



SOCIAL MEDIA DO's and DON'Ts

Is it okay to monitor your children's online activity and Social Media accounts? Our goal as parents is to raise happy, well adjusted children. To help them learn to navigate this information age we need to talk openly and frequently with our children and help them develop rules guidelines, and healthy habits. Controlling every aspect of their online life won't teach our children how to make good choices. They also won't learn good habits from having free reign without consequences. The answer? We need to start small, with closely regulated online activity and gradually add privileges and access as our children demonstrate they are ready. Here are some do's and don'ts to help guide you.

DO:

- **Talk** to your children about Social Media
- Model appropriate, healthy Social Media habits
- Develop rules with your children about Social Media (do's, don'ts, they must allow you to follow them, can't create accounts without permission...)
 - Print off an online "contract" to help you start a healthy discussion with your child:
 - <http://i.infopls.com/fe/pc/0,,17883-1399,00.pdf>
 - Explore **Common Sense Media** for contracts, discussion ideas, research, and videos
- Make your child earn devices and screen time through demonstration of responsible behaviors...remind them that technology is a PRIVILEGE!
- Download an app like **Checky** to begin to teach children to monitor their online behavior and screen time.
- Share an Apple ID with your children.
- Enable **Find my iPhone** or use an app like **Life 360** or **Ignore No More** to know where your children are.
- Limit screen time
- Use apps such as **Dinner Time** or **Screen Time Parental Control** to help enforce limits on screen time and promote healthy lifestyle choices
- Charge devices in a central location (not your child's room) overnight.
- Enforce a "screen time" bedtime at least 2 hours before bedtime.
- Use family plans (Apple, Microsoft, Kindle, Hulu, Netflix...) which allow you to setup child and parent accounts. These will allow you to control and access your children's accounts. Quickly check activity and usage.
- Consider using software such as **Qustodio** or **Net Nanny** to monitor Windows PC, Mac, iOS, Android, and Kindle devices
- Sit with your child and Google your child's name. Discuss the results. "What assumptions could a high school/college counselor/employer make about you from this search?"
- Slowly allow students (over the age of 13) **monitored** Social Media accounts. Introduce Social Media one at a time.
 - Setup the account with your child to ensure they choose an appropriate screen name, setup privacy and location settings and are old enough to have the account.
- Investigate your child's social media activity ...and let them know that you do (and why!).

DON'T:

- "Outlaw" all Social Media accounts forever
- Allow free reign on Social Media without supervision.

Food for Thought

1. Most Social Media accounts are for persons ages **13+** in compliance with COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act). Goal: protect your child's information and identity!
2. FINSTA- second Instagram account many students have that is blocked or private (often from parents).
3. Children can "block" you so that you can't see their account if you search it. To find your child's accounts use websites such as <https://www.peekyou.com/> , <https://pipl.com/help/deep-web/> or <https://www.social-searcher.com/>.



TIME-OUT FROM TECH

Do Not Disturb on iPhone:

Once you and your child have developed guidelines for use, sit with them and setup their Do Not Disturb Settings. They can set a custom message, so their friends know that they aren't reachable. As your children get older, encourage them to set their Do Not Disturb While Driving to Automatically.

1. Settings
2. Do Not Disturb
3. Do Not Disturb While Driving
4. Set Activate to: Manually
5. Set Auto-Reply to: All Contacts
6. Edit your Auto Reply Message (Note: An additional text will follow your custom message that explains that texts including the word "urgent" will break through Do Not Disturb)
7. Put your Do Not Disturb on your control center screen for quick access.
 - a. Settings, Control Center, Customize Controls, Add Do Not Disturb While Driving
8. Turn on Do Not Disturb and Unplug!

Unplug Activity Ideas:

April 30-May 5 is Screen Free Week. Plan on participating: <http://www.screenfree.org/>

Need some ideas on what to do without screens? Check out: <http://www.screenfree.org/screen-free-activities/>

- Bake or cook with your kids
- Clean out closets and take items to a local charity
- Go for a hike
- Walk your dog(s)
- Read a book...together!
- Build something together
- Ride bikes
- Draw on the sidewalk...



Research

Research on the Effects of Social Media on Student Academics: Bottom line? Teaching children to use social media responsibly and for learning can increase test scores. Daily use for social/entertainment decreases academic performance.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2017.06.006>

Kids Addicted to Screens? Here's How to Unplug Them:

<http://www.afr.com/technology/kids-addicted-to-screens-heres-how-to-unplug-them-20160821-gqxuth>

Why Age Restrictions on Social Media?:

<https://www.netnanny.com/blog/the-importance-of-social-media-age-restrictions/>

COPPA: <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/privacy-and-security/children%27s-privacy>

Find more E-Tips at <https://goo.gl/qPn7bN>