

Parent and Family Guide to Student Social Media Guidelines: 12 and Younger



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Family members are in the best position to act as positive role models for the responsible use of social media. This Parent and Family Guide was created to help you guide your children in using social media responsibly and effectively as described in the Student Social Media Guidelines: 12 and Younger.

The guidelines as well as an activity book for students to accompany the guidelines were created by New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) teachers, librarians, students, and parents in partnership with [Common Sense Education <https://www.common sense media.org/>](https://www.common sense media.org/). You can find the guidelines, activity book, and related resources and materials for both elementary and secondary school students at schools.nyc.gov/SocialMedia. If you have questions, please email Tech@schools.nyc.gov.

Create the Digital Image You Want

To control their own digital images, young people have four primary tools: aligning their personal reputations with their online images, being positive, being their best selves, and knowing their audience. The following activities are designed to help you work with your child to create a responsible and accurate digital image.

Activities and Advice	Why it Helps
<p>Headline Exercise Show your child headlines featured in a magazine, newspaper or online publication and talk to her about how the headlines might make you perceive a person in a positive or negative light. Discuss what the headlines of friends and family members might be if they were in a magazine or newspaper and whether they would be positive or negative.</p> <p>Next, have your child pretend she is the subject of a newspaper article and write what would she want the headline of the article to be. Review the types of photos and posts your child has in her online profiles and postings. Do they match the headline she would like to see? If not, how might future posts address that?</p> <p>You can also watch the “One Sentence Project” video at http://youtu.be/ndqdD6EXat4 to hear how other students have answered this question.</p>	<p>Gets the child thinking about how she sees herself and how her online image influences how people see her.</p> <p>Helps the child see how her online posts can be controlled to stay positive.</p>
<p>Self-Googling Google yourself, your child, and other friends and family. What are the results? Are you surprised by any posts? Does someone else come up? What can people do to differentiate their names online (for example, use a middle name)? Click on an image or website you are not sure of to find out the original source. Did a friend or family member post something without your knowledge?</p> <p>Note: Do this activity on your own before doing it with your child. This way you will be better prepared to discuss what you find.</p>	<p>Prompts discussion about photo and media consent</p> <p>Lets the child know that he has to keep on top of his digital image</p>
<p>Imagining Your Audience Remind your child that many people are potential audience members online. What would he like his teacher to see? How about a high school admissions officer? What if something he posted became a national news story? Discuss what he can do to responsibly manage his online image.</p>	<p>Puts the child in control of his digital image.</p>

Additional Resource

“Family Tip Sheet: Common Sense on Privacy and Digital Footprints, Elementary School.” Digital Literacy and Citizenship in a Connected Culture. Common Sense Media, 2012. Web. 3 Aug. 2015.

<<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/k-5-familytip-privacyanddigitalfootprints.pdf>>

“Privacy and Internet Safety.” Parent Concern. Web. 11 Aug. 2015.

<<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/privacy-and-internet-safety>>

“Create media projects together to explore and document your unique family identity.” The LAMP. Web. 14 Aug. 2015

<<http://thelamp.org/parents>>

Post Responsibly – Be Mindful of Your Audience

As a parent, you play a key role in ensuring your child is posting responsibly and protecting his or her personal information online. The NYCDOE Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy (<http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/InternetAcceptableUse>) reminds parents that they are responsible for teaching their set of family values to their children. This is your responsibility even when your child is doing homework or any school assignment. You can help your child post in ways that best represent the values of your family.

Activities and Advice	Why it Helps
<p>Select Privacy Settings Together Sign up for social media sites with your child. Read the privacy settings and statements together. Discuss options to protect your child’s privacy such as not giving out their address and birthday.</p>	<p>Helps to educate your child on the importance of privacy settings.</p>
<p>Smart Search Strategies Pay attention to where your child goes online. You may want to consider using parental controls, filtering software such as K9 Web Protection, NetNanny, or safe searching on certain sites. Talk with your child about sites or searches that you believe are unsafe or inappropriate. Also, speak to your child about what she should do if she finds an inappropriate site.</p>	<p>Allows you to influence the content your child is able to access online.</p>
<p>Current Events Most of us know someone who has been in the public spotlight if only for a short time. Maybe your aunt was featured as the “New Yorker of the Week.” Perhaps your friend happened to be on the scene during a parade and was interviewed. These stories provide an opportunity to discuss how to handle the situation and post responsibly online. See what happens in social media when those you know are the center of attention. In addition to focusing on what not to do, it is also important to identify examples of people using social media use for social good, a great online presence, or any other positive outcome.</p>	<p>Keeps the conversation current and authentic. It provides a ready answer to the question, “Why do we need to know this?”</p>

Additional Resources

“Facebook, Instagram, and Social.” Parent Concern. Web. 11 Aug. 2015.

