

Distant Learning Solutions Online Safety

Ten Tips to Keep Your Children Safe Online

1. Talk to your children regularly about how to use technology

Have an open conversation with your children when it comes to social networking. Make time to engage your children in a conversation about how they spend their time online, who they connect with, and what social media they use. This should be an informal conversation that happens regularly to keep up-to-date on what your children are doing. Advise your kids never to share passwords, not even with a close friend. If they think they did, they should change the password. Teach your children to log out of computers when they finish their work, even at home. This will prevent a friend or sibling from posting or emailing using their account--even as a joke.

When speaking with your children about their online activity, keep an open mind and be careful not to pass judgement. This will encourage your children to be open with you about their online presence in the future.

Tips to Get You Started

Ask your children:

“Help me understand why social media is important to you.”

“Who are your friends on social media? Do you personally know all of them?”

“Please accept me as your online friend, I would love to be part of your world.”

2. Make sure your child meets the minimum age requirement

The minimum age requirement for participants on most social media sites is 13 years of age.

In order to abide by the site’s regulations and teach your children to follow rules and be lawful (regardless of what their friends are doing), you should restrict your children from registering before they reach the specified age limit.

3. Control who sees your child’s posts: Privacy settings

Together with your child, go through the privacy settings of each social media platform and choose appropriate settings for the privacy and safety you seek as a family. Below are some considerations:

- Choose the “Friends” option when determining who can see your/your child’s posts instead of “Public” so that only people who have been given permission to access

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your content (pictures, comments, etc.) can do so.

- ✓ Only allow “friends” and/or “followers” you know to follow your child or send friend requests by choosing that option in the Privacy Settings
- ✓ Get alerts about unrecognized logins for security purposes.
- ✓ Turn off Location/Geo-tagging of pictures so that your child cannot be tracked down.
- ✓ Do not accept/allow people you or your child do not know personally to become “friends” or “followers.”
- ✓ Do not accept inbox messages on your/your child’s account from people you do not personally know.
- ✓ Avoid sites where anonymous exchange is allowed (such as Ask.fm).

4. Make sure your child exercise safe online behavior

In order for your child to have a safe and enjoyable experience on social media, it is important for him/her to follow a few commonsense rules.

- ✓ **Think twice before posting**

Whatever is posted online is there for life. If an embarrassing picture or a rude or mean comment is posted, it cannot be taken back. This will affect your/your child’s reputation and how people, universities, employers, etc. perceive you.

- ✓ **Be careful what you share online**

Make sure your children know what can be posted online and what should never be posted online. Teach your children how to draw the line between what is appropriate and what is not.

Be very clear as to what your children can share about themselves, their family, and their environment. No phone numbers, addresses, or E-mail addresses should be posted online.

- ✓ **Respect others**

Children must be taught to respect each other online and not to post embarrassing pictures and comments about other people. This includes tagging and negatively commenting on other people’s posts.

Before posting a photo of other people, out of courtesy ask if they mind if you share their photograph. Do not post pictures without permission. Some pictures and pos

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might hurt others. Go the extra mile to ensure that no one gets hurt with your online activity.

- ✓ **Do not share private information**

Make sure your child does not give out personal information (address, location, credit card number, passwords) to third party applications.

5. Beware of predators

Remind your children not to interact inappropriately with people they do not know and not to meet online "friends" in the real world unless accompanied by an adult.

6. Deal with cyberbullying

If your child is being cyberbullied, teach them to not respond, to keep a copy of all the messages, and to report it to the school or website. If the messages include threats, report this to the police. Encourage your children to let you know about any online bullying they may know of or be experiencing and discourage them from responding to it. Let your children know that most social media sites provide the ability to detach themselves from unwanted connections including by:

- ✓ **Unfriending/un-following someone:** You can remove a connection to a friend who you are no longer comfortable sharing with. If you decide that you'd like to be friends later, you can send them a friend request or follow them.
- ✓ **Blocking someone:** If you are being harassed by someone online or if you just don't want to be visible to them, you can block them from your timeline. When you block someone, it breaks all ties you have with them.
- ✓ **Reporting abusive or offensive content:** The most efficient way to report abuse is to do it as soon as it occurs by using the "Report" option on the post, timeline page, or the offender's profile page. Reports are confidential. People you report won't know that they've been reported.

Tip: Remind your children that you are there to support them. *"You know you can tell me if you ever have a problem at school or online."*

Please contact the **BAKIS Social Worker Ms. Zainab Saleh** to report cases of cyberbullying or inappropriate online behavior. The school is always ready to provide support.

Contact:

Ms. Zainab Saleh Social Worker

zainab.saleh@beaconhouse-azr.ac.ae

For Anonymous reporting please Fill in the survey

<https://forms.gle/uEzvspDdoxuDwUaV>

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7. Respect boundaries and establish trust

If you have friended your child online, try to respect the same boundaries you use offline. Let your relationship dictate how you interact. Social media is like a get-together at one of your child's friends' houses. You can give permission for your teenager to attend, and even though you won't be there to monitor his/her behavior, you trust your child to have good judgment around peers and other parents. It's all about balancing your teen's growing independence and his/her need for privacy with your safety concerns.

8. Protect your accounts: Security settings

It is recommended that you periodically change your passwords to stay safe and review the information on all of your accounts including your E-mail, phone number, and home address and make adjustments as needed.

It is equally important to protect your family computer through up-to-date antivirus software and firewall settings. Use complex passwords made up of number, letters, and symbols in order to make it more difficult for hackers to steal them.

9. Avoid clicking on unfamiliar links

It is important that family members avoid responding to ads and unfamiliar or suspicious links received through E-mail or appearing on social media.

10. Use a child-safe search engine

Use a child-safe search engine and Internet content filters like Google's Safe Search filter to change browser settings to prevent adult content from appearing in search results.