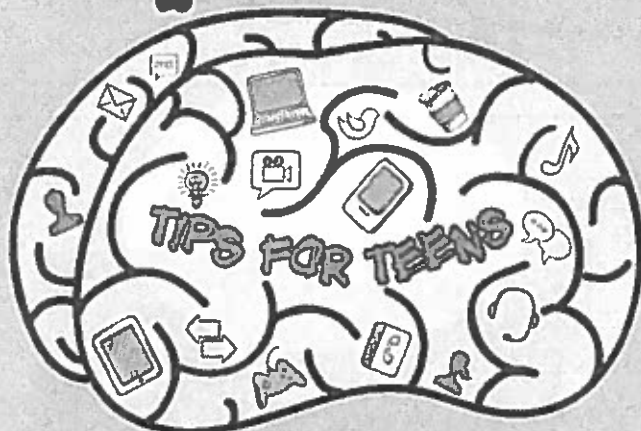
RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CUTE AND CREEPY.

Think about it – an older guy who wants to date someone younger is just creepy. It's not flattering; it's illegal! So don't friend them and don't meet them offline.

DON'T JUST SIT THERE – REPORT!

If you or someone you know has been victimized by someone you met online, report them to the police and www.cybertipline.com.

GOT NETSMARTZ?



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Watch Real-Life Stories videos at NSTeens.org

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SHARING TOO MUCH

INITIATE OPERATION PROFILE CLEAN-UP.

Scrub your page of everything too personal, embarrassing, and illegal. Those pictures of you passed out next to the empty bottles are not going to look so cool when you start applying for college.

STOP. THINK. PUT YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON!

You know those pictures of you wearing next-to-nothing and making kissy faces or flexing in the mirror? You might think it's sexy, but the law doesn't, so do yourself a favor – don't send them; don't forward them.

PROTECT YOUR SPACE.

Use privacy settings and don't accept just anyone as a friend. Do some investigating – Who are they? Why would you hang out with them?

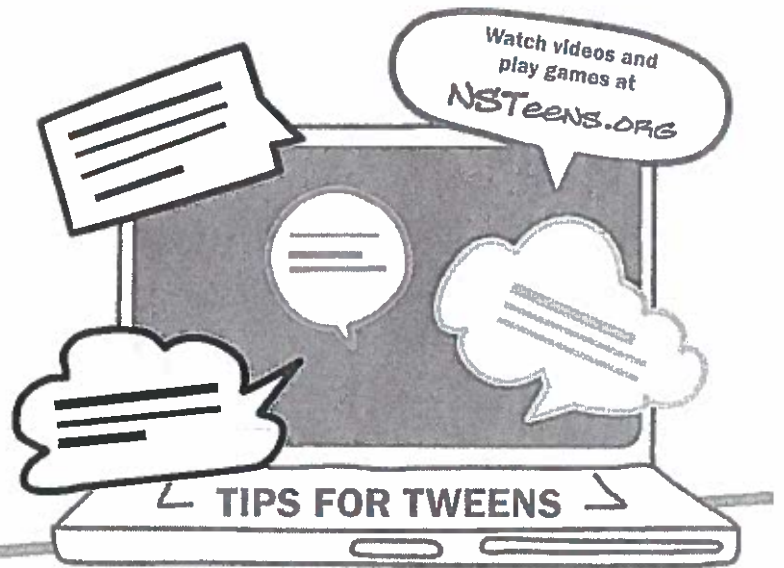
TRUSTED ADULTS



TALK TO YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS. THEY'RE NOT AS UPTIGHT AS YOU THINK.

Sometimes adults freak out about what you're doing online because you never tell them anything. Keep them in the loop so they know they can trust you.

YOUR NETSMARTZ



CYBERBULLYING

Don't be mean.

Gossiping doesn't make you cool.

Ignore. Block. Tell.

Ignore mean or threatening messages, block the sender, and tell a trusted adult who can help you report them.

Speak up

if your friends are cyberbullying someone.

ONLINE PREDATORS

Recognize the difference between cute and creepy.

An older guy who wants to date someone much younger is just creepy.

Don't just sit there – REPORT

anyone who asks to meet you in person to the police and www.cybertipline.com.

SHARING TOO MUCH

Avoid TMI.

Don't post anything too personal or embarrassing.

Protect your space.

Use privacy settings and don't accept just anyone as a friend.

Don't be that kid

who gets suspended for posting something stupid online.

