

Staying safe

How you present yourself on Facebook says a lot about who you are — just like what you say and do at school or with your friends. In all public places, online and off, it's important to represent yourself as the kind of person you want to be.



The importance of being you

Facebook is a community where people use their real names and identities, so we're all accountable for our actions. It's against the [Facebook terms](#) to lie about your name or age. Help us keep the community safe by reporting fake profiles to Facebook if you ever see them.

Think before you post

It's easy to get caught up in the moment and write or do something that may seem hilarious at the time. But remember, what you say can really hurt someone, or come back to haunt you. Think before you post. It only takes a second or two. Ask yourself if you really want to say it. Make sure you don't mind if your friends, classmates or teachers hear about it later.

Also remember that any information you post – whether in a comment, a note or a video chat – might be copied, pasted and distributed in ways that you didn't intend. Before you post, ask yourself - would I be OK if this content was shared widely at school or with my future employer?

At the same time, we all make mistakes. If you find yourself wishing you hadn't said or done something, it's never too late to apologise.

Check out additional tips from Facebook and MediaSmarts in the [Think Before You Share](#) guide.

Don't talk to me anymore

If you ever receive hurtful or abusive messages or posts on your profile page you have options. Depending on how serious the situation is, you can ignore it, ask the person to stop [unfriend](#) or [block](#) the person, or tell your parents, a teacher, a counsellor or another adult you trust. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect.

Report abusive content

Make sure you always [report](#) abusive content—whether it’s on your profile page, or someone else’s. You can also report inappropriate Pages, Groups, Events and fake or impostor profiles. (Remember that reporting is confidential, so no one will know who made the report).

Tips for teens

1. Don’t share your password with anyone.
2. Only accept friend requests from people you know.
3. Don’t post anything you wouldn’t want your parents, teachers or employer to see.
4. Be authentic. The real you is better than anything you might pretend to be.
5. Learn about [privacy settings](#), and review them often.

Facebook and law enforcement

We work with the law enforcement community to promote safety, on and offline.



Protecting Your Privacy

We take the privacy of your information very seriously. If Facebook receives an official request for account records, we first establish the legitimacy of the request. When responding, we apply strict legal and privacy requirements. See the [law enforcement guidelines](#) for more details.

Promoting Safety

We work with law enforcement to help people on Facebook stay safe. This sometimes means providing information to law enforcement officials that will help them respond to emergencies, including those that involve the immediate risk of harm, suicide prevention and the recovery of missing children. We may also supply law enforcement with information to help prevent or respond to fraud and other illegal activity, as well as violations of the [Facebook terms](#).

Getting Help

If you think you or someone you know is in an emergency situation, please call your local police. If you see something on Facebook that may violate the [Facebook terms](#), please [report it to us](#).

For Law Enforcement

If you are a law enforcement official, please review the [law enforcement guidelines](#).

Help your teens stay safe

For years, teenagers spent much of their free time talking to friends on the phone. Today's teens aren't so different. They just have more ways to communicate.



What's my teen doing on Facebook?

Just like adults, teens use Facebook to connect with friends — through chat, personal messages and sharing photos, videos, links and other kinds of information. They use Facebook to announce achievements, wish each other a happy birthday and plan social events — like going to the cinema or to a friend's house.

Who Can See My Teen's Posts?

Facebook enables people to control the audience of their posts. Encourage your kids to review their privacy settings and to make sure they consider the audience when sharing content on Facebook. Also encourage your kids to use their [Activity Log](#), a powerful tool that enables people to review and manage what they've shared on Facebook. With your activity log, you can manage who sees your content across Facebook. No one else sees your activity log.

Start a conversation

Parents don't need to be social media experts in order to ask questions and begin an ongoing dialogue with teens. Have conversations about safety and technology early and often, in the same way that you talk to your kids about being safe at school, in the car, on public transportation or playing sport.

One of the best ways to begin a conversation is to ask your teens why services like Facebook are important to them. You might also ask them to show you how to set up your own Facebook timeline, so you can see what it's all about. Discuss what's appropriate information to share online—and what

isn't. Ask them about privacy settings and suggest that you go over them together, regularly. Set ground rules and enforce them.

