

Dear Alcorn School District community,

This month's VIP exclusive topic at SmartSocial.com is all about social media challenges. It is very timely with the start of school and students coming back together, yet still connecting through social media too.

**Top tips for students to think about social media challenges:**

1. **Make a plan** - If you see an interesting social media challenge you want to participate in, consider making a plan of how you'll carry it out vs. "winging it."
2. **Think it through** - Consider what might happen after you stop the camera (what others' videos don't show you). Does it leave a mess for someone else? Who will clean it up?
3. **Ask yourself (or others), is it legal?** - Could someone get in trouble at school or with the law? Posting your video on social media could be perfect evidence that you participated in something against school rules or the law.
4. **Is it safe?** - Could someone get physically injured? Is that risk worth social media views?
5. **Consider online reputation** - Before posting anything on social media, always ask yourself: "how would this video contribute to my online reputation?" Even if your account names don't personally identify you, anything can spread on the internet and easily be connected back to you.
6. **Talk to an adult** - If your friends are participating in dangerous social media challenges (like taking medication or eating non-food substances), talk with a trusted adult like a school counselor or your parent immediately to make sure your friends get help.
7. **Who do you follow?** - Think twice about who you follow on social media or what types of posts you like. When you show interest in a topic or type of user, the social media algorithms use that information to develop what they think you want to see in your feed.

**Top tips for adults to engage with students about social media challenges:**

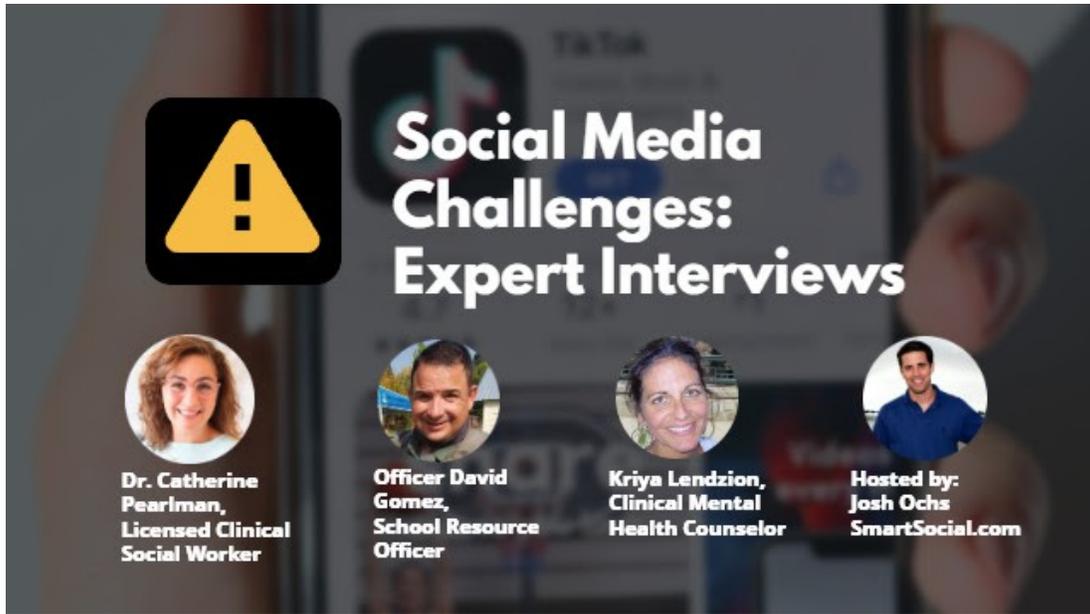
1. **Follow your kids** - Parents should follow their kids on social media to see what they are posting and what social media challenges they may be participating in.

2. **Talk about peer pressure** - Talk with your students frequently about peer pressure, even on social media, and develop strategies together to recognize when their actions are being driven by pressure vs. their own interests or goals.
3. **Help develop critical thinking** - Every social media challenge is unique, so the potential dangers are different for each one. Keep open communication with students to help develop their critical thinking and decision-making skills using social media interests as their “real-life” examples.
4. **Find other positive reinforcements** - Help students recognize where they feel the most validated, other than through social media likes and follows, and make a plan to help see positive reinforcement in their lives.
5. **Remind students often that the internet is forever** - Other users can easily find ways to share anything they post on social media, even if they think they have a private account or have no-share settings on their posts.
6. **Seek professional help** - If students seem to not understand peer pressure or repeatedly take unnecessary risks for social media challenges, consider seeking counseling through their school or other mental health resources.

Want to learn more? The SmartSocial VIP resource includes student, educator, and parent-friendly videos and content to bring social media challenges into the discussion for our whole community. Use our organization’s link to sign up for your VIP account today <https://smartsocial.com/alcornschooldistrict>.

Once you are logged into SmartSocial.com as a VIP, here are the video lessons you will find for this month’s topic at: [SmartSocial.com/post/social-media-challenges](https://smartsocial.com/post/social-media-challenges)

- What students think about social media challenges (8 min. video)
- Social media challenge examples from students (3 min. video)
- Social media challenge training videos for parents, educators, and students (8 min video) --with a student worksheet PDF
- Parent and educator training video (15 min. video)
- Expert guest video (15 min. video)



Don't forget to sign up for your VIP account through the Alcorn School District partnership with SmartSocial (no credit card information is required if you use our unique link: <https://smartsocial.com/alcornschooldistrict>)!

Thank you for taking the time to learn about social media challenges and opportunities through the SmartSocial resources we are proud to deliver to our community.

Sincerely,  
*Brandon Quinn*

*Superintendent of Education*