**Help Your Teens Play It 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 a movie or 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](https://www.facebook.com/help/249364625099845#What-is-my-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 dialog 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, riding public transportation, or playing sports.

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, cell 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 criticize a big part of their social interaction. You probably know this already, but unless you’re really on top of social media, your teenager most likely 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 teens 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 behavior, 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](https://www.facebook.com/safety/tools) 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 Center](https://www.facebook.com/help/?section=using).

**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?

Retrieved from : https://www.facebook.com/safety/groups/parents/