Help Adults Understand Your Use of Social Media

Because adults sometimes are concerned about teen use of social media, there are many things you can do to allay their fears. You might:

- Show them how to use the privacy settings on Facebook or another social media site.
- Show them that you don't post your address or phone number on social media sites.
- Ask an adult for help when you aren't sure what is the best way to keep some of your information private.
- Let an adult know if someone is bothering you on a social site.
- Show them how your use of social media is helping with a school project.

Learn More
Born Digital
http://www.youtube.com/user/
digitalnatives#g/c/43558371DB96CC9A
A set of videos about social media identity, safety, privacy, and more.

Facebook Privacy Guide
http://www.facebook.com/privacy/
explanation.php
The ins-and-outs of using Facebook's privacy settings, straight from Facebook.

Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media
http://tinyurl.com/4emxmbf
This book talks about how youth are using media in such settings as at home, online, and after school.

Online Safety 3.0: Empowering and Protecting Youth
http://www.connectsafely.org/
Commentaries-Staff/online-safety-30-
empowering-and-protecting-youth.html
A great resource that gets beyond the stranger-danger fears and focuses on new media literacy and digital citizenship.

Pew Internet & American Life Project
http://tinyurl.com/pewteens
Research you can use when talking with adults about your use of social media.

YALSA's Teen Tech week strives to guarantee that al teens are competent and ethical users of technology. Learn more at www.ala.org/teentechweek.

Social Media

A Guide for Teens

from

What is Social Media?
Blogs, wikis, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Pandora — all allow users to create their own content and to connect with other people. That's why they are called social media. You may also hear these kinds of tools called "Web 2.0."

Unfortunately, lumping these kinds of sites together by referring to them as social media can give adults the impression that these tools are used mostly for social situations, perhaps for meeting people you don't know in virtual environments.

Why do Adults Get Nervous about Social Media?
Adults get nervous about many things that have the potential to be dangerous for their children and teens. They sometimes get nervous about teens hanging out in a mall because it's possible that a stranger might strike up a conversation that is not a safe one for a teen to engage in. The same can happen in a social media environment. Someone who doesn't have your best interests in mind might try to contact you and strike up a friendship.

It's true that everyone (adults and teens) who uses social media has to think carefully about what they post about themselves and who has access to their private information. Sometimes adults aren't sure that teens know how to be careful in online social situations. And, sometimes, teens aren't as careful as they should be.

What's My Digital Footprint?
Digital footprint is a phrase that is used to describe the virtual tracks that everyone leaves behind when posting information online. Photographs posted on Flickr, the personal information added to a Facebook wall, the book reviews or comments on blogs or other websites — all of these leave a footprint of where you have been, information about what you think, and details about who you are. Put all of those pieces together and someone might be able to create a pretty accurate (or inaccurate) picture of you.

There are ways to be careful about your digital footprint; that's where thinking about privacy settings comes in.

What's Privacy Got to Do With It?
It's probable that you don't want everyone to see all of the details of your life. That's why you need to make sure the personal information you post on social sites can only be seen by the friends and family you select. Most social media sites provide users with the ability to change privacy settings. These settings are important in determining who can see what information is posted.

In general, it's a good idea to keep your profile and photos private. Do not let strangers find out personal details about you. Make sure to regularly check your privacy settings on social media sites. A site can (and often does) change the way those settings work. What you thought was private is suddenly no longer private.

What's Reputation Management?
College admissions officers, as well as employers, are now looking at social media sites as they make admissions and hiring decisions. You don't want the information you post on social sites to stand in the way of getting into college or getting a job. That's why you want to manage your reputation online. You can do that by:
- Only posting photos that show you (or your friends) in a positive light.
- Only writing positive things about others on your own, or their, Facebook walls.
- Only posting links to sites and resources that are not embarrassing for others to see.