

PARENTS' GUIDETO SMARTPHONE SAFETY

SMARTORSCARY?

Smartphones are essentially little computers, so you might be a little worried when handing one over to your child. Take some time to understand the risks and implement a few safeguards so that you can help your child use smartphones safely.



THE RISKS

- CYBERBULLYING

With the constant connectivity of smartphones, your child may be more susceptible to cyberbullying or have more opportunities to cyberbully others.

- GEOLOCATION

A GPS-enabled smartphone can reveal your child's location through online posts and uploaded photos.

- INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With smartphones, your child has mobile access to content you may consider inappropriate, such as pornography or violent videos.

- SEXTING

Your child may use the Internet and social apps to send, receive, or forward revealing photos.

- VIRUSES & MALWARE

Just like a computer, a smartphone is vulnerable to security attacks if your child accesses unsecured websites and apps.

5 WAYS TO BE SMARTER THAN THE SMARTPHONE!

1. Be a parent and a resource.

Establish clear guidelines, including time limits and consequences for inappropriate behavior, but be open so your child will come to you with any problems.

2. Set up password protection.

This will keep everyone but you and your child from accessing personal information stored on the phone.

3. Update the operating system.

New versions often contain important security fixes.

4. Approve apps before they are downloaded.

Make sure you understand their capabilities and approve their content.

5. Understand location services.

GPS features are useful when using maps, but you'll want to disable location-tagging when your child posts anything online.

For more resources visit NetSmartz.org/TipSheets

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THE FOLLOWING CHECKLIST CAN HELP YOU TAKE STEPS TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFER ONLINE.

- **CHECK YOUR COMMENTS AND IMAGES.**
Have you posted anything inappropriate or illegal, like threats, nudity, alcohol, or drugs?
- **TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT WHAT'S OK TO POST.**
Agree that you won't post embarrassing or hurtful comments or images of each other. Be clear that you'll delete – or if needed, report – any posts that are inappropriate, illegal, or threatening or could get you in trouble.
- **REVIEW YOUR ACCOUNT SETTINGS.**
Go through each option slowly. Always ask yourself – *what is on my profile and who can see it?*
- **KNOW YOUR FRIENDS, CONTACTS, AND FOLLOWERS.**
These are the people who can see, share, and comment on what you post so you want to be sure you can trust them. Block and report anyone who makes harassing, threatening, or inappropriate comments.
- **KEEP AN EYE ON 3RD PARTY APPS.**
Some of these apps will give companies access to your personal information. Always read the fine print before deciding to add one.
- **DON'T FORGET MOBILE.**
When you use mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to post something or check in, you could also be sharing your location. Check your settings to make sure you're only sharing what you want to.
- **REPORT.**
You have the right to be safe online. If anyone cyberbullies you, make a report to the website or app. If anyone shares or asks you to share sexual messages or images, make a report to www.CyberTipline.com.

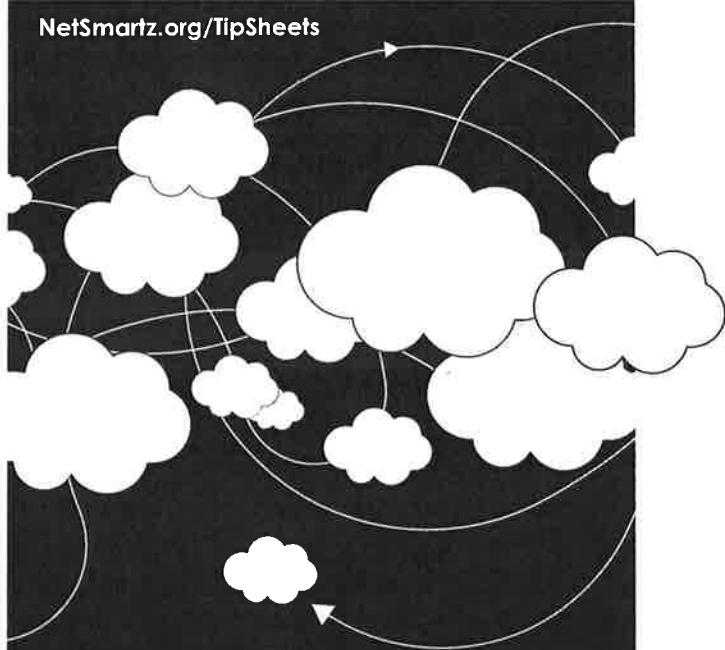
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Protecting your **KIDS** on social media

Online social media services aren't new, but many of us are still learning how to use them without getting into trouble – especially children and teens. Use these tips to help your kids safely use any social media service from networking to image posting sites.

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Do you know...



What they're posting?