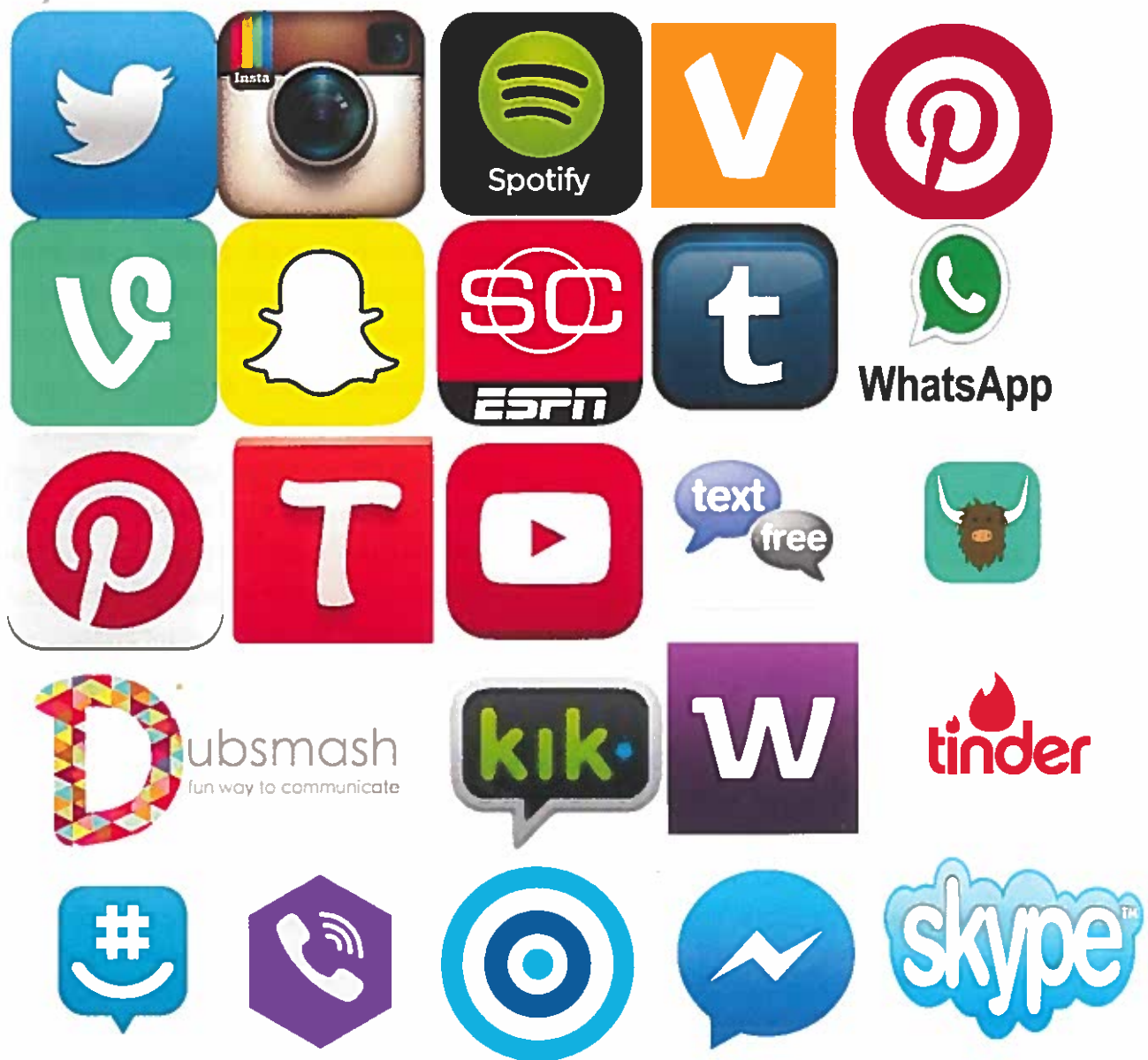
TRUSTED ADULTS

Talk to your parents or guardians

about what you're doing online. They're not as bad as you think.

Apps You Want To Know:

A Parent's Guide to What You May OR May Not
Want to Know About Your Child's
Social Media Life...



Texting Apps

The World of Social Media



Kik Messenger

This app allows kids to text for free. It has no message limits, character limits or fees if you only use the

basic features it has. Since it's an app, the texts won't show up on your kid's phone's messaging service, and you're not charged for them (beyond the standard data rate).

Parents:

-Ads/In-app purchases: *Kik* is used for conversations between brands and users. It also offers specially designed apps; many offer products for sale.

-Stranger Danger: *Oink Text* is an app linked with *Kik* which allows you to talk to strangers. You can share your *Kik* username to find other people to chat with. Also there is a *Kik* community blog where you can share photos of yourself and screenshots of messages exchanged. (*Kik* sometimes displays the user account's full name.)



Text Free

Text Free is an app your child can use if he/she has gone over the service

bill and parents shut off the phone. They receive a free texting number, and send free unlimited texts to anyone.

Parents: Can be used to talk to people you forbid your child to talk to.

ooVoo



The app is a free video, voice, and messaging app. You can have a group chat of up to 12 people. It's common for kids to go on the app after school.

Parents: You can only talk to people who are on your contact list.



WhatsApp

WhatsApp

Users can send text messages, audio messages, videos, and photos to one or more people with no limits or fees.

Parents: For users 16+. Once you sign up, it automatically looks up everyone that's in your contact list that has this app.



Tango

Tango is an app that you can use for free video, voice and text with friends and family. Accept or decline using your location setting to make phone calls.

Parents: Connect and share information including, group chats, games and music. Users must be 13+ in order to be able to use the app. Chatting can include up to 300 conversations.

Texting Apps Continued...

The World of Social Media



Group Me

Users can use this app to talk to more than one person at the same time. You can start a conversation with anyone who is in your contact list. This app works universally between androids and iPhones. You can also send photos within the group conversation.

Parents:

-Just like any other texting app, there is the risk it will be used for other forms than it should, such as sending explicit photos and messages.



Viber

Free calling, text and sharing pictures at anytime between Viber users.

There is no registration or invitations, or alias needed. Automatically integrates your contact list so you may talk to anyone on your list who has Viber.

Parents:

-Persons not on their contact list and who don't have the app can't talk to them.

Parents: Just make sure your child knows everyone in his/her contact list and there aren't any random contacts.



Skype

Users can make an account and video-chat with anyone who is their friend. You can also call anyone of your friends via skype. It can be a landline or even a cell number. You can instant message and connect to family members all across the country at anywhere and anytime.

Parents:

-Users can use this as a possible way to sext their boyfriend or girlfriend through skype.

-Calling landlines and cell phones comes to a low cost.



Messenger

Users can chat with friends and family members who already have with on Facebook. It's similar to what used to be AIM for AOL account users. It's automatically linked through their Facebook profile. You can chat with anyone who is online at the same time you are. If not, they will get the message when they sign back on to their profile.

Parents: Just make sure your child knows his/her "friends."

Blogging Apps & Sites

Obsessive Nature



Instagram

Users are able to take, edit and share photos and 15-second videos. Profiles can either be public or private. Share and comment on others' photos. You can edit pictures by using different filters.

Parents:

- Users look for how many "likes" they can get in a certain period of time.
- Hashtags can be used as captions for what someone



Tumblr

It's an app that is between a blog and Twitter: a scrapbook of texts, photos, videos, and audio clips. Users create and follow short blogs, or "tumbleblogs," anyone can see it online.

Parents:

- User must create two profiles for full privacy. The first one is public; the second one is private and password protected.



Twitter

Twitter allows users to post brief 140 character message "tweets" and follow other users activities. Adults and teens use it to keep up with what's going on in the news and their favorite celebrities.

Parents: Users have the choice of allowing their tweets to be private or public.

- You can remove your tweets, but followers can still read what you wrote until it's gone.



Vine

Vine allows users to post and watch six-second videos that loop. Videos are often creative, and funny. Vine is used to post and share goofy videos of themselves, friends and/or family members.

Parents:

- Inappropriate stuff
- Privacy concerns: Videos you post, the accounts you follow, and comments you make are public unless you decide to allow only your followers to see what you post. Approve your followers.



Pinterest

Pinterest allows users to create their own collage boards that are based on what they like to do and what they are interested in. Boards can be personal things like your favorite teams in sports, your favorite hobby, or how you envision your future house, wedding, and vacations.

Parents:

- Can have inappropriate things on it if that is what they are into.

