



# Parent Guidelines for Social Media and Cell Phone Use

- 1. Follow/friend your child on ANY social media sites they use.**
  - Check these sites on a regular basis.
  - Be careful about how and what you comment on- parent comments are not always welcome.
  - Be aware that kids may have two profiles- one for family, and then their "real" page.
- 2. Go over, on a regular basis, what information should NOT be shared online/over text.**
  - Never give out full name, phone number, address, or e-mail address.
  - Pictures, posts and statuses can last forever online- even if "deleted."
  - Rule of thumb: if you wouldn't want grandma, future bosses or a college recruiter to see it, or you wouldn't say it to someone's face, don't post or text it.
- 3. Know your child's passwords on all devices and all social media accounts. (Don't forget that iPods, tablets, and gaming consoles can all be used to access the internet).**
  - Help your child choose "safer" passwords.
  - Teach them not to give their passwords out to anyone, even friends.
- 4. Monitor your child's mobile phone use and text messages on a regular basis.**
  - Do surprise text/social media checks. Don't give them warning.
  - You are liable if something illegal occurs over phone, text, or on social media apps on a cell phone, because you pay the bill, not your child- i.e. inappropriate pictures, harassment, etc.
  - Put limits on usage. Have designated tech free times each day. Have a house rule that there are no cell phones in bedrooms at night.
- 5. Check the privacy, security and GPS settings on your child's phone and social media accounts.**
  - Posting pictures or "checking in" can be an invitation for a criminal to enter your home, and or a way for someone online to find out where your child lives or hangs out.
  - Make sure social media profiles are set to private.
- 6. Talk to your child about who they friend on social media.**
  - "Online friends" are just as influential as real friends.
  - Emphasize quality, not quantity. Not everyone is a friend!
  - Un-friending someone is ok to do. Let your child know the person does not even know you did it.
- 7. Talk about what a negative or inappropriate comment, picture, or post is.**
  - Show your child how to delete these items.
  - Discuss reporting inappropriate posts and teach them how to do it on each social media site they are on (or have them show you)
- 8. Explain to them that not everyone uses social media for fun.**
  - Anything that makes them feel uneasy, uncomfortable, that is inappropriate, or threatening to them or others MUST be reported.
  - Social media can be the first place to catch signs of bullying, suicidal thoughts, violent acts, sexual predators, etc.
  - Explain to them that they should NEVER agree to meet with someone they met online.