



# SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR STUDENTS

As a student, you are more than accustomed to using the Internet in your everyday life, but the risks that come with that use could greatly impact you and your future.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- **95 percent** of teens use the Internet.<sup>1</sup>
- **77 percent** of teens use Facebook.<sup>2</sup>
- **53 percent** of teens use Instagram.<sup>3</sup>
- **24 percent** of teens use Twitter.<sup>4</sup>
- **10 percent** of teens use Tumblr.<sup>5</sup>
- The average teen has approximately **300 friends on Facebook** and **79 followers on Twitter**.<sup>6</sup>
- Among Twitter users aged 12 to 17, **64 percent made their tweets public**.
- **19 percent of teen users have posted things they regret**, including photos, videos, status updates, tweets, or comments.<sup>7</sup>
- Only **18 percent** of young adults claim they are **comfortable with what their friends post about them online**, and **32 percent** say that the information about them online is what they choose for the public to see.<sup>8</sup>

## BEWARE OF WHAT YOU POST ONLINE

No matter what social media platform you use, consider the type of information you choose to share with others. Here are the common cyber risks you may face when using social media:

- **Sharing sensitive information.** Sensitive information includes anything that can help a person steal your identity or find you, such as your full name, Social Security number, address, birthdate, phone number, or where you were born.
- **Posting questionable content.** Remember future employers may look at your social media accounts before hiring you. Questionable content can include pictures, videos, or opinions that may seem unprofessional or mean and can damage your reputation or future prospects.
- **Tracking your location.** Many social media platforms allow you to check in and broadcast your location, or automatically adds your location to photos and posts.

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, "The Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project: Teen Fact Sheet." September 2012

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Pew Research Center, "Social Media Update 2014." January 2015

<sup>4</sup> Pew Research Center, "The Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project: Teen Fact Sheet." September 2012

<sup>5</sup> Pew Research Center, "Teens and Libraries in Today's Digital World." April 2014

<sup>6</sup> Pew Research Center, "Teens, Social Media, and Privacy." May 2013

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

## SIMPLE TIPS

1. **Remember, there is no 'Delete' button on the Internet.** Think before you post, because even if you delete a post or picture from your profile only seconds after posting it, chances are someone still saw it.
2. **Don't broadcast your location.** Location or geo-tagging features on social networks is not the safest feature to activate. You could be telling a stalker exactly where to find you or telling a thief that you are not home.
3. **Connect only with people you trust.** While some social networks might seem safer for connecting because of the limited personal information shared through them, keep your connections to people you know and trust.
4. **Keep certain things private from everyone.** Certain information should be kept completely off your social networks to begin with. While it's fun to have everyone wish you a happy birthday, or for long-lost friends to reconnect with you online, listing your date of birth with your full name and address gives potential identity thieves pertinent information. Other things to keep private includes sensitive pictures or information about friends and family. Just because you think something is amusing does not mean you should share it with the world.
5. **Speak up if you're uncomfortable.** If a friend posts something about you that makes you uncomfortable or you think is inappropriate, let him or her know. Likewise, stay open-minded if a friend approaches you because something you've posted makes him or her uncomfortable. People have different tolerances for how much the world knows about them, and it is important to respect those differences. Also report any instances of cyber bullying you see.

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

### [NetSmartzKids.org](http://NetSmartzKids.org)

Clicky, a yellow robot, along with brother-and-sister team Nettie and Webster, teach kids what to watch out for online in this interactive website with videos and games.

### [iKeepSafe.org](http://iKeepSafe.org)

Faux Paw, the Websurfing Techno Cat, is always on an adventure. Read about her trip to Beijing or her experiences with the dangerous download.

### [NSTeens.org](http://NSTeens.org)

Real-life stories, games, and comics that explore potential online dangers and how to avoid them.

### [iSafe.org](http://iSafe.org)

Become an iMentor and promote cyber safety in your home, school, and community.