Secret Apps

What they don't want you to know

Snapchat



Snapchat allows users to send pictures and messages. With the pictures /videos, users can put in a time limit on how long another user may view the picture before they send it. Many users use this app to share goofy and embarrassing photos to lower the risk of them going public. Plus this is also used to tell stories about what is going on all over the world.

Parents:

- It is a myth that snapchat goes away forever. Anyone on the receiving end of the picture/video may take a screenshot and it will be there forever.
- Some users think because this is a "risk-free" messaging app, they can share pictures that can be claimed as "sexy."

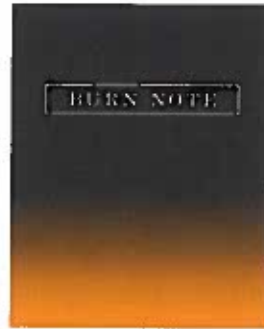


Whisper

This is used as a "confessional" type of app. Users can post whatever is on their mind at anytime of day. This also allows the teens who have raging hormones the freedom to share how they feel without feeling any type of judgement from someone.

Parents:

- Very sexual for some—try to hook up with people nearby and there is a "meet up" section.
- Topics can include: depression, insecurities, substance abuse and any lies told to others.



Burn Note

This app deletes messages after a certain period of time that goes by. It limits itself to text

messages compared to other apps. Teenagers who use this cannot send photos or videos.

Parents:

- Limits sexting.
- Avoid taking screen shots of each others' messages by only revealing a specific portion of the message
- You can send messages to any other teen who has the app and ones who don't.



Yik Yak

This app allows users to post brief comments like Twitter.

Users can find out secrets, opinions, rumors, etc. Plus all the information posted on Yik Yak is within a 1.5 mile radius of that person.

Parents:

- Reveals location unless remove sharing.
- Can be a mix of trouble: cyberbullying, explicit sexual content, and things about drugs and alcohol.

Dating Apps

You May or May Not Want to Know



Tinder

Tinder is a photo, messaging, and dating app. Users browse numerous photos of potential matches within a certain area of the user's location., then message each other to meet up and hook up.

Parents: It's all about "swipes." You swipe right to "like" a photo or left to "pass." If a person whose photo you "liked" swipes "like" on your photo, the app allows you to directly message each other.

MeetMe

Users can chat and meet new people. This app does have a "match" feature where you can secretly admire others. With the user base, that means guaranteed attention, and fastpaced communication.

Parents:

-Open network: users can chat with whomever is online and also search locally for anyone in the area who is on.

-A lot of personal things are required: first and last name, age, and zip code or you can login using your Facebook account. Also, you can use



Skout

It's a flirting app, but you can sign up as a teen or adult. You are placed in the appropriate age group, you can post to a feed, comment on other's posts, add pictures, and chat. Look at the geographical area when someone joins. If someone "cheeks" you, you can cash in your points to see who it is.

Parents: Safest dating app for teens if used appropriately, but easy for teens and adults to lie about their real age.



Omegle

Omegle is a chat site or app that puts strangers together in their choice of a video chat room or text chat. It is all anonymous and "interest boxes" allow you to filter your potential chat partners by shared interests.

Parents:

-There is no registration, and they're paired up with strangers.

-This is NOT an app for kids and teens, and many are looking for a sexual chat through video or porn sites.

-Explicit language!

Fun Apps

Users can do voice overs on their favorite and most popular songs.



You can also make videos of you singing the songs you love. You can do it

with anyone and send it to your friends via text message. It doesn't stop with just songs; it can be sayings from different movies, things that are popular on Vine, tv shows, and so much more.

Parents: Some songs have explicit and derogatory language.



This is an app for users who support sports all year round. They can follow their favorite teams and get updates on their favorite players and what the sta-

tistics are during the season.

Parents: This is harmless app; it just allows you to keep up to date on everything going on around the league.

Users can answer questions on a certain topic to receive rewards, and once you receive every reward for each topic, you



win the game. You can challenge anyone you know who has the app or it can link up to your Facebook and you can play anyone on your Friends list. It's actually a very educational app and the questions test you

on topics on geography, entertainment, history, sports, art and science.

Parents: You can allow your child to play this game because it's educational and they are learning new things everyday.

YouTube is for users to be able to look



up their favorite songs and watch the music videos to those songs, as well as any funny videos and upload vid-

eos of their own they want the world to see. You can follow your favorite people such as the Women's National Soccer Team or the Giants football team. You can start trends with making funny and stupid videos. You can also look at informational videos of how to do anything or even make up tutorials.

Parents: There can be some inappropriate things on there, but they're only seen by your child if he/she looks them up.



On Spotify, users can look up their favorite artists and fol-

low them. They will be notified of any new singles and new stations the artists create. You can look at what they are listening to, and the app links to Facebook as well. You can see what your friends are listening to and if you have any of the same interests.

Parents: This is a music app for your children. It's a safe way to listen to the music they love and not download it illegally.

Start the Discussion:

When it comes to your children, they are looking for you to have an open conversation with them. You may think you are invading their privacy, but you are looking out for their best interest. Don't be scared; it will all be okay. You might end up surprising yourself on what your child tells you.

Questions to Start the Discussion:

- Do you have any social media accounts? If so, what are they?
- Do you know about being safe on the Internet and watch what you post?
- Do you know everything you post stays on the Internet no matter if you delete it or not?
- Is what you post appropriate?
- Does it represent how you want others to see you?
- Is your account private or public?
- Do you post private information such as your phone number, address, or social security number?

Parent Resources:

- www.netsmartz.org
- www.common sense media.org
- www.safekidspro.com

Recommended Parent Monitoring

Programs:

- <http://www.mmguardian.com/>
- <http://www.phonesheriff.com/>
- MyMobile Watchdog
- Mamabear

Internet Crimes Against Children

As remarkable as the Internet is, the "information superhighway" holds hidden dangers for children. Just as there are good and bad places to go in any city or community, there are good and bad places to go on the Internet. Most children do not understand the online risks, and few parents are sufficiently familiar with them and/or Internet technology to effectively guard against them. Yet, this is a problem that must be addressed, since more and more children use the Internet for safe, legitimate purposes.