Check comments and images for personal information, like phone numbers and addresses, as well as inappropriate and illegal content such as hateful or threatening speech and nudity. Delete anything you think is too much information.



How they access social media?

Mobile devices, like cell phones and tablets, let children access social media apps away from adult supervision. Children may post content and even share their locations. Review app settings to help them keep information – like their location – private.



Who they're talking to?

Your child's online contact lists and followers may include people you don't know, or even people your child only knows online. Even if you don't know the contact, make sure you know what images, messages, and other content they're sharing.



What account settings they're using?

This is where you can control who has access to your child's information. Each social media service has a different setup, so take a look at each one your child uses. Always ask yourself – what is on the profile and who can see it?



Who has access to their information?

Most social media services have ads and applications from 3rd parties, like games and fan pages. If children click on these or add them to their profiles, they are allowing access to their personal information. Have a discussion about what's OK to add and what's not.



Where to report?

If anyone talks to your child about sex, shares or asks them to share sexual images, or is a victim of sexual exploitation, make a report to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children® at www.CyberTipline.com or **1-800-THE-LOST®**.

Many teens believe that anything they want to do with *their* bodies and *their* phones is *their* business. They enjoy the privacy and freedom that cell phones give them from their parents and guardians, but what happens when they use their cell phones to explore their sexuality?

Sexting is the sending or distributing of nude or partially nude images. Scary headlines may lead you to believe this is a common practice among teens with extreme consequences. Although the actual numbers vary, many researchers agree that most teens are not sexting, and those who are usually aren't subjected to harsh penalties. However, there are still risks to consider for teens who sext. These tips will help you talk about sexting with your teen so you're both prepared if it ever becomes an issue.

Psychologists like Dr. Abigail Judge advise parents to make discussions about sexual behavior, including sexting, a regular occurrence so teens will be better prepared.

"...research suggests that parents should address the topic of sex with their children—and by extension, digital media and its use in the home—not through a one-time conversation, but through an ongoing dialogue that should begin early and occur often, across developmental time."

Dr. Abigail Judge,
Harvard Review of Psychiatry, 2012

TALKING
TO

TEENS

ABOUT
SEXTING

THE RISKS

Teens who take, send or forward sexting images may face:

- Embarrassment if their picture is shown to family, friends, classmates and even strangers.
- Bullying or harassment from peers who judge them for sexting.
- Trouble at school if they have violated a school policy. Some teens have been kicked off of athletic teams or suspended from school.
- Future consequences if the image follows them for a long time. It may be seen by college admissions officers or even potential employers.
- Trouble with the police. In extreme cases, kids can be charged for sending or forwarding nude images of minors.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT

- Ask questions to make it clear you're comfortable discussing it. "Has anyone ever asked or pressured you to sext? Have you ever received a sexy picture from someone?"
- Discuss what characterizes a healthy relationship. "Any person pressuring you to sext isn't someone you should trust. Boyfriends and girlfriends come and go, but a sexual image of you can stay around forever."
- Explain how quickly images can spread online. "Once the photo is sent, it's out of your control."
- Emphasize the importance of not forwarding sexts they receive. "You do not have the right to decide who should see someone else's body. Forwarding images is a major violation of trust and exposes the person in the picture to potential ridicule. Imagine how you would feel if someone betrayed your trust by sharing a nude photo of you."

IF YOUR CHILD'S IMAGE IS ALREADY OUT THERE

- Help them report it to the websites/apps where the image is posted. Make it clear your child is a minor, and it was posted without his or her consent.
- Talk to school officials so they can help stop the spread of the image and any harassment that may be happening.
- Contact the police if your child is being blackmailed, harassed or if it involves an adult.
- Above all, offer support. Assure them that you'll get through this together. Consider seeking professional counseling if they need help coping.

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CYBERBULLYING.....

AVOID GOSSIP.

Everyone's bound to get a little excited by those oh-so-dramatic high school scandals, but that doesn't mean you have to text the latest rumor to everyone you know.

DON'T FEED THE CYBERBULLIES.

Ignore mean or threatening messages. Block the sender and file a report with the website, cell phone service, or police.

BYSTANDERS ARE GUILTY, TOO.

If your friends are cyberbullying someone and you stay silent, you're just as guilty as they are. Speak up and keep your friends in check.



ONLINE PREDATORS.....

RECOGNIZE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CUTE AND CREEPY.

