

10

WAYS TO KEEP YOUR TEEN SAFE ONLINE



1. MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

This is especially valuable for younger teens. Teens who use social media or communication apps without proper supervision are more likely to experience negative content or the harmful effects of online activity.

2. UNDERSTAND WHAT PLATFORMS YOUR TEEN IS USING

It can be hard to monitor their activity and have productive discussions about responsible use if they are using platforms that are unfamiliar to you. Some platforms can be hard to understand, but the benefit is worth the effort to understand them.

3. TALK TO YOUR TEEN

Studies show that it is critical to talk with your teen about how to be online in safe and helpful ways.

4. BE PATIENT

Trying to talk to your teen about their online activity may be met with eyerolls or other signs that they are not interested. It is important to keep your cool.

5. MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOR

If you are constantly on your phone or scrolling through social media, then your teen is much more likely to do the same. Your doing healthy offline activities can help them develop good habits, and it can strengthen your relationship with them.

6. UNDERSTAND THE TEEN BRAIN

The teen brain is still developing, and it is especially vulnerable to features of social media, such as the like button or algorithms, that are designed to keep their attention and keep them scrolling.

7. RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Taking a zero-tolerance policy toward social media and only focusing on its negative side may alienate your teen and make it harder to have productive discussions about responsible use.

8. BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR PROBLEMATIC USE

Your child's social media use might be causing problems if it interferes with their daily routines, sleep, physical activity, or offline social interactions. It is also an issue if they keep using social media even after wanting to stop.

9. TEACH SOCIAL MEDIA LITERACY

Along with their school and peers, you can help your teen develop the skills and understanding that they need to stay safe online. This can include teaching them how to distinguish credible sources of information.

10. TALK WITH OTHER PARENTS

Talking to the parents of your teen's peers can give you a more complete picture of what is happening online, and you can work together as a community to keep all teens safe, including yours.



A PARENT'S ROLE

Keeping your teen safe online may be especially challenging if you did not experience the online world of social media as a young person. Issues like cyberbullying are new, and feeling overwhelmed is understandable, but the good news is that you are not alone. There are many other parents who are facing the same challenge. Because this challenge has become so common, there are many resources to help you aid your child in avoiding the dangers of this rapidly changing technology.

**DIGITAL SAFETY STARTS
AT HOME.**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

American Psychological Association

www.apa.org/topics/social-media-internet/social-media-literacy-teens

Homeland Security

www.dhs.gov/know2protect/take-action