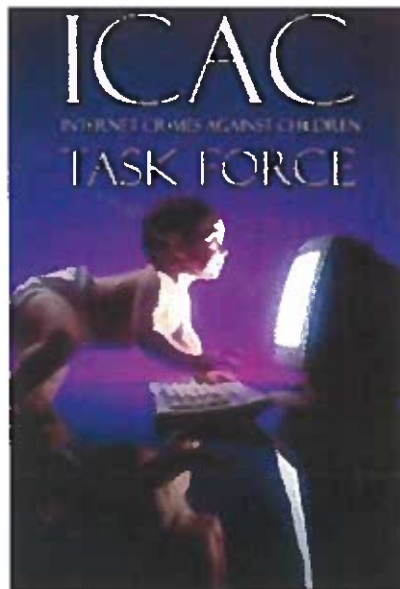
Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force

To address these problems more effectively, a federally funded Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force has been established. The Task Force, located at State Police Division Headquarters in Albany, joins the New York State Police, the New York State Attorney General's Office, and the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services in an effort to combat Internet crimes against children. Members in the investigative, legal, analytical, and community outreach fields combine their efforts in order to arrest, prosecute, educate, and ultimately prevent crimes against children that are perpetrated via the Internet.

The criminal justice system cannot do this alone

Although the federal program gives state and local law enforcement agencies the tools to conduct investigations to protect children from crimes involving the Internet, your help is needed.

To help this task force attack Internet crime against children, we are asking you to report any information or suspicions you may have. If you believe a child is being victimized, please report it by calling the Task Force's toll-free 24-hour help line at **1-877-474-KIDS (5437)** or your nearest police agency.



Originally created by:

**West Virginia State Police
Crimes Against Children Unit
Internet Crimes Against Children**



wvicac@wvsp.gov

SEXTING.....

Questions and Answers from NetSmartz® Workshop

Many teens believe that anything they want to do with their bodies and their phones is their business. Young people enjoy the privacy and freedom that cell phones give them from their parents or guardians, and sometimes they use that freedom to explore their budding sexuality. Amanda Lenhart of the Pew Internet & American Life Project calls the combination of cell phones and sexual exploration "a 'perfect storm' for sexting."¹ Youths who engage in sexting, the sending or posting of nude or partially nude images, expose themselves to a variety of social, emotional, and even legal risks. The good news is that most teens do not sext—only 4% of cell-owning teens (12-17) say they have sent these kinds of images²—but those who do often face unexpected and unwanted consequences.

Help your children avoid these potentially life-changing consequences by learning more about the issue and talking to your children before they put themselves in a compromising position.

Q: Why do teens sext?

A: Teens sext for many reasons. They may be trying to impress a crush or trying to be funny. Some are responding to a sexual text message they've received and others willingly send nude photos of themselves to a boyfriend or girlfriend. Occasionally teens are pressured into sending sexual pictures, and in extreme cases, they may be blackmailed by someone threatening to distribute an earlier sexting image if they do not send more. Teens make these decisions without thinking about how their futures may be affected. It's important for parents and guardians to understand that as technically savvy as their children are, they often don't think about the implications of how quickly and widely digital information can spread via cell phone and the Internet.

Q: What are the consequences of sexting?

A: Sexting may profoundly affect the emotional and psychological development of a child. Trust is broken when an image is forwarded without the creator's consent, such as when a boyfriend takes revenge on an ex-girlfriend by forwarding images intended to be private. Once an image is spread via cell phone or posted online, it is impossible to get back and can potentially circulate to hundreds of people. Teens who engage in sexting risk reoccurring embarrassment, exploitation, and victimization, which could be psychologically devastating.

¹ Lenhart, Amanda. *Teens and Sexting*. Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2009.

² Ibid.

Teens who sext may also face social repercussions, such as being judged or excluded by their peers, communities, and families. They may become targets of mean comments, rumors, and harassment. Unfortunately, the image may follow them for a long time, damaging academic, social, and employment opportunities. For example, some teens caught sexting have lost their place on school sports teams, potentially impacting their college prospects.

In cases involving blackmail, bullying, or images being passed around without consent, law-enforcement officers may become involved, often at the request of anxious parents or school administrators. Although it is unlikely that teens will be charged with a serious crime for sexting, police investigations can be stressful for everyone, especially if there is media attention. Many teens have been ordered to attend an educational program or complete community service as a result of these investigations.

Q: What can I do to help prevent my child from sexting?

A: Make sure to set house rules for Internet and cell phone use with your children and review them often. You should also discuss the consequences for breaking those rules. For example, you might consider disabling picture messaging. If children ignore the rules, consider removing cell phones altogether; however, this should be your last resort. Technology is not going anywhere, and it's important that children learn how to use it appropriately.

Talk to them early and often about how digital information and images may travel very far, very quickly. Make it absolutely clear to your children that the moment they send a digital image of themselves from their cell phone, they lose complete control of what happens to it next.

(Continued on last page)

Many teens believe that anything they want to do with *their* bodies and *their* phones is *their* business. They enjoy the privacy and freedom that cell phones give them from their parents and guardians, but what happens when they use their cell phones to explore their sexuality?

Sexting is the sending or distributing of nude or partially nude images. Scary headlines may lead you to believe this is a common practice among teens with extreme consequences. Although the actual numbers vary, many researchers agree that most teens are not sexting, and those who are usually aren't subjected to harsh penalties. However, there are still risks to consider for teens who sext. These tips will help you talk about sexting with your teen so you're both prepared if it ever becomes an issue.

Psychologists like Dr. Abigail Judge advise parents to make discussions about sexual behavior, including sexting, a regular occurrence so teens will be better prepared.

"...research suggests that parents should address the topic of sex with their children—and by extension, digital media and its use in the home—not through a one-time conversation, but through an ongoing dialogue that should begin early and occur often, across developmental time."

Dr. Abigail Judge,
Harvard Review of Psychiatry, 2012

TALKING

TO

TEENS

ABOUT
SEXTING



THE RISKS

Teens who take, send or forward sexting images may face:

- Embarrassment if their picture is shown to family, friends, classmates and even strangers.
- Bullying or harassment from peers who judge them for sexting.
- Trouble at school if they have violated a school policy. Some teens have been kicked off of athletic teams or suspended from school.
- Future consequences if the image follows them for a long time. It may be seen by college admissions officers or even potential employers.
- Trouble with the police. In extreme cases, kids can be charged for sending or forwarding nude images of minors.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT

- Ask questions to make it clear you're comfortable discussing it. "Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to sext? Have you ever received a sexy picture from someone?"
- Discuss what characterizes a healthy relationship. "Any person pressuring you to sext isn't someone you should trust. Boyfriends and girlfriends come and go, but a sexual image of you can stay around forever."
- Explain how quickly images can spread online. "Once the photo is sent, it's out of your control."
- Emphasize the importance of not forwarding sexts they receive. "You do not have the right to decide who should see someone else's body. Forwarding images is a major violation of trust and exposes the person in the picture to potential ridicule. Imagine how you would feel if someone betrayed your trust by sharing a nude photo of you."

