

## Tips for Teens :

1. Make sure your social networking page is set to private.
2. Password protect all of your pictures/blogs/images online to ensure only those you know and trust have access
3. Do not put your personal information on the web including your social networking site.
  - a. This is going to include your full name, date of birth, what city you live in , what school you attend, where you play sports/activities and what those activities/sports are, names of your friends, your personal email address & phone number.
4. Ensure your privacy settings are up to date (Facebook just updated theirs about two weeks ago).
5. Do not “friend” people that you do not actually know. “Knowing” them in cyberspace does not count.
6. **Think about what you post.** Sharing provocative photos or intimate details online, even in private emails, can cause you problems later on. Even people you consider friends can use this info against you, especially if they become ex-friends. (courtesy of [ConnectSafely.org](http://ConnectSafely.org))
7. **Read between the “lines.”** It may be fun to check out new people for friendship or romance, but be aware that, while some people are nice, others act nice because they’re trying to get something. Flattering or supportive messages may be more about manipulation than friendship or romance.
8. **Don’t talk about sex with strangers.** Be cautious when communicating with people you don’t know in person, especially if the conversation starts to be about sex or physical details. Don’t lead them on – you don’t want to be the target of a predator’s grooming. If they persist, call your local police or contact [CyberTipline.com](http://CyberTipline.com).
9. **Avoid in-person meetings.** The only way someone can physically harm you is if you’re both in the same location, so – to be 100% safe – don’t meet them in person. If you really have to get together with someone you “met” online, don’t go alone. Have the meeting in a public place, tell a parent or some other solid backup, and bring some friends along.
10. **Be smart when using a cell phone.** All the same tips apply with phones as with computers. Except phones are with you wherever you are, often away from home and your usual support systems. Be careful who you give your number to and how you use GPS and other technologies that can pinpoint your physical location.
11. **Keep in mind that anything you post online whether that include information or pictures NEVER really goes away.** It will be online FOREVER!
12. Nothing you do online is truly anonymous.
13. Before clicking SEND or post be sure to think about the recipient’s reaction and understand that nothing is truly private online.
14. It is very easy to lie about who you are and your identity online – time does not equal trust and remember that you can be lied to online.

## **TEEN SEXTING TIPS:**

*“Sexting” usually refers to teens sharing nude photos via cellphone, but it’s happening on other devices and the Web too. The practice can have serious legal and psychological consequences, so – teens and adults – consider these tips!*

**It’s illegal:** Don’t take or send nude or sexually suggestive photos of yourself or anyone else. If you do, even if they’re of you or you pass along someone else’s – you could be charged with producing or distributing child pornography. If you keep them on your phone or computer you could be charged with possession. If they go to someone in another state (and that happens really easily), it’s a federal felony.

**Non-legal consequences:** Then there’s the emotional (and reputation) damage that can come from having intimate photos of yourself go to a friend who can become an ex-friend and send it to everyone you know. Not only can they be sent around; they can be distributed and archived online for people to search for pretty much forever.

**Not just on phones.** Sexting can be done on any media-sharing device or technology – including email and the Web. Teens have been convicted for child porn distribution for emailing sexually explicit photos to each other.

**Many causes.** In some cases, kids are responding to peer pressure in a form of cyberbullying or pressure from a boyfriend or girlfriend (they break up, and sometimes those photos get sent around out of revenge). Sometimes it’s impulsive behavior, flirting, or even blackmail. It’s always a bad idea.

**The bottom line:** Stay alert when using digital media. People aren’t always who they seem to be, even in real life, and sometimes they change and do mean things. Critical thinking about what we upload as well as download is the best protection.

Any Questions or Concerns Contact:

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