

Healthy Social Media Practices

A Guidebook for Youth



Youth Services Department
Education & Training Center



What is Social Media?

Social media refers to websites and mobile apps that let people connect online, like Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, Snapchat, and LinkedIn. Users can share, create, or exchange digital content such as information, messages, photos, or videos.



Social Media Definitions



Cyberbullying

Hurting or harassing someone online. This can include mean messages, threats, or sharing private info without permission.

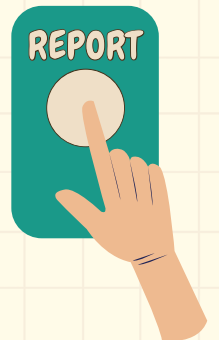
Misinformation

False or misleading information shared on social media. People may share it by mistake.



Safety

Protecting users from harm online. This includes blocking, reporting, and filtering content.



Report

Telling the platform about harmful or rule-breaking content. This helps keep social media safer.

Privacy

Controlling who sees your posts and information. It also means managing your data and settings.



Social Media Word Search

W M F T C S H A R E S K N B K
G C O B O U V C M L P Q F L Y
U Y L E N M P O I I R H G O K
T B L R N E R M S K I K R C W
P E O X E M O M I E V T E K Z
H R W P C O F E N F A I P G P
A B J O T J I N F O C J O A L
S U N S I I L T O L Y U R N F
H L Y T O V E J R L M X T B A
T L R S N E J I M O Y S I F F
A Y V Q C N I U A W Z A U Q R
G I T N F C Z M T E Y F P M I
M N H A O O G Y I R X E M E E
C G G M W U B T O S K T N O N
Q B L B F K M Z N C Y Y D R D

Misinformation
Connection
Cyberbullying
Like
Followers
Emoji

Hashtag
Profile
Post
Follow
Comment

Friend
Shares
Block
Safety
Privacy
Report



Impacts of Social Media on Mental Health



Positive Impact

Social media can help you stay connected with friends, learn new things, and express yourself.

Negative Impact



Spending too much time on social media can lead to feelings of anxiety, loneliness, low self-esteem, and jealousy. It can also expose us to fake news or harmful comparisons with others.



Why Social Media can be FUN AND HELPFUL!

Stay Close to Friends and Family

Even if they live far away, you can see what they're doing and share your own fun moments!

Learn New Things

Discover awesome facts about animals, space, sports, and more with videos and pictures.

Show Your Talents

Draw, sing, or tell stories and share them with others who will cheer you on!

Make New Friends

Find kids who like the same games or hobbies as you, no matter where they live.

Ask for Help

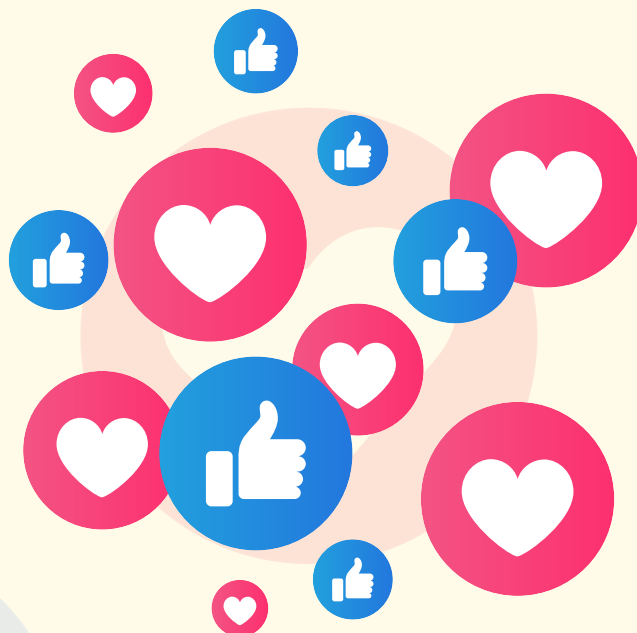
If you're stuck or confused, there are friendly people online who can help.



The Benefits of Social Media

FILL IN THE BLANK:

1. SOCIAL MEDIA HELPS ME _____
2. SOCIAL MEDIA ALLOWS ME TO _____
3. SOCIAL MEDIA GIVES ME A PLATFORM TO _____
4. THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, I CAN _____
5. SOCIAL MEDIA HELPS ME FEEL _____



IMPORTANT INTERNET SAFETY TIPS!