IF YOUR CHILD'S IMAGE IS ALREADY OUT THERE

- Help them report it to the websites/apps where the image is posted. Make it clear your child is a minor, and it was posted without his or her consent.
- Talk to school officials so they can help stop the spread of the image and any harassment that may be happening.
- Contact the police if your child is being blackmailed, harassed or if it involves an adult.
- Above all, offer support. Assure them that you'll get through this together. Consider seeking professional counseling if they need help coping.

A program of the

NetSmartz Workshop

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

NATIONAL
CENTER FOR
MISSING &
EXPLOITED
CHILDREN

tips to prevent **SEXTING** FOR **TEENS**

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

NetSmartz® Workshop

A PROGRAM OF THE
NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN



THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES

of taking, sending, or forwarding a sexual picture of someone else, even if it's of you. You could get kicked off of sports teams, face humiliation, lose educational opportunities, and even face a police investigation.



NEVER TAKE

images of yourself that you wouldn't want everyone—your classmates, your teachers, your family, or your employer—to see.



BEFORE HITTING SEND

remember that you can't control where this image may travel. What you send to a boyfriend or girlfriend could easily end up with their friends, and their friends' friends, and so on...



IF YOU FORWARD

a sexual picture of someone without their consent, you are violating their trust and exposing them to potential ridicule. It's not up to you to decide who should see their body, so don't forward the image to anyone.



IF ANYONE PRESSURES

you to send a sexual picture, don't give in and talk to an adult you trust. Remember that anyone who tries to get you to do something you are uncomfortable with is probably not trustworthy.

Watch Real-Life Stories at **NSTEENS.ORG**

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Q: How do I know if my child is sexting?

A: No parent or guardian wants to be the last one to know that their child is sexting. Try to maintain open lines of communication with your children so that they are not afraid to talk to you if they receive inappropriate photos or are being pressured to send them.

Here are some discussion starters to help you have the "sexting talk" with your child:

- Have you ever received a naked picture on your cell phone?
- Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to send a nude or sexual picture?
- Do you think it's OK to send "sexy" messages or images? Why?
- What could happen to you if you send or forward a naked picture with your cell phone?
- How likely is it that images and messages intended for one person will be seen by others?

For more resources visit NetSmartz.org

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Tips to Prevent **SEXTING** for Teens

THINK ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES

of taking, sending, or forwarding a sexual picture of someone else, even if it's of you. You could get kicked off of sports teams, face humiliation, lose educational opportunities, and even face a police investigation.

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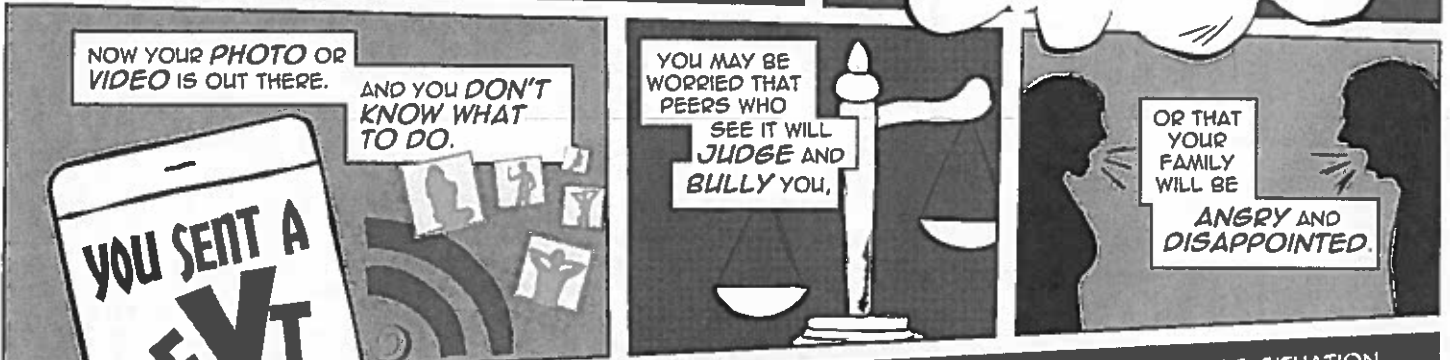
you to send a sexual picture, don't give in and talk to an adult you trust. Remember that anyone who tries to get you to do something you are uncomfortable with is probably not trustworthy.

NetSmartz.org/TipSheets



NO MATTER WHY YOU DECIDED TO SEXT, YOU PROBABLY THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD STAY PRIVATE.

ONLY IT DIDN'T.



YOU MAY FEEL LIKE THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO ESCAPE THIS SITUATION.

BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE!

WHILE YOU CAN'T GET YOUR IMAGE BACK, YOU CAN TAKE STEPS TO:

- * GET IT REMOVED FROM WEBSITES.
- * HELP STOP IT FROM SPREADING.
- * GET EMOTIONAL SUPPORT.
- * DEAL WITH BULLIES.

REPORT

This is one of the best ways to stop your image from spreading if it is on a website/app or being shared without your consent.

REPORT IT:

- **To the website or app.**
Trustworthy websites/apps work hard to keep off sexual images of minors and will remove them if notified. You can also report anyone who is posting or sharing images of you. For more information about reporting to popular websites/apps, visit https://needhelpnow.ca/removing_pictures.
- **To CyberTipline.org.**
This tipline can connect you with the experts best suited to work on your case. They may contact the website or the police, or reach out to you for more details. You can report without sharing your name and can even make a report for a friend if they need help.
- **To the police.**
They can help stop your image from spreading by working with websites/apps and talking to the people sharing it. You should know if the police get involved, you could face some consequences, too. It's illegal to share sexual images of minors even if they are of you. You may not be charged with a crime, but you may have to attend classes or complete community service.
- **To a teacher.**
If your pictures are being shared around school, your teachers and school administrators can help stop it by making clear there are consequences for sharing them.

GET SUPPORT

One of the worst things about a sexting incident is feeling like you're facing everything alone. But you have people who care for you and want to help. Talk to them!

