

## Social Media Rules

Setting ground rules for using social media is a good idea. It's a great way for parents and kids to work together to be safe and responsible online. Ideas from mediasmart.ca:

- Only follow people you know.
- Show an adult any message or post that makes you feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Do not share any personal information of yourself, like your age, where you live, and where you go to school.
- Turn off location settings that tell people where you are or where a picture was taken.
- Never publish anything you don't want your parents, teachers and grandparents to see – pictures can be shared in a matter of seconds.
- When creating a password, make it something that is hard for someone to guess but easy for you to remember. Don't share your password with anyone but your parents or a trusted adult.
- Always check your privacy settings.
- Think before you share, comment or send a message.
- Do not upload pictures of others without their permission.



For more information on crime prevention, scan the following QR code on your smart phone or visit our website at [www.torontopolice.on.ca/crimeprevention/](http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/crimeprevention/)



To report a crime anonymously, call Crime Stoppers at: 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or online at: [www.crimestoppers.com](http://www.crimestoppers.com)

For more crime prevention tips visit: [tps.on.ca/crimeprevention](http://tps.on.ca/crimeprevention)

### In An Emergency: Call 9-1-1

To report a crime to the Toronto Police that is not an emergency call: 416-808-2222

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## SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS



## WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA APPS ARE YOUR CHILDREN USING?

For kids and teens, being on social media is part of daily life and a great way to communicate with friends and document and share what they are doing in real time.

There are plenty of good things about social media — but also many potential dangers and things that you want your kids and teens to avoid. As a parent, you can help them navigate this new world in a healthy way.



**Reduce The Risk!**

**Reduce The Opportunity!**

**[tps.on.ca](http://tps.on.ca)**

# SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR PARENTS

Most of these apps offer safety tips for users that contain important steps to protecting privacy. There are also many online resources for parents who want to learn more about the apps their teens are using and how to set up parental controls and privacy settings, including: [mediasmarts.ca](http://mediasmarts.ca), [techwithoutviolence.ca](http://techwithoutviolence.ca), [ProtectKidsOnline.ca](http://ProtectKidsOnline.ca), [internetmatters.org](http://internetmatters.org)

## Facebook

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**WHAT IS IT?** Facebook is a social networking site that allows users to share photos, comments and status updates.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:** Teens sometimes forget that what they post on the internet can be shared by others, and that not every post will be appropriate to every situation. Employers increasingly research Facebook pages to find out more about job applicants before making a hiring decision, for example. Encourage your teen to build and maintain a positive online reputation and presence. Let them know that even so-called “private groups” are never private. They should never post something online that they would not be willing to say in public.

## Snapchat

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**WHAT IS IT?** Snapchat is a messaging app that allows users to post videos and pictures that “disappear” after a few seconds.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:** Kids and teens assume that their snaps disappear forever, which gives them a false sense of security about sending risky or embarrassing photos. Other users can replay a snap or take a screenshot to share an image. Remind your child or teen that the photos they post are never really gone, and that the Internet is never private. What they consider a private chat could lead them down a dangerous road – possibly even toward criminal charges.

## Instagram

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**WHAT IS IT?** Instagram is all about selfies, filters and followers. Kids and teens take, crop and modify photos to share them with their contacts. They can also use hashtags to reach a lot of people very quickly.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:** Instagram has a ‘stickers’ feature that lets them post where their pictures were taken. This makes it easier for anyone to track their whereabouts, and leaves them vulnerable to stalkers. Ask your child or teen to turn off their location tagging by setting their account to ghost mode.

## YouTube

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**WHAT IS IT?** YouTube is great for watching videos, posting videos and following other “YouTubers.” Kids and teens love to set up their own channels and grow their following.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:** YouTube comments are notoriously negative. Posting personal videos can leave your child or teen vulnerable to criticism and may attract trolls – people who intentionally start negative conversations. Encourage your child or teen to ignore negative comments and to block the user if they experience harassment. Discuss what they should and shouldn’t be posting, and remind them to steer clear of hateful discussions about other people’s content.

## Skype

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**WHAT IS IT?** Skype allows users to have unlimited video and audio calls, exchange messages, and share photos and files with other users.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:** If your child or teen sets up a Skype account without adjusting the privacy settings, any user can send them messages, calls or videos. Online predators often pose as someone else by using a false account with a fake profile picture, or pretending to have a “broken” webcam. Discuss why it’s never a good idea to Skype with someone your child or teen has never met, especially if they claim their camera is “broken.”

## WhatsApp Messenger

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**WHAT IS IT?** WhatsApp is one of the most popular instant messaging apps with over 1 billion users. Kids and teens use it to chat or call other WhatsApp users around the world.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:** People share fake news, spam messages and spam links. Kids and teens can be fooled into clicking on them, or giving out personal information or a credit card number to get new upgrades. Tell your child or teen to ignore or block messages that ask them to tap on an unknown link, a link that ‘activates’ new features or one that asks for personal information. Guide them to the App Store or Google Play Store to access new features.