<<https://www.common sense media.org/social-media>>

“Family Tip Sheet: Common Sense on Privacy and Digital Footprints, Elementary School.” Digital Literacy and Citizenship in a Connected Culture. Common Sense Media, 2012. Web. 3 Aug. 2015.

<<https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/k-5-familytip-privacyanddigitalfootprints.pdf>>

Knorr, Caroline. “Responsible Search Strategies for Kids.” Responsible Search Strategies for Kids. N.p., 30 Sept. 2013. Web. 10 Aug. 2015. <<https://www.common sense media.org/blog/responsible-search-strategies-for-kids>>

“Kids and Socializing Online.” Consumer Information: Privacy & Identity. Federal Trade Commission. September 2011. Web. 5 August 2015. <<http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0012-kids-and-socializing-online>>.

“Kids and Socializing Online.” OnGuardOnline.gov. The Federal Trade Commission. September 2011. Web. 5 August 2015. <<http://www.onguardonline.gov/articles/0012-kids-and-socializing-online>>.

Nielsen, Lisa. “DIY Guide to Keeping Children Safe Online Without Costly Filters.” September 2011. Web. 14 August 2015. <<http://theinnovativeeducator.blogspot.com/2011/09/diy-guide-to-keeping-children-safe.html>>

Consider the Consequences of Your Online Actions

It's important for students to think through the consequences of their online actions and to be careful about both the websites they visit and who they are interacting with online. Students don't always realize that what they do outside of school can have consequences at school, and this is especially true online.

Activities and Advice	Why it Helps
<p>Don't Post Sensitive Personal Information Explain to your child why it is unsafe to post your address, birth date, or other personal information and what identity theft means. Use real examples.</p>	<p>Creates clear ground rules and emphasizes the importance of protecting certain information.</p>
<p>Keep Information Private Talk to your child about not sharing passwords with friends and make sure you both know how to prevent computers you share with others from automatically saving passwords. (For example, always log off when you have finished using a site – don't just click out of the browser.) Let your children know that they can be held responsible for another person's actions when that person uses their online accounts to post information or make purchases.</p>	<p>Opens the discussion about the importance of protecting oneself, in both the real and digital worlds.</p>
<p>Parental Notification Schools should notify parents each year about school or classroom-based social media activities. If you haven't heard anything talk to your child's teacher, and your child, about what kinds of social media activity, if any, is part of his classroom work. Discuss the school's use of social media with your child the same way you would talk about other school work.</p>	<p>Keeps you in touch with what's happening in your child's school so you can take actions to support and guide his social media use.</p>
<p>Be Aware of Your Child's Behavior Online Some families keep a copy of their child's online usernames and passwords; others have a place where all family passwords are kept in case of emergency. Establish rules for what is permissible behavior online for your family and discuss the Student Social Media Guidelines at home.</p>	<p>Helps you stay aware of what's taking place online. It also helps children know their parents are there to support them in safe and responsible use of social media.</p>

Additional Resources

"Avoid Scams." *OnGuardOnline.gov*. The Federal Trade Commission. n.d. Web. 5 August 2015. <<http://www.onguardonline.gov/topics/avoid-scams>>

Bazon, Emily. "Don't Stalk Your Kid Online." *Slate Magazine*. N.p., 14 Feb. 2014. Web. 5 August 2015. <http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2014/02/it_s_complicated_an_interview_with_danah_boyd_about_teens_and_technology.html>

"Be Smart Online." *OnGuardOnline.gov*. The Federal Trade Commission. n.d. Web. 5 August 2015. <<http://www.onguardonline.gov/topics/be-smart-online>>

NYC Department of Education: Rules and Policies. NYC Department of Education, Division of Family and Community Engagement. n.d. Web. 5 August 2015 <<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/7A8FE940-0015-403C-9487-E7B28431A4D6/0/socialmedia41513.pdf>>

Take Threats of Cyberbullying Seriously

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic technologies to hurt or harass others. Examples include creating or circulating offensive text messages or emails, posts that are not true and create rumors, and embarrassing photos. Some signs of cyberbullying (both being bullied, and bullying) are: withdrawal from daily activities, getting upset when online or texting, quickly closing out of applications when an adult walks by, or avoiding discussions about what she is doing on the computer. The guidelines give students suggestions about what to do when someone they know is being targeted, or if they are being targeted themselves. They also provide information on who you can contact for support.