- **Your friends** can stand up for you by refusing to forward the image and making it clear that it's not cool to share the image or bully you.
- **A trusted adult** can offer advice, help you report, and help you deal with other complicated things. It could be your mom, dad, an aunt, a school counselor, or anyone you trust and are comfortable talking to.
- **Teachers** can remind your classmates and peers about your school's rules and codes on bullying and help put a stop to any bullying behavior.
- If you feel that your school is ignoring the bullying, ask your **mom, dad, or guardian** for help. They can champion your case at your school, with your teachers, and other adults.

DON'T GIVE UP

Having a nude or sexual image of yourself floating around is scary. It can make you feel vulnerable and isolated. But remember, **other teens have been in the same situation you are – and they have beaten it.**

The people who have taken advantage of you want you to feel powerless. **But you are not powerless.** You are strong. You can take charge of your situation and take back control of your life.

What if I'm being blackmailed?

Blackmail is when someone tries to threaten or scare you into doing something. For example, teens may share sexual images with people they trust, only to have those people turn on them. They may threaten to send the images to teens' families unless the teens share more images.

If you're being blackmailed, you may feel helpless or guilty. You may think you don't have the right to say "no" because you shared the first image willingly. **WRONG!** Blackmail is illegal and you don't have to take it.

YOU SHOULD:

- Stop any communications with blackmailers. They'll try to use your conversations to threaten and manipulate you – don't give them the chance. Even if you have already started communicating with them, it's never too late to stop and report it.
- Block or remove the blackmailer from your contact list. If you decide to deactivate your accounts, contact the websites/apps for help.
- Make a report to the police and CyberTipline.org right away. Seriously. They can help. They may want to see any messages you've received from the blackmailer.



A Parents' Guide to **Mobile Phones**

ConnectSafely
Smart Socializing Starts Here™

It seems just about everybody has a mobile phone now, including more than three-quarters of U.S. teens and a rapidly growing number of younger kids. For young people as well as adults, the technology has changed the way we work, play, communicate, learn, and socialize. Even the term "smartphone" is a bit of an understatement, with all that its hundreds of thousands of applications allow us to do—track flights, do homework, stay fit, take tutorials, avoid traffic, find recipes, read books, or share moments and play games together across vast distances.

Mobile phones also help keep us and our kids safe. They enable us to call for help in an emergency, find our way when we're lost and help family members keep track of each other. Phones can even be used to help parents know the speed at which a teen is driving the family car. You don't need us to tell you that they've become an indispensable part of our lives.

While the overwhelming majority of young people are using their phones responsibly, it's natural for parents to worry about how their kids are using such powerful devices. As with any other powerful tool, there are risks, but through responsible use, they can be minimized. That's why we created this guide.



Today's mobile ecosystem means shared responsibility

The mobile ecosystem now has many moving parts, each of which has a role to play in cellphones users' safety, privacy and security. In addition to the service providers themselves, there are the companies that make the devices and operating systems (like Android, iOS and Windows) and the makers of the hundreds of thousands of apps people can download to their phones. Even the makers of smartphones' Web browsers play a role, because they make it possible to access millions of websites, send and receive messages and have voice or chat conversations from any Wi-Fi hotspot—even where there's no cellular service.

There are two other very important players in this ecosystem where families are concerned: *you* and *your children*. More than ever, it's up to the user to determine what to do with a smartphone and how to use it safely. Safety, privacy and security are now very much a shared responsibility in families, among friends and between users and all the other parts of the mobile ecosystem.

How kids use mobile phones

The best way to find out how your kids are using their phones is to ask them. Activities popular with kids include photo and video sharing, texting, gaming, and a growing number of social networking apps that are not limited to the ones you might have heard of, such as Facebook and Twitter. It's all about sharing and socializing because, as kids get into their pre-teens, their interests are more and more social. The good news is, if they have cellphones at that age, their use is embedded in everyday life—mostly school life—and the people they're interacting with are typically friends and peers they know from school and other parts of their lives you know about. And sometimes they even use their phones to help with homework. So even though apps come and go and technology changes, the parenting part hasn't changed much. You still need to be the parent, ask questions, and set limits. Just know that what goes on with phones is more about people and relationships than about technology. As for the technology part, our kids are usually pretty happy to help us out with that.

Is your child ready for a cellphone?

Consider whether he or she is...

- ☐ Able to understand the cost of providing and using a phone and willing to stay within the usage limits you set.
- ☐ Ready to take good care of a phone (i.e., Isn't likely to lose or break it).
- ☐ Able to manage his or her time and not use the phone for socializing or entertainment when there is schoolwork to be done.
- ☐ Willing to answer when you call and call you when it's time to check in.
- ☐ Willing to talk with you about the apps on his or her phone and how they're being used.
- ☐ Able to use the phone politely, in a way that respects the feelings of the people in the room or at the other end of the conversation.
- ☐ Willing to only share his or her location with close real-life friends and family.
- ☐ Ready to accept the consequences of breaking any family cellphone rules.

Your child's first phone

There are lots of things to think about when parents consider buying kids their first cellphones. Of course the "right time" and the right phone vary by child, his or her maturity level and the family budget. Some parents want their young children to have a phone so they can call or be reached at any time. Others prefer to wait till they're teens. Factors to consider include: whether a child can use a phone with respect for the device, your rules and the people they interact with on it; if he or she can stay within the usage allowances included in the service plan and whether the child knows when to turn the phone off (e.g., at bedtime).

For young kids, you could consider getting a simple "feature phone" rather than a smartphone. Though they can be used for texting, these basic phones are mainly for just talking—kids can't use them to download third-party apps, some don't have cameras, and they're less expensive if you need to replace them. It's likely that your kids—especially teens and preteens—will want a smartphone and access to apps and, depending on your cellphone plan, you may be able to get them one and add it to your family plan at a fairly low cost. But do consider establishing rules about what apps are appropriate, using parental-control tools and discussing how to keep usage within the family's cellphone plan.



12 Tips for Smart Smartphone Use

Share with care. Use the same good sense about what you say or share with your phone as you would in person. Once shared, texts, photos, and videos are tough to take back. They can be copied and pasted elsewhere and are out there pretty much forever (possibly even in apps that supposedly make them disappear). Think about all the people in them (including you!). Reputations are at stake.

Know what your apps know. Pay attention to any permissions apps request as you install them. If an app asks to access your location, contact list, calendar or messages or to post to your social networking services, consider if the app really needs that information to function. When in doubt, consider withholding permission or not using that app.

