

Appropriate Online Behavior

- Think Before You Share
 - What you post online could have a bigger "audience" than you think.
 - Even if you use privacy settings, it's impossible to completely control who sees your social networking profile, pictures, videos, or texts. Before you click "send," think about how you will feel if your family, teachers, coaches, or neighbors find it.
 - Once you post information online, you can't take it back.
 - You may think that you've deleted information from a site —or that you will delete it later. Know that older versions may exist on other people's computers. That means your posts could live somewhere permanently.
 - Get someone's okay before you share photos or videos which include other people.
 - Online photo albums are great for storing and sharing pictures of special events, and camera phones make it easy to capture every moment. Stop and think about your own privacy —and other people's —before you share photos and videos online. It can be embarrassing, unfair, and even unsafe to send or post photos and videos without getting permission from the people in them.
- Interact with Tact
 - Politeness counts - Texting is another way to have a conversation with real people. Texters are people too, and just like people talking face-to-face or on the phone: they appreciate "please" and "thank you" (or pls and ty).
 - Tone it down - In online conversations, using all CAPS, long rows of exclamation points or large bolded fonts is the same as shouting, yelling, or otherwise being very loud.
 - Think about who you are sending the message too - Before you hit send on an email, stop and think about whether everyone needs to see that message.
 - Avatars are people too - When you're playing a game or exploring an online world where you can create a character and interact with others, remember real people are behind those characters on the screen. Respect their feelings just like you would in person. Remember that your character or avatar is a virtual person —what does it tell people about you and your interests?
 - Don't impersonate - It's wrong and in most cases illegal, and most certainly hurtful to create sites, pages, or posts that seem to come from someone else.
 - Speak up - If you see something inappropriate on a social networking site or in a game or chat room, let the website know and tell an adult you trust. Using Report Abuse links can help keep sites fun for everyone.
 - Don't stand for bullying online or off - Treat others the way you want to be treated —whether you're interacting with them online, on your phone, or in person.
- Protect Your Information
 - Some information should stay private – like Social Security numbers and financial information, such as bank accounts, and credit card information. Be careful when using such information online; make sure a website is secure and authentic before giving your information.
 - Keep your passwords private – The longer your password, the harder it is to crack. Don't share your passwords with anybody, including your best friends, your boyfriend, or your girlfriend. They don't need to know it, and it just puts you at risk.
 - Avoid phishing scams – Don't reply to text, email, or pop-up messages that ask you for personal or financial information. Even if the message looks like it comes from a person or

organization you know and trust, or threatens that something bad will happen if you don't reply. These messages are most likely fake, and are sent to steal your information.

- Protect Your Computer
 - Be cautious about opening attachments or clicking on links: Some contain viruses and spyware. Sometimes free stuff —like games, ring tones or screen savers —can hide viruses or spyware.
 - Don't download free stuff unless you trust the source and scan the file with security software.
 - Use peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing services with caution. Many of them are illegal.
 - If you use file-sharing software at all, install it properly, and scan any files you download with security software before you open or play them. Otherwise, you could be sharing information your family expects to keep private, like financial records.
- Responsible Texting
 - Texting - When texting, respect others. Texting shorthand can lead to misunderstandings. Think about how a text message might be read and understood before sending it. Also: ignore texts from people you don't know, block numbers from your cell phone that are unsolicited, avoid posting your cell phone number online, never provide financial information in response to a text
 - Sexting – Sending or forwarding sexually explicit photos, videos, or messages from a mobile phone is known as "sexting." This can have serious consequences, Don't do it! Don't view it! In addition to risking your reputation and your friendships, you will most likely be breaking the law if you create, forward, or even save this kind of message. Know the consequences! They can stay with you a long time.