COMMUNICATION

How to help your child communicate in a digital world

How do students
COMMUNICATE
with each other?

At school or when wtih friends, students tend to communicate face-to-face with each other.
When not physically together, students use their phones to communicate through various social media platforms.
The most common platforms are:

- Snapchat
- Instagram
- Tik Tok
- Discord
- Texting
- FaceTime (less common)

How do students
COMMUNICATE
with adults?

In general, students prefer to communicate with adults face-to-face. If a student needs to talk with a teacher, counselor, or other school personnel, and they do not see them at school, they will email them. If a student needs to communicate with an adult they are close to, they prefer to call or text them, if they will not see them in person.

Since email is a big part of communication for students at school, we encourage you to talk with your child about appropriate email communication. Email is a part of their lives, and learning how to communicate through email professionally and effectively will set them up for success.

What can adults do to help PREVENT cyberbullying?

After surveying middle school and high school students, the most common answers to this question were:

- Parents should monitor our social media

- Adults/parents should be aware of what apps we have

- Engage with us. Ask us questions about our friends, our social life, and what is happening at school and during our extracurricular activities (even when we act like we don't want to share that information).

- Comfort us and be there for us. We are faced with a lot of tough situations. Don't lecture us. Just listen, support, and comfort us.

How to
IMPROVE COMMUNICATION
with your child

Spend time talking with your child. Show an interest in your child by listening to what they like and why it's important to them.

01
Ask open ended questions.

02
Make communication a habit, not a one time thing.

03
Don't act judgemental.

04
Respond in the conversation with more than one word answers.

05
Remove distractions around you.

The Issue

Social media sites and apps are an important part of how we all use the internet. Younger children may enjoy sites like Animal Jam that do not fit the traditional social media mold, but still allow users to communicate with each other, while older children, teens, and adults, may prefer sites like Facebook, and apps like Snapchat and Instagram.

In a 2018 Pew Research survey, teens were split on whether social media had a mostly positive or mostly negative effect on their lives. The noted positive elements included social media's role in connecting them with friends and family, easy access to news and information, and meeting others with similar interests. The noted negative effects included bullying, lack of in-person contact, and unrealistic views of others' lives.[1]

Most social media sites and apps (including Facebook, SnapChat, Twitter, Instagram, and Musical.ly) require users to be at least 13 years old, though it is not uncommon for youths to be untruthful about their date of birth in order to gain access to the site or app. By accessing these platforms before age 13, young children are at an increased risk of encountering inappropriate content and/or contact from older users.

https://www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/topics/socialmedia#theissue

By the Numbers

37%

of teens feel pressured to post content that will get a lot of likes on social media.

45%

of teens feel overwhelmed by drama on social media.

About 70%

of teens associate their social media use with positive emotions such as feeling included and confident.[2]

How to Talk About It

Use these discussion starters to talk about using social media safely with every age group.

Ask

- What's your favorite website or app? What do you like to do there?

- Have you ever seen something online you didn't want to see?

- Do you ever talk to people you don't know online? What do you talk about?

- Can you show me which sites and apps you're using?

- Would you feel comfortable if I checked your accounts?

- What kinds of things do you post?

- How do you decide who to add as a friend?

- How much personal information do you share online?

https://www.missingkids.org/netsmartz/topics/socialmedia#theissue

Reinforce

- It's safest to only add people you know offline to your online circles. Ask kids to check their "friends" and "followers" lists to see who has access to their accounts. Encourage them to remove anyone they don't know or trust. Children should also block or "unfriend" anyone bothering them.

- Privacy settings are there to help make the experience safe! Teach kids and teens to use privacy settings. While they don't guarantee complete privacy, they can help children control who sees what they share.

- Today, one's online reputation counts offline, too. Help children remove any personal or inappropriate images from social media and other accounts.

- If it wouldn't be OK to do or so offline, it's not OK online, either. Help children and teens report any criminal behavior to the police and report inappropriate posts to the website or app -- most have a system in place to handle these complaints.

If anyone sends them an inappropriate sexual request, they should report it to https://report.cybertip.org.

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