Share location mindfully. A growing number of apps let you share your location and track where friends are. If you use a location feature, think about who could see that and whether you want them to know where you are. Make sure only close friends or family members can see your location.

Phones are personal. Letting other people use your phone when you're not around is like letting them have the password to any of your social network accounts. They can impersonate you, which gives them the power to mess with your reputation and relationships. Lock your phone when you're not using it, and use strong and unique passwords for all your apps.

Keep it kind. Because people socialize on smartphones as much as anywhere now, cyberbullying can be mobile too. Treat people well on phones as you would face-to-face and your chances of getting bullied or harassed go down. Respect is contagious. Ask permission before taking photos and videos of others and be aware of people randomly taking pictures at parties, in locker rooms, etc.—you may not want to be tagged in their social-network photo albums!

The value of "presence." If you do a lot of texting, consider the impact that being "elsewhere" might be having on the people around you. Your presence during meals, at parties, in the car, etc. is not only polite—it's a sign of respect and appreciated by the people you're with.

Down time is good. Constant texting and talking can affect sleep, concentration, school, and other things that deserve your thought and focus. You need your sleep, and real friends understand there are times you just need to turn off the phone.

Avoid accidents. Never send or read texts while driving, bike riding and other activities that require your full attention. Make it a rule for the entire family, including parents.

Have a conversation (not a lecture) with your kids about smartphone use. Consider drawing up a family cellphone contract and talk with your children about why each point is important (there's a sample contract at ConnectSafely.org/mobile).

Technology can help. Visit GrowingWireless.com to find out what parental controls your mobile phone company offers, or look for third-party parental-control apps in the app store on your phone.

Find missing phones. Use a find-my-phone app that can help locate the phone and delete all personal data if it's lost or stolen.

Watch costs. Knowing how to keep track of the costs of using a phone and its apps is part of using it responsibly. Be aware of the costs of in-app purchases and the allowances included in your service plan and how to track your data use so you can avoid unexpected charges. Be aware of options that help you use the phone economically, such as using Wi-Fi rather than cellphone service where available.

Helping kids protect their safety, privacy and security

Young people tend to use their devices safely most of the time, but it's always good to talk over the key issues, even revisit them now and then as your kids change and grow:

- **Communicate with care.** Whether it's by voice, text, a social networking or photo-sharing app, there are plenty of ways kids can interact with people they know and—in some cases—don't know. If a child is being contacted by someone who might be harassing or bullying them, there are usually ways to block that person, through your cellphone company, the app or both. They probably do, but be sure your kids know who is and isn't appropriate to interact with on their phones as well as online. Younger children may need contact lists you set up with people you pre-approve.
- **Limit who can locate you.** All modern phones are equipped with geolocation technology that can pinpoint the phone's location. That can enhance safety and convenience by allowing parents to track kids, users to find lost phones and first responders to find people in an emergency (with Enhanced 911, or "E911"). There are also apps



that use location or share it with other users or companies. With the exception of E911, it's possible to turn off geolocation, either for the entire phone or just for specific apps. You and your kids can review the apps on their phones to see which apps share location. If you're uncomfortable with any of them, you can try to turn off the app's location feature or just delete the app.



- **Lock your phone.** One of the simplest ways to protect privacy and security is to password-protect a phone with a numeric code, gesture, password, or fingerprint so no one else can use it. In addition to protecting the information on your phone, the password also protects you. Locking a phone prevents others from using kids' phones to impersonate them, possibly to bully or play "jokes" on others in their name, or to post images or comments that could embarrass them. Tell

them never to share that password with anyone—even friends—because sometimes friends make mistakes or become ex-friends.

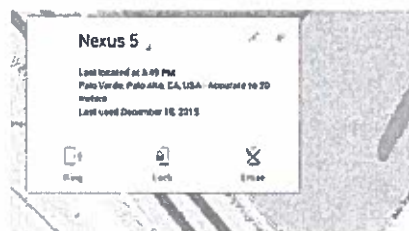
- **Be app-savvy.** When you're downloading apps, look at the reviews and pay special attention to the permissions they seek. Do a bit of Web searching to see if an app you're installing is from a reputable developer, and only download apps from official sources like Google Play or the Apple App Store. Even then, be careful because not all apps in these stores are appropriate for all users. As you install an app, it may ask you whether it can do such things as access your calendar, contact list, or location—or whether it can post on your behalf to a social networking service. In many cases, you can choose not to, but with some apps, your only choice is to agree to all the permissions or cancel the installation. Either way, you have a choice. You and your children can periodically review the apps on their phones together and consider deleting any that you're not comfortable with. There are also parental controls (see below) that can help you manage your child's use of apps.
- **Share thoughtfully.** Whether they're using photo- and video-sharing apps or commenting in social media apps, kids need to know that what they post is a reflection on them. Talk with them about respecting their own and others' dignity and privacy by being aware of



what they're "saying" with both words and images. We all need to ask permission before sharing pictures of others and think about how they affect our own and others' reputations.

- **Use strong passwords everywhere.** Even if your phone is locked, make sure you have strong passwords for apps or sites that access any personal information, because people can access these services from other devices too. Use strong passwords that are easy to remember and hard to guess (i.e., use symbols, mix upper- and lower-case letters), and don't use the same password for every app, service, or website. You'll find suggestions at Passwords.ConnectSafely.org.

- **Consider the costs.** Sign up for a plan that's appropriate for your children's voice, data and texting needs, and check in periodically to make sure they stay within their plan's allowances. It's a good discipline that can offer early financial literacy lessons. Also consider whether a contract plan or pre-paid plan is right for your child. If your plan has a data limit, consider using Wi-Fi when possible. KnowMyApp.org has more advice and offers data usage estimates for popular apps. Have a family policy about spending money on apps and in-app purchases. Even "free" apps can cost money if they allow your child to make purchases within a game or other kind of app. Some families have a rule that kids can't download an app without a parent's permission.
- **Protect the device** with a good, strong case and consider getting some type of insurance through your cellphone company or a third party, in case the phone is lost, stolen or damaged.



Use a phone finder app. There are free apps that can help you locate a lost phone, make it ring even if it's in silent mode, erase the contents and lock it so that an unauthorized person can't use it. Some include additional security features. Go to ConnectSafely.org/mobile for instructions on how to use Apple's Find My iPhone app and Google's Android Device Manager that come with recent models of these phones.