Learn from your teen

Today's teens have grown up with the internet, mobile phones and text messaging. Most don't distinguish between being online or off. New technology has always been a part of their lives, so when we write it off as trivial or a waste of time, we criticise a big part of their social interaction. You probably know this already, but unless you're really on top of social media, your teenager probably knows more about it than you do. That's OK. Don't be afraid to ask your child to show you the ropes!

It's about respect

It's also important to talk about the Golden Rule: treating others the way you want to be treated. This also applies to using new technologies. Make sure your teenagers know where to go for support if someone ever harasses them. Help them understand how to make responsible and safe choices about what they post—because anything they put online can be misinterpreted or taken out of context.

Once You're on Facebook...

If you have a Facebook timeline, and have friended your child, try to respect the same boundaries you use offline. Let your relationship dictate how you interact. For example, whether you join a conversation among your child's friends or if you post on their wall. Think of social media as a get-together at one of your child's friends' houses. You can give permission for your teen to attend, and even though you won't be there to monitor their behaviour, you trust your teen to have good judgment around peers and other parents. It's all about balancing your teen's growing independence and need for privacy with your safety concerns.

See our [Tools page](#) for more information and resources for parenting on the web.

Learn the lingo

Friends? Friends of friends? Like? Poke? Wall? Learn what all these terms mean in the [Facebook Help Centre](#).

Tips for parents

1. It can be tough to keep up with technology. Don't be afraid to ask your kids to explain it to you.
2. If you're not already on Facebook, consider joining. That way you'll understand what it's all about!
3. Create a Facebook group for your family so you will have a private space to share photos and keep in touch.
4. Teach your teens the online safety basics so they can keep their Facebook timeline (and other online accounts) private and safe.
5. Talk about technology safety just like you talk about safety while driving and playing sports.

Start a Conversation with Your Teen

1. Do you feel like you can tell me if you ever have a problem at school or online?
2. Help me understand why Facebook is important to you.
3. Can you help me set up a Facebook timeline?
4. Who are your friends on Facebook?

5. I want to be your friend on Facebook. Would that be OK with you? What would make it OK?

Teaching digital kids

Technology is all around us and your students don't stop using mobile phones and social media when they get to school. Both in and out of the classroom, teachers can play an important role in keeping teens safe.



Model citizenship

Today's teens are growing up in a digital world. Though most adults aren't as active with social media and new technologies, teens are still looking to them for examples of how to be good citizens—online and offline. That's why we encourage educators to engage with students online. Please keep in mind that different schools and districts have varying policies about the use of social media in the classroom. Make sure you understand your school's guidelines.

Facebook in the classroom

You can use Facebook as a communications hub. Create a public page or smaller closed group for your classes to keep parents informed, distribute homework or permission slips and share photos or videos from classroom activities or field trips. Anyone can like a page on Facebook, and students who do will see updates in their News Feed. Groups, on the other hand, allow you to limit membership to only those you approve. You can also email all the members of a group.

[Read this blog post](#) to learn more about the differences between pages and groups.

Both personal and professional

Maintaining a page or group is also a great way to establish a presence as a teacher without blurring the line between your personal and professional lives. You can interact with parents, students and colleagues via your page or group, called something like "Ms. Smith's Year 9 Science Class." Again, be sure to understand and comply with your school's social media policies.

Keeping private things private

If you do decide to use Facebook pages or groups to engage with your students, make sure to customise your privacy settings so that they reflect the amount of information you want to share with people who know you from school. You can also model safe behaviour by being careful about what you share online.

Report abuse

If you see inappropriate content, please report it to us so we can review it. We remove reported items if they violate our [Terms](#).

You and your students can also block another person from finding you in a search, viewing your profile or sending you a message.

Tips for teachers

1. Know your school's policy on using social media in the classroom and comply.
2. Use public pages for your classes to post homework assignments and other updates.
3. Use groups to control membership and facilitate discussion.
4. Be a role model as a good online citizen.
5. Report inappropriate content to Facebook.