

Kids are much smarter (and sneakier) than we give them credit for! But they're still impressionable and need supervision and guidance to ensure their safety!

CONNECT

- Set clear rules, expectations, boundaries, and consequences—before something happens
- Talk with your child and participate in their digital lives predators avoid children who are confident and are being supervised
- Make sure friends and family are aware of your rules and boundaries—and they follow them too
- Report Concerns— Contact local resources

LEARN

- Know the apps/platforms your child uses—and what their screen names /passwords are
- Teach your children the potential dangers of being online—including Red Flags of abuse and exploitation
- Research the best parental controls for your family unit—and upgrade or change settings as appropriate

ENGAGE

- Talk about it - normalize safety conversations
- Get involved - know what your child does online
- Resolve the mistakes— educate rather than punish or taking away electronic privileges
- Talk about “strangers” and how you and your child define someone only known as an online friends/acquaintance

LOCATION:

Set up workstations for children and teens that provide quick visual access to the screen for easy check-ins by safe adults. Never allow devices behind closed doors or in private areas

RESOURCES

SCHUYLER COUNTY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

(607) 210-0955

SCHUYLER COUNTY DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES

(607) 535-8522

SURVIVOR SUPPORT SERVICES

(formerly SARC)

(866) 307-4086

SAFE HARBOUR (TRAFFICKING):

607-742-9629

HELP KEEP KIDS & TEENS SAFE ONLINE

A Guide for
Parents & Guardians



WHERE DO I START?

Keep Devices and Game Consoles in a common area

Set Parental Controls on apps and devices

Youth report exposure to sexual images, hate speech, violence, body shaming, and drugs/alcohol while online.
Be Prepared!

TAKE INTEREST

- Know your child's online activities. Watch them play or play with them
- Don't allow apps or sites if you cannot be a friend or follower to monitor activities, including live chats/messenger
- Discuss Red Flags of abuse and exploitation with them
- Remember: "banning" social media at home doesn't mean your child isn't using it elsewhere without your knowledge or supervision
- Any photo/video/post can be altered, screenshotted, altered! and then shared/re-posted
- Bullies and predators count on a child's silence and compliance!
- Manipulation or fear are often used by online predators and cyberbullies

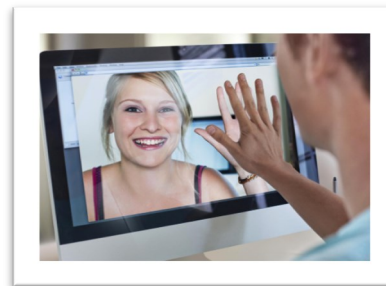
PRECAUTIONS

Ensure your child never discusses or puts in their User Names anything that can be linked to their real identity or location!

Consider an emoji or landscape instead of a real photo for profile pictures

RED FLAGS

- Youth having 'secrets' or code talk
- Sudden separation or distrust toward authority figures and caregivers
- Decreased social interaction with real life family and friends
- New anxiety, depression, isolation and 'addiction' to certain online 'friends/family'
- A new person taking specific interest in the child: excessive compliments, sending gifts, making promises or engaging in relationships
- Swift changes in sleep, studies, dress or other interests
- Child sneaking off, running away or refusing to tell adults where they are



IF SOMETHING HAPPENS:

- Stay calm, use casual body language
- Don't do or say anything that may affect the child being honest with you
- Take screenshots or save evidence but DO NOT delete anything or post about it
- Listen, and thank the child for coming to you
- Contact resources for help!

WHAT TO KNOW

Instagram allows kids 13+ . Profiles are public and can be viewed or misused by predators and trolls looking to bully or prey on youngsters.



Snapchat messages supposedly 'disappear' automatically; nothing is controlled. Adult content is common and accounts can be faked. It's easy to take screenshots or alter info.



Omegle is completely random so kids are linked to strangers and the app is fraught with predators and inappropriate sexual content.



Like Omegle, Kik is dangerous due to perceived anonymity and cyberbullying despite the 17+ as there's no verifications.



Tinder uses GPS to connect users with others nearby. Cyberbullies and predators use it to track and torment youth with fake accounts, but it's intended for adult use.



TikTok is very popular with youth and may contain inappropriate language or sexual content. Accounts are public unless controls are set to prevent inappropriate content.



Twitter is public, so everyone can see posts, retweets or comments. Twitter also has ample adult content, drug/alcohol info and uses geolocating to link you to others nearby for parties or meet ups.



Always monitor! The sites/apps kids use change all the time!