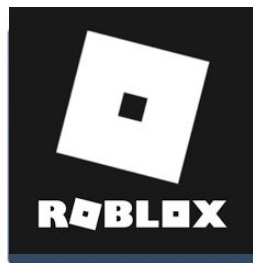


Keeping Your Child Safe in a Digital World

By:

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So what do I do??????

- What does the research say on cell phone use?
- How does this impact the school environment?
- How can you make informed decisions to be sure your child is safe?



Some research....



- The average teen spends 9 hours on social media a DAY.
- The legal age to have a social media account is 13.
- The average age a child receives a cell phone is 10.
- The percentage of teens who would respond to a stranger on social media is 21%.
- The percentage of teens who report that they have sent or posted nude or semi-nude photos is 20%.

Dangers of excessive, unsupervised use....



-With a lack of impulse control, many kids cannot regulate the content they post or the information they share.

-Cyberbullying

-Exposure to pornography or inappropriate content

-Excessive use contributes to...

-Anxiety

-Depression

-ADHD

-Suicidal ideation and action

-Loneliness

-Paranoia

-Sleep issues

-Self harm behaviors

-Addiction

-Impulse Disorder

-Problems with mental function

-Social difficulties

Red Flags

— — —

- When someone you meet online wants you to switch platforms (especially to snapchat because those messages disappear)
- When friends you meet online get too attached too quickly
- The person asks for/offers you money
- They always have an excuse as to why they can't speak on the phone or facetime
- Their social media accounts have very few friends or tagged photos
- The person has an elaborate story that pulls on your heartstrings



What are some signs of healthy social media use?

You might see that your child is using social media in a healthy way if he or she...

- Rarely has an active presence on their feeds.
- Posts few photos and makes few comments.
- He or she can do homework and other activities without checking in on social media.
- They are very active with different friend groups and have face-to-face connections.
- Maintains strong personal relationships with family members.
- Rarely gossips and is aware of the drama that is associated with social media.
- Doesn't feel pressure to fit in.

What about cell phone contracts?

-Mixed reviews on the effectiveness or the message this sends.

-Changing the idea from a cell phone as a privilege to it being a tool for your safety.

[Sample cell phone contract- Josh Shipp](#)

[Growing leaders- cell phone contract](#)



- Whatever you choose, come up with a system to supervise in an honest way.

VIRGINIA

Former Virginia State Police trooper accused of killing California family after 'catfishing' victim's teenage daughter

by: Kassidy Hammond

Posted: Nov 28, 2022 / 08:35 AM EST

Updated: Nov 28, 2022 / 01:07 PM EST



Did you know...

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- 67% of teens report that they have secret social media accounts that their parents do not know about.
- Many apps have features to hide parts of their social media.
- Even if the students are the same age, sharing and/or possessing nude photos is still considered possession and dissemination of child pornography.
- What your child is doing now on social media can affect their lives as adults. It doesn't go away, even when deleted!

How does social media negatively affect my child's education?

— — —

- Cyberbullying
- Hate speech
- Shared private conversations and hurt feelings
- Hurtful trends (like “my hate list”, “slap challenges”, etc.)
- Anxiety about online regrets



Social Media and the School Setting



Social Media = Skating Rink

Exceptions:

- Legitimate Threat
- School Disruption

Limitations:

- No Authority
- Cannot verify Identity

What Can YOU Do:

- Block/Don't Connect (In Person Rule)
- Call Police

What can we do about it?



- Realize that this is YOUR cell phone and they get to use it. You have every right, and NEED to, check their phones periodically to keep them safe.
- Have open and honest communication with your child. When you see something, bring it up to them in a calm way.
- Be realistic about where your child is developmentally. It is normal to push boundaries and change in MS and HS years.

So what if my child needs a phone or you feel they're ready?

There are ways to have safer use of phones for our kids.

- Delay access
- Follow their accounts
- Create family accounts
- Social media only allowed on big screens
- Plan face-to-face time with friends
- Provide non-tech time as a family
- Have technology live in your room at night



[Psychology Today- Social media use for teens](#)

The most important advice for parents is to have open and ongoing conversations about safe and appropriate online behavior. Other advice to consider:

- Educate yourself about the websites, software, games, and apps that your children use.
- Check their social media and gaming profiles and posts. Have conversations about what is appropriate to say or share.
- Explain to your kids that once images or comments are posted online they can be shared with anyone and never truly disappear.
- Tell your children to be extremely wary when communicating with anyone online who they do not know in real life.
- Make it a rule with your kids that they can't arrange to meet up with someone they met online without your knowledge and supervision.
- Stress to your children that making any kind of [threat online](#)—even if they think it's a joke—is a crime.
- Report any inappropriate contact between an adult and your child to law enforcement immediately. Notify the site they were using, too.

But monitoring is exhausting!!!!

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Here are some resources to help you in keeping them safe—

[Bark](#)

[Qustodio](#)

[Best Parental control apps for phones](#)



We are in this together!



We must support them together on this. Phone and social media can affect their education, emotional health, social development, and self esteem.

If you think your child has an issue with social media/phone use or if you would like additional resources, please feel free to reach out...

- Lisa Byrd, Elementary School Counselor
- Ashley Brown, Middle School Counselor
- Dietrich Long and Dr. Vanessa Harrington, High School Counselors