



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT WELLBEING - SENIOR SCHOOL

In today's digital age, social media has become an integral part of our lives. While it offers numerous benefits, it also poses certain risks, especially for our children. As educators, we believe it is crucial to equip parents with the knowledge and strategies to help their children navigate the online world safely. Over the next few terms, we will be exploring positive relationships online as well as offline. In the Senior School, we have several presenters coming into our different year groups including Brainstorm Productions, Police liaison officers, YourChoicez who, along with our regular wellbeing program, all try and equip students to build resilience and positive connections. Some of the topics they will cover are anti-bullying, cyber safety, anxiety, and mental health.

You may find the following strategies helpful when helping your child navigate the difficulties of online social media during the holidays and into next term:

1. **Open Communication:** Establish an open and honest line of communication with your child. Encourage them to share their online experiences and concerns with you.
2. **Set Clear Boundaries:** Establish rules and guidelines for your child's social media use. Discuss appropriate online behavior, time limits, and the importance of privacy.
3. **Monitor Online Activity:** Regularly monitor your child's online activity. Familiarise yourself with the platforms they use and understand their privacy settings.
4. **Educate Yourself:** Stay informed about the latest social media trends, apps, and games. This will enable you to have meaningful conversations with your child and address any potential risks.
5. **Encourage Critical Thinking:** Teach your child to think critically about the content they

encounter online. Help them differentiate between reliable sources and misinformation.

6. **Report and Block:** Teach your child how to report and block any inappropriate or abusive content or individuals they come across online. Most social media platforms have built-in reporting features. You can also report abuse or illegal and restricted online content via the eSafety website <https://www.esafety.gov.au/report>

Remember, your involvement and guidance play a crucial role in ensuring your child's online safety. By working together, we can create a safer digital environment for young people.

Here are some additional strategies that you can discuss with your child on how to remain safe online:

1. **Protect Personal Information:** Avoid sharing personal information, such as your full name, address, phone number, or school, with strangers online. Be cautious when filling out online forms or surveys.
2. **Use Strong Passwords:** Create strong and unique passwords for your online accounts. Avoid using easily guessable information like your name or birthdate. Remember to change your passwords regularly.
3. **Think Before You Share:** Before posting or sharing anything online, think about the potential consequences. Be mindful of the content you share and consider how it may affect your reputation or the feelings of others.
4. **Be Wary of Strangers:** Be cautious when interacting with strangers online. Remember that not everyone may have good intentions. Avoid meeting someone you only know from the internet without parental permission.
5. **Report and Block:** If you come across any inappropriate or abusive content or individuals online, report it to a trusted adult or use the platform's reporting feature. Block anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable.
6. **Balance Screen Time:** While the internet offers endless possibilities, it's important to find a balance between online and offline activities. Make time for hobbies, physical exercise, and spending time with family and friends.

As always, if you are concerned about the wellbeing of your child, we'd very much appreciate hearing from you. Please reach out and make contact via your child's Year Advisor, or if more urgent there is contact information on the College website for connecting with the College Counselling Team.

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