



Tips and Tools: Keeping your Teenager Safe on Social Media

Heavy use of technology, social media, and electronic devices that connect to the internet are part of today's adolescent's daily life. Help them be responsible, stay safe, and steer clear of the dangers.

- Check the text, photo album, and video storage on the phone periodically for inappropriate content.
- Limit the number of outgoing text messages for the teen's phone. Contact your phone service for details.
- Create ground rules for cell phone and computer usage. Include parameters for the video, text, internet, and camera components.
- Contact the cell phone provider to find out about current parental features to monitor and track cell phone usage.
- Get access to "parental block" software that protects your child from exploring inappropriate websites. There are many options you can find by typing "free Internet blocking software" into a search engine (for example, Google).
- Keep computers with internet access in a centralized location in the home, not in your child's bedroom, and set limits on data access on your teen's cell phone. Utilize phone restrictions.
- Check your child's computer and data use history. (Type in "Internet monitoring software for parents" on a search engine—some options are specifically geared toward monitoring your child's activity on social networking sites such as Instagram and Twitter).
- Set a family internet use policy. Define the ground rules for internet use, such as scheduled times, permissible websites, and limitations on cyber communication with familiar peers or close friends.
- When setting cyberspace rules, consider how vulnerable your child might be to sexual solicitation and cyberbullying. Base your decision on his or her life circumstances as well as age and stage of development. For example, rules for internet use for middle school children should be more restrictive than those set for high school teenagers.
- Because they value privacy, be prepared to enforce set consequences when teens fail to observe a "family internet policy" (for example, teens can be held responsible for fixing damages from computer viruses or paying for data minutes overages) and setting appropriate limits and fair consequences.
- Teach your child what cyberbullying is and give some specific examples of what to look for; help them learn to identify and interpret information shared or comments made by the predator. Kids will often think they are the only ones experiencing this and that they should be able to handle it.
- Educate your teen about potential dangers of cyber communication and sharing information. It is very easy for a predator to learn where the child lives and goes to school from only a little bit of information.
- Help teens to role-play effective ways to respond to sexual solicitation and cyberbullying.
- If an incident involving victimization of your teen occurs, reassure him or her that internet access will not be forever discontinued, nor will their cell phone be confiscated, unless such measures are deemed temporarily necessary for their immediate safety.
- Talk with your child about netiquette, and how to behave and communicate politely over the internet and mobile devices. Teach children to never say something about someone online that they wouldn't say to that person face-to-face. Bullying others, online or in person, is never appropriate behavior.
- Make sure your child understands that comments and images posted on the Internet can be long-lasting and have a global audience.

- Teach your child to keep the passwords to their online accounts private. Create passwords that are a combination of letters and numbers and are difficult to guess. Passwords should not be shared with friends, not even a best friend.
- Talk to children about how to handle strong emotions, such as anger. It is never appropriate to send a message or post a comment on the Internet when you are angry or emotional.
- If your child receives an angry or taunting message, teach them to refrain from responding and to tell a responsible adult. Responding to these types of messages could encourage a bully to continue to pick on the victim.
- Know how much time your child is spending on the internet and mobile device.
- Enjoy the internet with your child. If you are unable to sit down together at the computer, at least know what activities they are doing online. Consider installing parental control software to monitor your child's activities and limit the web sites that are available.

Parental-Control Programs:

Norton Online Family is free software that lets parents monitor the websites their children visit as well as what they search for online and who they chat with. Not only can parents set time-limits for how long their children can use the PC for, they can also see their social networking activities and even receive an email report about all of the kid's online activities.

TeenSafe is a sophisticated program that allows you to monitor your child's cell phone activity.

Online Addiction:

It's a fine line as a parent. If you severely limit a child or teen's internet use, they might rebel and go to excess. But you can and should model appropriate computer use, supervise computer activity and get your child help if he or she needs it. If your child or teen is showing signs of Internet addiction, there are many things that you as a parent can do to help:

- Encourage other interests and social activities.
- Monitor computer use and set clear limits.
- Talk to your child about underlying issues.