ONLINE PREDATORS

These are strangers who might try to trick kids online by pretending to be someone nice. They want to get personal information or meet up, which can be dangerous!

Remember: Never talk to strangers online or share your personal info (like your full name, address, or school).

CYBERBULLYING

This is when someone says mean or hurtful things online, like in messages, comments, or posts. Cyberbullying can make people feel sad or scared.

If you see or feel this, tell a trusted adult right away – you're never alone!

OVERSHARING

This means sharing too much personal stuff online, like where you live, your phone number, or your daily plans. Oversharing can make it easier for the wrong people to find out too much about you.

Tip: Always think twice before sharing – if it feels too personal, keep it private!

The Dangers of Social Media



Draw a line to connect each scenario with the appropriate risk.

1. A stranger sends a friend request with a message asking where you live.



Online Predators

2. You post a funny picture of you and your friends, but one of them shares it without your permission.

3. Someone leaves a mean comment on your photo calling you names.

4. You share your phone number with a new friend you met online.

Oversharing

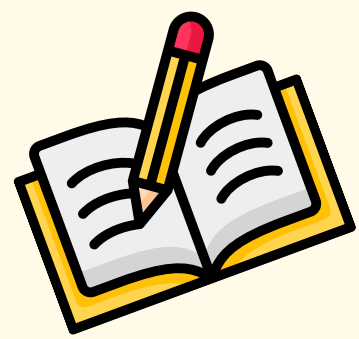
5. You share a private moment, like a text or photo, with a close friend, and they screenshot it.

6. Someone you don't know sends a message saying they want to meet in person.

Cyberbullying

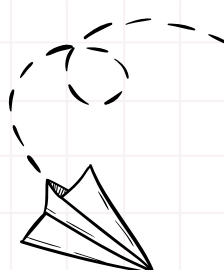
7. A person you don't know starts complimenting your photos too much and asks to meet you in real life.





Reflecting...

After completing the matching activity, take a moment to reflect on the scenarios. How can you stay safe on social media? Write about it or draw a picture below.



Cyberbullying Awareness

Read the statements below and decide if they are true or false. Circle the correct answer.

Cyberbullying can happen over text, social media, or email.



True or False

It's okay to respond to hurtful messages with the same tone.

True or False

You should always tell a trusted adult if you're bullied online.

True or False

It's important to take screenshots or save hurtful messages as proof of cyberbullying.

True or False

Cyberbullying only happens between strangers, not friends.

True or False



Palm Beach County
Board of County Commissioners

Setting Boundaries & Privacy

Setting boundaries with social media is a great way to take care of your mental and physical health. By creating rules, you can make sure that you enjoy social media in a healthy way without it taking over your life.

TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

NO SCREENS 30 MINUTES BEFORE BED.

TAKE A BREAK AFTER 1 HOUR OF SCROLLING.

ONLY CHECK SOCIAL MEDIA AFTER FINISHING HOMEWORK OR CHORES.

LIMIT SOCIAL MEDIA TIME TO 1 HOUR PER DAY.

NO SOCIAL MEDIA DURING FAMILY MEALS OR GATHERINGS.

ONLY USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR A TOTAL OF 30 MINUTES AFTER SCHOOLWORK IS COMPLETE.

TURN OFF NOTIFICATIONS TO AVOID CONSTANT DISTRACTIONS.

DON'T POST ANYTHING IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT. TAKE TIME TO THINK BEFORE SHARING.

ONLY FOLLOW ACCOUNTS THAT INSPIRE OR MAKE YOU FEEL POSITIVE.



Setting Boundaries & Privacy

WRITE DOWN THREE RULES YOU WANT TO FOLLOW WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA. THESE BOUNDARIES WILL HELP YOU STAY BALANCED AND FOCUSED ON OTHER IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES TOO!

Rimberio

RULE 1



RULE 2



RULE 3



Social Media Scramble

OTIKOT

EOKFCBAO

IMNATGSAR

YBTUOUE

SPATNACH



Healthy Screen Time

Fill-in-the-Chart: Create a weekly schedule that balances screen time with other important activities such as studying, exercise, hobbies, and socializing offline.

Example:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM | Study/Online Learning |
| 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM | Lunch & Break |
| 1:00 PM – 1:30 PM | Social Media Time (Limit to 30 minutes) |
| 1:30 PM – 5:00 PM | Exercise/Outdoor Play |
| 5:00 PM – 5:30 PM | Social Media (Relax time) |

Hint: Try to limit Social Media Time to 30 minutes at a time

List three things you can do to avoid too much screen time:





Healthy Screen Time

Now you try!

