Social Media Safety

Social media sites like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are fun and useful ways to communicate with friends, classmates and family members. Unfortunately, these sites can also be used by adults and youth to bully, harass and endanger others. It is important to use social media appropriately and know how to protect yourself against predators.

TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

- **Always remember that what you post online stays online.** Never post anything that you might regret.

- **Kindness counts.** Avoid gossiping and bullying on social media sites. If you wouldn't want something said about you, don't say it about someone else. Avoid saying things online that you would never say to someone in person.

- **Post positive content on your social media accounts.** Employers and education professionals often view people's social media profiles when making decisions about hiring and school admissions.

- **Never share your online passwords with anyone but your parents.** Use strong passwords that will be difficult for hackers to figure out.

- **Customize your privacy settings.** Visit each site's privacy section to make sure your account is set on the safest privacy settings. Limit who can view your profile.

- **Trust your instincts.** Block any user that makes you feel uncomfortable, has sent inappropriate content to you or has bullied or harassed you.

- **Share any concerns with a parent, teacher or other adult you trust.** You do not have to deal with online bullying and harassment by yourself

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- **If you witness online bullying or harassment, report it** through the site's reporting system. Make a copy of any inappropriate text or images before you delete it from your profile. It may be important to have evidence of the incident. Contact law enforcement if necessary.

- **Avoid giving personal information** such as your phone number and address to people you do not know outside of the internet.

- **Ignore friend requests and direct messages from people you do not know.** Identity thieves often create fake profiles and try to gain access to other people's accounts by adding them as friends.

- **Turn off location settings.** Sharing your current location gives thieves and predators an easy way to track when you are alone or not at home.

- **Only click on links for websites that you trust.** Some links on social media sites will lead to inappropriate websites or will download viruses onto your phone, tablet or computer.

If you or someone you know is being bullied, please contact the 24 hour Parent & Youth Resource Hotline at **1-800-CHILDREN**.

You may also send a text or email to **1800children@kcsl.org**.

For more online tip cards, visit kcsl.org under the "Resources" tab.

Kansas Children's Service League

Parenting questions? Call the Parent Helpline.
1-800-CHILDREN or email/text 1800children@kcsl.org

Kansas state department of Education

Kansas Safe & Supportive Schools

Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund

Prevent Child Abuse Kansas
A chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America

Kansas Department for Children and Families
Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas