

Social Media Support

Talking to Teens and Tweens about Social Media and Sexting

Today's teens and tweens are connected to one another, and to the world, via digital technology more than any previous generation. Recent data suggests that social media venues like Facebook and Twitter have surpassed e-mail as the preferred method of communication in all age groups. While today's tweens and teens may be more digitally savvy than their parents, their lack of maturity and life experience can quickly get them into trouble with these new social venues. For this reason, it is imperative that parents talk with their children of all ages about social media and monitor their online social media use to help them navigate this new online social world. How parents talk with their Teens and Tweens will vary slightly by age depending on the topic being discussed.

The Problem of "Sexting"

"Sexting" refers to sending a text message with pictures of children or teens that are inappropriate, naked or engaged in sex acts. According to a recent survey, about 20 percent of teen boys and girls have sent such messages. The emotional pain it causes can be enormous for the child in the picture as well as the sender and receiver - often with legal implications. Parents must begin the difficult conversation about sexting before there is a problem and introduce the issue as soon as a child is old enough to have a mobile phone.

[Family Internet Safety Agreement \(PDF, 55KB\)](#) and [Who's Chatting To Your Kids? \(PDF, 1022KB\)](#) are available from the Queensland Police Child Protection Unit. We encourage you to read these and discuss these issues with your children.