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Hint: Try to limit Social Media Time to 30 minutes at a time.



Common Traps That Signal Misinformation:

TOO GOOD (OR BAD) TO BE TRUE

BIG PROMISES, MIRACLE CURES, OR EXTREME STATEMENTS ARE OFTEN RED FLAGS.

NO SOURCE OR FAKE SOURCE

IF IT DOESN'T SAY WHERE THE INFO CAME FROM, OR USES MADE-UP EXPERTS, IT'S LIKELY UNRELIABLE.

EMOTIONALLY CHARGED

MISINFORMATION OFTEN TRIES TO MAKE YOU ANGRY, SCARED, OR SHOCKED SO YOU'LL SHARE IT FAST.

VIRAL WITHOUT CONTEXT

JUST BECAUSE SOMETHING HAS THOUSANDS OF LIKES OR SHARES DOESN'T MEAN IT'S TRUE.

Tips for Spotting Misinformation:

- Check the source: Is it a **reliable** website or expert?
- Look for **evidence**: Are facts or studies provided?
- **Compare** information: See if other trusted sources say the same thing.
- Ask yourself: Does this sound **too good (or bad)** to be true?

Identifying Misinformation



Post A:

"Drinking lemon juice cures all illnesses! Try it every day and never get sick."

Post B:

"Experts say washing your hands for 20 seconds helps prevent spreading germs."

Post C:

"If you don't get 10,000 steps a day, you will gain weight instantly."

WHICH POSTS DO YOU THINK ARE MISINFORMATION? WHY?

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN CHECK IF A SOCIAL MEDIA POST IS TRUE OR FALSE?

HOW MIGHT MISINFORMATION AFFECT YOUR FEELINGS OR CHOICES?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO QUESTION THINGS YOU SEE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?



RESOURCES FOR PARENTS



Start with Open Conversation

Instead of banning or policing use, ask questions like:

"How does being online make you feel?"

"Who do you follow, and how do they affect your mood?"

Model Healthy Use

Demonstrate balance by limiting your own screen time, not using devices during meals, and prioritizing in-person interactions.

Create Tech-Free Zones & Times

Establish family rules like no phones at dinner, during homework, or one hour before bed.

Encourage Following Positive Content

Help your teen find uplifting, educational, or inspirational accounts. Unfollow accounts that trigger stress, anxiety, or comparison.

Watch for Red Flags

Withdrawal, mood changes, secrecy, or sudden drops in self-esteem could indicate unhealthy online interactions.

Use Privacy Settings Together

Teach them how to block/report harmful content and adjust who can view or comment on their posts.



What is Therapy?

Therapy is a safe space and judgment-free zone where you can talk about your thoughts and feelings with someone who listens and helps you find ways to feel better. It's a place to learn new skills, build confidence, and get support when life feels tough.

Why is Therapy Helpful?

- **A safe space to share feelings**
- **Teaches tools to handle stress, anxiety, and emotions**
- **Better communication with friends & family**
- **More confidence in yourself**
- **Healing & support for tough experiences**



Breaking the Stigma!

Taking care of your mental health is just as important as taking care of your physical health. Therapy isn't just for big problems —it's for anyone who wants to grow, heal, and feel their best. Asking for help is a sign of strength!



Let's Normalize Therapy!

- **It's okay to ask for help.**
- **You don't have to go through things alone.**
- **Everyone deserves support and care.**

Your mental health matters. You matter.

Therapy is here to help you feel heard, understood, and stronger everyday!



FREE THERAPY SERVICES IN PALM BEACH COUNTY!

IN-PERSON AND TELEMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES OFFERED FOR AGES 0-22

Education & Training Center

100 Australian Ave, Suite 210, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

(561) 233-4460

Highridge Family Center (Residential)

4200 N. Australian Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33407

(561) 625-2540

Youth & Family Counseling - West County

38754 State Road 80, Belle Glade, FL 33430

(561) 992-1233

Youth & Family Counseling - North County

3188 PGA Blvd., Room 1436, West Palm Beach, FL 33410

(561) 242-5714

Youth & Family Counseling - South County

345 S. Congress Ave, West Palm Beach, FL 33445

(561) 276-1340

Youth & Family Counseling - Four Points

50 S. Military Trail, Suite 203, West Palm Beach, FL 33415

(561) 242-5714

pbc.gov/youthservices

