

Safety First: Social Media and Securing Your Kid's Safety

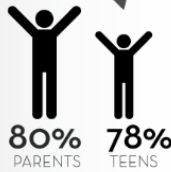
SAFETY FIRST: SOCIAL MEDIA AND SECURING YOUR KID'S SAFETY

When the majority of teens and kids are checking their Facebook accounts at least once a day, with many checking multiple times, keeping them safe is important. Here we look at the current social networking climate between kids and their parents and ways to keep them safe and secure when online.



IS THERE REASON FOR CONCERN?

"I feel in control of my personal information when using social networking websites."



2 out of 3 PARENTS & 7 out of 10 TEENS believe they understand privacy protection on Facebook



a majority of both groups (52% and 59% respectively) feel that the privacy settings are clear.

11% PARENTS & 6% TEENS Worry about privacy on sites like Facebook.

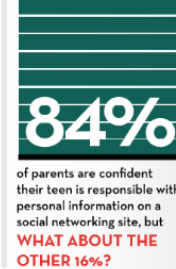
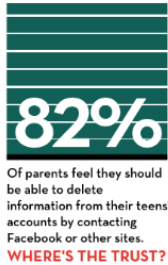


SADLY

1 out of 10 PARENTS

SECRETLY LOG INTO THEIR KIDS' SOCIAL NETWORKING ACCOUNTS WITHOUT PERMISSION. WITH GOOD COMMUNICATION AND THE SETTING OF HOUSEHOLD SECURITY POLICIES AND RULES, PARENTS COULD AVOID HAVING TO DO THIS.

80% of teens use privacy settings at some point to hide content from certain friends and/or parents.



SO, HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?



HAVE A TALK

Before you sign up your kids on a social media site, make sure to talk with them about protecting themselves. Teach them to be honest about their age to prevent them from lying about joining Facebook or other sites, or being allowed to view inappropriate material. Show your kids you know how to use what they are using, and that you are willing to learn what they may not know.



LOOK FOR WARNING SIGNS

Watch for behavior changes in your kids, if they are not telling you what is happening to them online. Look for changes in behavior as far as withdrawing from the family and school activities. They tend to show signs of depression, if they are being bullied.



CONSIDER SOFTWARE-FILTERING PROGRAMS

Using parental control products as tools of learning and safety can be helpful. Get your hands on programs that have the ability to protect your children from inappropriate contacts and content on social networking sites.



MONITOR THEIR BEHAVIOR

The best way to monitor your kid's behavior on social sites is to have a profile yourself. While not all kids will friend their parents online, it's worth a try and it might turn out to be more fun than either of you expected. Being the parent you can even make a policy requiring that you and your child "friend" each other.

OUT OF 72% OF PARENTS WHO MONITOR THEIR TEENS' ACCOUNTS:



RESTRICT SETTINGS

One simple way to restrict your kids is to limit the amount of time they spend online in a given day. Additionally, placing your computer in an area of the house with lots of foot traffic will make for a more open and less tempting situation for them. If you help your kid set up their social networking account, certain settings can keep them safe. For example, limit the amount of personal information they add to their Facebook profile.

AND IF ALL ELSE FAILS WITH THE LITTLE ONES...

FIND AN ALTERNATIVE:



"ScuttlePad offers children, age 6-11, the opportunity to create a profile with the supervision of their parents. In order to create an account, a child must submit one parent's e-mail address and provide a favorite color, along with age and birthday."

- Fast Company



"Togetherville seeks to mimic the experiences of social networks such as Facebook, but in a way that's protective of children younger than 10 and allows for parental supervision. The site lets children connect with their real-world friends in its virtual neighborhood."

- Los Angeles Times

SOURCES: ftc.gov, safekids.com, intellipointouch.com, peworld.com, latimes.com, fastcompany.com