Activities and Advice	Why it Helps
<p>Discuss Cyberbullying Review the social media guidelines <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/C5A1F024-5B97-4894-92FA-078F50FF06B8/0/SMG_12younger1.pdf> with your child and talk about what cyberbullying means. Talk about examples and why this behavior could hurt someone’s feelings or make someone upset.</p>	<p>Helps your child understand what cyberbullying is and how it can be harmful.</p>
<p>Know What to Do If Your Child Is The Bully If you suspect your child is bullying someone, it’s important to understand the situation. Try to determine the underlying issues and come up with a plan to address and correct the behavior with your child. Your child’s school Respect for All liaison or guidance counselor can help you with this.</p>	<p>Families don’t need to go through these situations alone. The NYCDOE has professionals and resources to support you.</p>
<p>Family Media Agreement Writing up a family media agreement together will help you have a discussion about how to be responsible online. You can find forms for these agreements online: http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/parent-media-education/family-media-agreements</p>	<p>By setting clear expectations and establishing boundaries, you make future conversations on the subject much easier.</p>
<p>Role Play Being an Upstander When your child notices that someone he knows is not being treated with respect, encourage him to support the victim, whether by privately telling the victim that he is sorry for what she is going through or by speaking up publicly. Try to find real examples of this from your life or in the media. Discuss with your child the different ways he might respond. Next do a role play to act out how this might work.</p>	<p>Shows that there are alternatives to bullying. Standing up against abuse can give your child confidence and deepen his empathy.</p>
<p>Search for Opportunities to Make a Positive Contribution Encourage your child to stay positive online. Point out examples of others who participate this way, like the students who are part of https://www.facebook.com/groups/stuvoice. Discuss with your child the different ways she can keep things positive or become part of participate in positive communities.</p>	<p>Helps you show your child how social media can be used positively.</p>

Additional Resources

“Cyberbullying, Haters, and Trolls.” *Parent Concern*. Web. 11 Aug. 2015.
 <<https://www.common sense media.org/cyberbullying>>

“Cyberbullying.” *U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*. n.d. Web. 5 August 2015.
 <<http://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/index.html>>

“Family Tip Sheet: Common Sense on Cyberbullying.” *Digital Literacy and Citizenship in a Connected Culture*. Common Sense Media, n.d. Web. 5 August 2015.
 <https://www.common sense media.org/sites/default/files/uploads/pdfs/k-5-familytip-cyberbullying_032615.pdf>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. (2015). What to do when your child is cyberbullied: Top ten tips for parents. Cyberbullying Research Center. Retrieved 5 August 2015, from
 <<http://cyberbullying.us/what-to-do-when-your-child-is-cyberbullied/>>

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J.W. (2015). What To Do When Your Child Cyberbullies Others: Top Tips for Parents. Cyberbullying Research Center. Retrieved 5 August 2015, from
 <<http://cyberbullying.us/tips-for-parents-when-your-child-cyberbullies-others.pdf>>

“Respect for All.” *New York City Department of Education*. n.d. Web. 5 August 2015.
 <<http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/RespectforAll/default.htm>>

“Tip Sheet: Technology and Youth: Protecting Your Child from Electronic Aggression.” *Center for Disease Control and Prevention*. n.d. Web. 5 August 2015. <<http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ea-tipsheet-a.pdf>>

“What to Do If Your Child Exhibits Bullying Behavior.” Anti-Defamation League. 2012. Web. 5 August 2015.
 <<http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/education-outreach/What-to-Do-if-Your-Child-Exhibits-Bullying-Behavior.pdf>>

Wired Safety: <<https://www.wiredsafety.org/subjects/cyberbullying.php>>

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