Parental controls

There are actually two major types of parental controls. The first is *family rules* or guidelines that you establish with your children, and the second is *technology tools* provided by cellphone companies, smartphone makers, and app developers. In many ways, the first kind is more effective, because it involves teaching your children self-regulation and -protection, which are with them wherever they go and can last a lifetime. Monitoring and Web filtering apps are available, but don't let them give you a false sense of security because they're no substitute for the resilience, moral compass and cognitive filter kids develop for their own well-being. If you do use technology to monitor or limit their phone activities, in most cases it's a good idea to be up front with your kids about it and revisit it every now and then as they mature.

Because phones have Web browsers, they can be used to view any type of Web content, including content you might consider inappropriate for your children. Establishing rules and talking with your kids about appropriate use is baseline safety. Depending on the device, if you make yourself the administrator of your child's phone and put the settings behind a password, you can block Web browsing and other functions altogether and decide if they can download apps, among other options. This may be a big factor in deciding what phone you give your child.

Using filtering or time-management apps can be really helpful with some kids. There are also parental-control tools that enable parents to know what kids are texting, what sites they're visiting



and what apps they're using, as well as tools that enable you to locate your child when he or she isn't home.

To find parental-control tools, contact your mobile phone company to see what it offers, or visit GrowingWireless.com for a list of wireless parental-control tools. You can also search for "parental controls," "monitoring" or "filtering" in the app store on your child's phone. Look for apps' ratings or users' reviews to see if they're worth downloading (even if they're free); see if they have privacy

policies or if their descriptions say anything about how the app will use your data. You'll find links to app stores and other resources at ConnectSafely.org/mobile.

Two kinds of safety

The best way to stay safe when using a cellphone is to use good sense and stay alert. The only real risk to physical safety is distraction. Don't just tell your teens not to text while driving, model it! Texting while driving is extremely dangerous.

Thoughtful, balanced use of phones is good for us in lots of ways: It can help kids get enough sleep (when phones are off), keep grades up and allow time for exercise—and we all know that ignoring your phone occasionally can be good for relationships.

Another form of safety is the social kind. As every child and parent knows, social media can turn into anti-social media, so family conversations about keeping social lives positive need to include the interaction that happens on digital devices too. As a society we're all learning that anonymity and a lack of visual cues doesn't mean we can treat others differently or stop being respectful. It doesn't mean that these aren't fellow human beings behind our texts, posts, photos, avatars, and comments. The same social practices that maintain good relations in offline life support everybody's well-being in digital spaces too. If you want additional help, check out our guide for dealing with cyberbullying at ConnectSafely.org/guides.

Some closing thoughts

These days, parenting needs to be as dynamic and adaptive as our kids and their favorite technologies are. What works to help one child might flop when tried with another kid. And what helps a boy when he's 11 can hold him back when he's 14. Just as childhood represents a process of ongoing growth, parenting is a process of ongoing calibration.



In the advice above, we mentioned a lot of external protections—from parental-control tools to phone settings to family rules. What isn't considered enough is the internal kind of safeguards parents have always helped kids develop: self-respect, resilience, empathy, manners, and a moral compass—that inner guidance system that protects them long after they grow up and leave home. They work really well with any technology our kids use, and—though they can be challenging to model and teach—they're not new, and rapid change in kids and technology only increases their value.

Parents' Top 5 Questions About Mobile Phones



1. What's the best age to get a child his or her first cellphone?

The short answer is, "it depends." Only you can know if your child is mature enough to follow family rules, take care of the phone and not lose it. Another major factor is whether the child understands how to use the phone in a way that considers the feelings and rights of others.

The average age of kids getting their first mobile phones keeps going down. It was 16 a decade ago; in 2009 it was about 12, according to the latest available data from Pew Research Center. More recent (2013) Pew Research found that 68% of 12-13 year-olds own a cellphone and 23% a smartphone, while 83% of older teens (14-17) have cellphones and 44% have smartphones.

2. How can I limit or monitor what my kids do with their cellphones?

In addition to family rules and lots of communication, there are parental-control tools you can use to block access to websites and apps; monitor what kids are doing (including texting) and control who can call them. You can check with your cellphone company and search for third-party parental-control tools in app stores to find what's available. If you do use a parental-control tool, we recommend you tell your child why you're using it. Also seriously consider how much information is too much. Some monitoring apps record a user's every keystroke—even in text messages. Think about whether you really need to know the content of every text.

3. How can I make sure my child's privacy is protected?

There are two types of privacy protection—the kind that can be set or installed on a phone and the kind that develops in a child's head. Privacy settings in apps and on phones can provide control over use of your child's data, and parental controls can give you more control or oversight over his or her phone activities. Locking a phone reduces the risk of it being used by someone to impersonate the phone's owner or bully others.

The second kind—learning how to protect your and your friends' privacy—is just as important because the information users post and share with their smartphones has just as much impact on privacy as settings and other tech safeguards. Helping our kids share information carefully, showing respect for themselves and others, spells real protection of both privacy and well-being. It helps to be up front with your kids about the measures you take and learn *together* what rules and tools best keep their mobile phone use positive and constructive.

4. How can I make sure my child only uses apps that are safe and appropriate?

The best way to ensure that your kids are using safe and appropriate apps is to talk with them about each app they use or want to use and do a little research to make sure it's appropriate. You can look at reviews in the mobile app stores, search the Web for information about an app or talk with friends who have used it. You could also have a rule that no app gets downloaded without a parent's permission or use parental controls to put app-downloading behind a password so that your child can only download one with your help. But even some appropriate apps can be misused, so kids still need to make sure that what they share doesn't jeopardize their privacy and security.

5. How do I control the cost of my child's cellphone service and apps?

First, review your cellphone plan to make sure it's appropriate for your child's use. Factors to consider are limited or unlimited texting, the number of voice minutes and how much data can be used each month. Consider calling Customer Service at your service provider to make sure you have the right plan for your family. Also talk with your kids about Wi-Fi, which enables them to use their mobile devices to watch video or download apps or content without incurring the cost of cellular data use. People can also run up costs buying and using apps, so consider having a family

policy that addresses spending money for or within apps or setting a password (your kids don't know) that keeps them from buying apps or spending money via "in-app purchases" that can sometimes really add up. Setting limits on your child's use can help keep costs under control.

A Parents' Guide to **Mobile Phones**

ConnectSafely
Smart Socializing Starts Here™



Sprint

CTIA
The Wireless Association®

T-Mobile

✓
verizon

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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