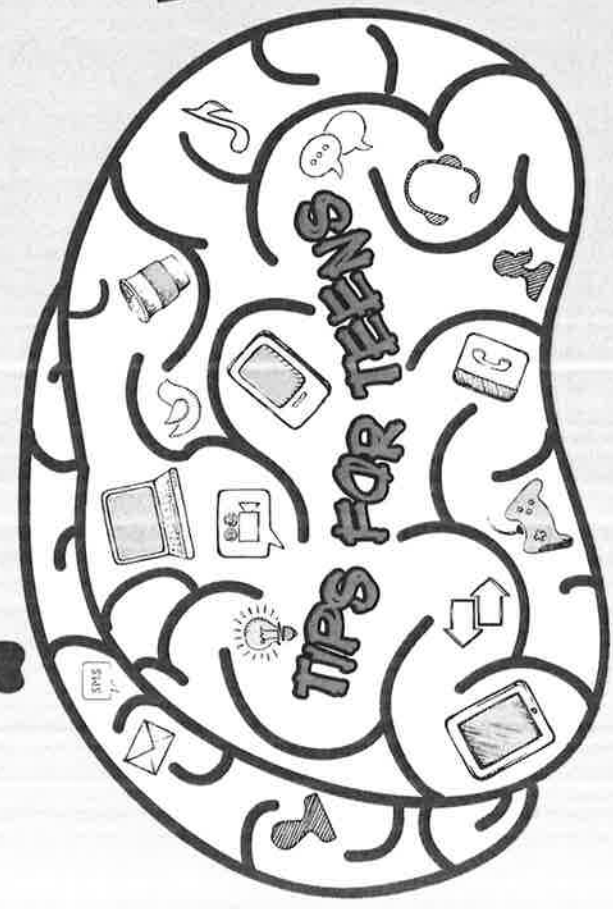
Think about it - an older guy who wants to date someone younger is just creepy. It's not flattering; it's illegal! So don't friend them and don't meet them offline.

DON'T JUST SIT THERE - REPORT!

If you or someone you know has been victimized by someone you met online, report them to the police and www.cybertipline.com.



GOT NETSMARTZ?



SHARING TOO MUCH.....

INITIATE OPERATION PROFILE CLEAN-UP.

Scrub your page of everything too personal, embarrassing, and illegal. Those pictures of you passed out next to the empty bottles are not going to look so cool when you start applying for college.

STOP. THINK. PUT YOUR CLOTHES BACK ON!

You know those pictures of you wearing next-to-nothing and making kissy faces or flexing in the mirror? You might think it's sexy, but the law doesn't, so do yourself a favor - don't send them; don't forward them.

PROTECT YOUR SPACE.

Use privacy settings and don't accept just anyone as a friend. Do some investigating - Who are they? Why would you hang out with them?



TRUSTED ADULTS.....

TALK TO YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS. THEY'RE NOT AS UPTIGHT AS YOU THINK.

Sometimes adults freak out about what you're doing online because you never tell them anything. Keep them in the loop so they know they can trust you.



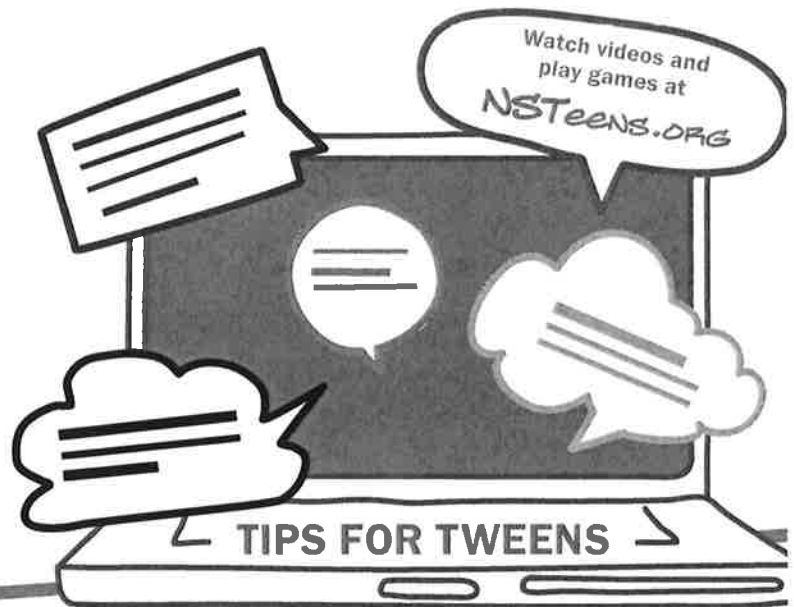
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Watch Real-Life Stories videos at NSteens.org

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YOUR NETSMARTZ



CYBERBULLYING

Don't be mean.

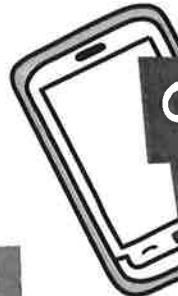
Gossiping doesn't make you cool.

Ignore. Block. Tell.

Ignore mean or threatening messages, block the sender, and tell a trusted adult who can help you report them.

Speak up

if your friends are cyberbullying someone.



ONLINE PREDATORS

Recognize the difference between cute and creepy.

An older guy who wants to date someone much younger is just creepy.

Don't just sit there - REPORT

anyone who asks to meet you in person to the police and www.cybertipline.com.



SHARING TOO MUCH

Avoid TMI.

Don't post anything too personal or embarrassing.

Protect your space.

Use privacy settings and don't accept just anyone as a friend.

Don't be that kid

who gets suspended for posting something stupid online.



TRUSTED ADULTS

Talk to your parents or guardians

about what you're doing online. They're not as bad as you think.

TAKE CONTROL OF THE SITUATION AND YOUR LIFE AGAIN.

USE THESE TIPS

REPORT

This is one of the best ways to stop your image from spreading if it is on a website/app or being shared without your consent.

REPORT IT:

- **To the website or app.** Trustworthy websites/apps work hard to keep off sexual images of minors and will remove them if notified. You can also report anyone who is posting or sharing images of you. For more information about reporting to popular websites/apps, visit https://needhelpnow.ca/removing_pictures.
- **To CyberTipline.org.** This tipline can connect you with the experts best suited to work on your case. They may contact the website or the police, or reach out to you for more details. You can report without sharing your name and can even make a report for a friend if they need help.
- **To the police.** They can help stop your image from spreading by working with websites/apps and talking to the people sharing it. You should know if the police get involved, you could face some consequences, too. It's illegal to share sexual images of minors even if they are of you. You may not be charged with a crime, but you may have to attend classes or complete community service.
- **To a teacher.** If your pictures are being shared around school, your teachers and school administrators can help stop it by making clear there are consequences for sharing them.

GET SUPPORT

One of the worst things about a sexting incident is feeling like you're facing everything alone. But you have people who care for you and want to help. Talk to them!

- **Your friends** can stand up for you by refusing to forward the image and making it clear that it's not cool to share the image or bully you.
- **A trusted adult** can offer advice, help you report, and help you deal with other complicated things. It could be your mom, dad, an aunt, a school counselor, or anyone you trust and are comfortable talking to.
- **Teachers** can remind your classmates and peers about your school's rules and codes on bullying and help put a stop to any bullying behavior.
- If you feel that your school is ignoring the bullying, ask your **mom, dad, or guardian** for help. They can champion your case at your school, with your teachers, and other adults.

DON'T GIVE UP

Having a nude or sexual image of yourself floating around is scary. It can make you feel vulnerable and isolated. But remember, **other teens have been in the same situation you are - and they have beaten it.**

The people who have taken advantage of you want you to feel powerless. **But you are not powerless.** You are strong. You can take charge of your situation and take back control of your life.

What if I'm being blackmailed?

Blackmail is when someone tries to threaten or scare you into doing something. For example, teens may share sexual images with people they trust, only to have those people turn on them. They may threaten to send the images to teens' families unless the teens share more images.

If you're being blackmailed, you may feel helpless or guilty. You may think you don't have the right to say "no" because you shared the first image willingly. **WRONG!** Blackmail is illegal and you don't have to take it.

YOU SHOULD:

- Stop any communications with blackmailers. They'll try to use your conversations to threaten and manipulate you - don't give them the chance. Even if you have already started communicating with them, it's never too late to stop and report it.
- Block or remove the blackmailer from your contact list. If you decide to deactivate your accounts, contact the websites/apps for help.
- Make a report to the police and CyberTipline.org right away. Seriously. They can help. They may want to see any messages you've received from the blackmailer.

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Tips:

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Gaming Safely

Parental involvement is critical when it comes to helping children game more safely. Take an active interest in the games that your child plays and wants to buy. You can research games' ratings and content on www.esrb.org. This website is maintained by the Entertainment Software Rating Board which rates thousands of games each year.

Know which safety features are available on the gaming equipment that your child uses—a headset may have voice-masking features, for example.

Keep gaming consoles in an easy-to-supervise location and be aware of other places where your child may be accessing games.

Tell your child never to give out personal information while gaming or agree to meet anyone outside of the game.

Set rules about how long your child may play, what types of games are appropriate, and who else may participate.

Have your child check with you before using a credit or debit card online.

Check to see if the games your child plays have reporting features or moderators.

Start a discussion with your child

- » Can we play some of your favorite games together?
- » How do you respond if someone bothers you while you are gaming?
- » How much do you let people know about you while gaming?
- » What kinds of people do you game with?
- » Do you feel safe while you are gaming online? Why or why not?

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