INTERNET SAFETY

Common Sense on Internet Safety

for high school kids

Tips for keeping your child safe online

1 **Tell your kids:**
   > not to share personal information like their name, school, age, or address
   > to use social networks privacy settings so only their friends can see their stuff
   > they should never send pictures to strangers
   > passwords are private (except to parents)
   > people aren't necessarily who they say they are in cyberspace
   > If they meet someone, it better be in a public place, with a friend

2 **There's no such thing as "private" online.** Anything posted can be seen by or forwarded to strangers, college admissions officers, and potential employers.

3 **Have an agreement about what's okay to post.** Teen years are full of self-expression and rebellion. Just make sure that your kids know your rules about suggestive material, alcohol, and drug references.

4 **Help your teen be a good digital citizen.** Online cheating is still cheating. And flagging inappropriate content isn't ratting – it's keeping the Web safe.

5 **The Golden Rule applies in cyberspace.** If they wouldn't do it in real life, they shouldn't do it online. No humiliating or cruel posts, no hate speech or groups, no compromising pictures they wouldn't want the world to see.

6 **Agree on downloads.** What music is okay? Which video sites? What games?

7 **Encourage critical thinking.** They should ask "who posted this? and why?" This will help them find trustworthy information, and it will also help avoid online scams that deliver spyware and viruses directly to your home.

8 **Stay in safe neighborhoods.** Just as your teens learn not to walk down dark alleys alone at night, they need to know how to avoid creepy places online. And if they do venture there, remind teens that unpleasant or suspicious communications should get trashed immediately.

9 **View your own habits carefully.** You are the ultimate role models.

10 **Keep channels of communication open.** Better safe than sorry. Make sure kids are comfortable telling you if anything menacing or cruel happens – no matter what site they were on.

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