

## Making Good Choices on Social Networking Sites

### Principal Concerns

The principal concerns associated with social networking sites are ...

- Unsafe or inappropriate disclosure of personal information or images.
- Unsafe connections with dangerous individuals or groups.
- Engage in or targeted by cyberbullying or sexual harassment.
- Addictive access.
- Lie about age to participate.

### Check It Out

- Do you meet the age requirement?
- Do the Terms of Use prohibit harmful activities?
- Does the site allow you to control who has access to your profile?
- Does the site have a complaint process?

### Protect Your Privacy and Reputation

- Use privacy protection features to limit who can view your profile.
  - But remember "private" does not mean PRIVATE!
- Even if you use privacy protection features, don't post material that could ...
  - Allow a stranger to find you in Real Life.
  - Attract a dangerous stranger.
  - Be used by a cyberbully to torment you.
  - Damage your reputation, friendships, or future opportunities.
  - Cause harm or distress to another.
- If someone posts this kind of information or material about you on their profile, demand that it be removed. If it is not promptly removed, tell an adult or file a complaint.
- Recognize that personality quizzes and contests are techniques to obtain your personal information for advertising.

### Be Selective

- Be selective about who you add as friends.
  - When starting, limit contacts to friends and "friends of friends."  
You should know how to find all of your online friends in Real Life.
- Carefully assess the safety and values of people you meet online by reviewing their profile and communications.
- Have a safe plan, approved by your parent, if you want to meet in person. Meet in a public place with a safe person nearby.
- Block anyone who ...
  - Communicates rudely.
  - Appears to be trying to manipulate you by sending "overly friendly" messages, using excessive compliments, offering you "gifts", or wanting to establish a "special" relationship.
  - Wants to talk about sex or asks for a sexy picture.
  - Does not fit your values.
- File a complaint if you receive harmful or potentially dangerous communications.

### Be Responsible

- Do not send rude or hurtful messages or post harmful material.
- Respect the privacy and reputation of your friends.

### Be a Leader

Speak up for good values in your online community.

If you see someone who is making bad choices or in danger ...

- Talk with the person about your concerns.
- Report to a responsible adult.

### Keep Your Life in Balance

- Communicating with friends online can strengthen your friendships. But make sure you also spend time with your friends in Real Life.

## Core Strategies

### Effective Problem Solving

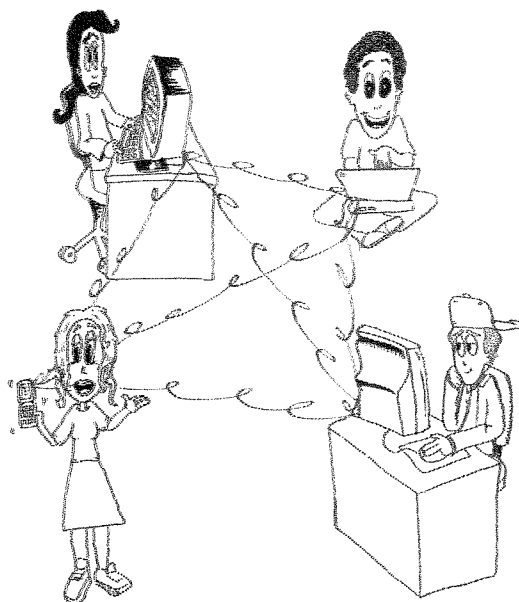
The following questions can help teens engage in problem solving.

- What is the situation?
  - What concerns does this situation raise?
  - What are the risks?
  - What values are implicated?
- Who is involved and what are their personal interests?
  - Does anyone appear to be trying to manipulate someone else?
- What are the possible actions and the possible outcomes for each of these actions?
  - Which choice has the greatest possibility in leading to the best possible outcome for all concerned?

### Responsible Decision-Making

These questions can help teens evaluate whether they are making a responsible choice.

- Is this kind and respectful to others?
- How would I feel if someone did or said the same thing to me or to my best friend?
- What would my mom, dad, or other trusted adult think or do?
- Would I violate any agreements, rules, or laws?
- How would I feel if my actions were reported on the front page of a newspaper?
- What would happen if everybody did this?
- Would it be okay if I did this in the real world?
- How would this reflect on me?



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