Helpful Resources for Parents

www.NetAddiction.com

www.safekids.com

www.teeagerstoday.com

www.connectsafely.org

www.byparents-forparents.com

www.radicalparenting.com

Melody Black, MFT 45646
melody@ludingtoninstitute.com
 805-449-4375 ext. 1#

Social Media

Popular Social Networking Sites:

- Instagram
- Twitter
- SnapChat
- Ask.fm
- WhatsApp
- Vine
- Tumblr

Instagram



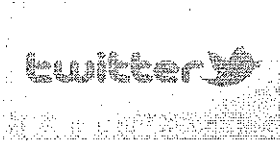
Instagram

Instagram is a photo editing and sharing 'app' that allows users to edit photos taken on their phone and post them online. You can take a picture with your iPhone, choose a filter to transform the look, geotag your location, and post it to Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, it's photo sharing, reinvented.

Instagram



Twitter



Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service that allows you to answer the question, "What are you doing?" by sending short text messages up to 140 characters in length, called "tweets", to your friends, or "followers."

Snapchat



Snapchat is a free app where you can take a picture or video and send it to your friends. Kids like it because the image isn't permanent and because it feels spontaneous. You get to decide how long a photo will "live," from 1 to 10 seconds, after it is viewed.

Ask.fm



Ask.fm is a social networking website where users can ask other users questions, with the option of anonymity. This is a question-and-answer service that thrives on anonymity, making it fun and dangerous, which is why teens like it.

WhatsApp

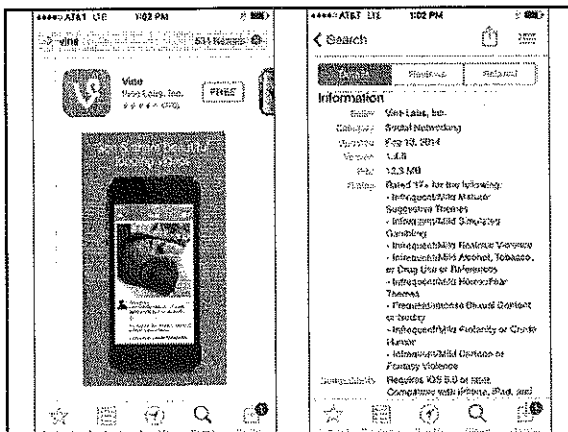


WhatsApp Messenger lets teens send text messages, videos, photos, and short audio messages to one or many people with no message limits or fees (after paying for the app).

Vine



Vine is a mobile service that lets you capture and share short looping video clips.



Tumblr

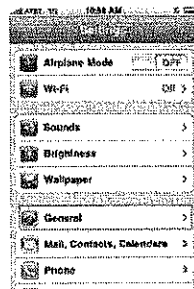


Tumblr is a blogging platform that lets you effortlessly share anything. You can post text, photos, quotes, links, music, videos and even other people's blog posts into your blog, and share it with other people.

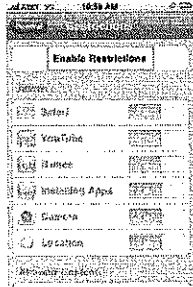
How to use iPhone Restrictions: Go to Settings.



Once in settings,
go to *General* tab.

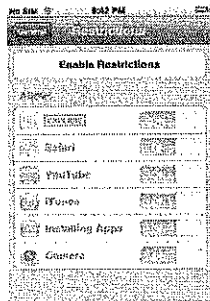


Tap the *Restrictions* tab and *Enable Restrictions*.



You will be asked to enter a 4 digit passcode. **Do not forget this passcode, there is no way to retrieve it, and a full restore (re-installation) of the iPhone is needed to reset it.**

You will now have control over what you want to restrict.



To re-enable a function, just return to restrictions page, authorize with the 4 digit passcode and turn it back on.

So in summary, the way to stay safe and not get a bad rap w/ electronics?

1. Make sure your page is private, not public.
2. Do not post or put up anything inappropriate. What seems cool now could end up ruining your future!
3. Do not post any comments with foul or offensive language, nudity, photos of illegal things, and don't join any inappropriate groups.
4. Think twice about what you write or post. The rule: "If you wouldn't want your parent's to see it, don't post it!"
5. Be careful about who you become 'friends' with. Only accept a friend that you know!
