



Social Media Top Tips for Parents

While schools talk to teenagers about how to stay safe online, parents also need to take responsibility for their children's wellbeing on social media. Here are our tips on how to approach this.

FIND OUT WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS THEY USE

Keep it light – make sure your conversation doesn't turn into an interrogation. Teenagers may see their social media activity as being outside parental control so you may need to tread carefully. Explain why it's important that you know.

ASK TO SEE THEIR PROFILE & KNOW THEIR ACCOUNT NAMES

They may not want to show you so make sure you're not overly critical.

EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIVACY SETTINGS

Encourage them to put their settings to private rather than public so only their friends will see what they post. Make sure they know that their friends can re-post their content and share it so they shouldn't post anything that they wouldn't want other people seeing.

KNOW THEIR PASSWORDS

Not very popular with your children/teenagers but it is important that you try to keep a log of their passwords. They may come in useful in the future if you have any concerns. You can agree with your child/teenager that you will only use it in an emergency and don't then abuse their trust.

BE OPEN AND APPROACHABLE

Have open and non-judgemental conversations with your teenage children so they feel able to talk to you if they have a bad experience online. Don't threaten to delete their accounts as this may encourage them to be secretive and not honest with you in the long run.

CHECK WHO THEY ARE FRIENDS WITH OR WHO FOLLOWS THEM

Many teenagers mistakenly think that the number of friends they have is a sign of how popular they are. Talk to them about only accepting friend requests from people they know and trust. And if they let you, set up your own accounts and become friends online so that you can see what they are posting - you can promise not to 'like' or 'comment' on their posts.

DEALING WITH UNWANTED MESSAGES & IMAGES

Discuss what to do if they receive unsolicited or undesirable messages or images. Reassure them that they don't need to reply to messages and the best approach is to ignore or block anything or anyone they're not comfortable with. Without worrying them, make sure they are aware of online scammers and predators looking to groom young people.