



## ***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