Cyberbullying Prevention
Questions Parents Should Ask Their Children About Technology

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It is important to talk with youth about what they are doing and seeing online. Most of the time, they are using technology safely and responsibly, but sometimes they run into trouble. As a parent, you want to establish an open line of communication so that they are comfortable turning to you in times of crisis, whether perceived or actual, and whether online or off.

Below we list several questions that you can use to get the ball rolling. Be strategic in how you approach your children with these queries: don't badger them with questioning first thing in the morning or when they are stressed out about something at school. Find a time when they are open to your interest in these topics. Maybe it is during a longer car ride to an activity that they are really looking forward to. Or bring them up while you are eating ice cream on a hot summer afternoon. If you catch them at the right time, they will prove to be a treasure trove of information that can help you better understand what they are doing online.

General Tech Use

What is your favorite website? What do you do on these sites?

What websites are your friends into these days?

Are you ever contacted by someone online that you don't know? If yes, what did they want? What did you do? How did you respond?

Have you ever received a text message from someone that made you upset? How did you respond?

How do you keep yourself safe online?

Do you get concerned that people will read what others have written about you online that is not true but think it's true?

Do you ever talk to anyone online that isn't in your school?
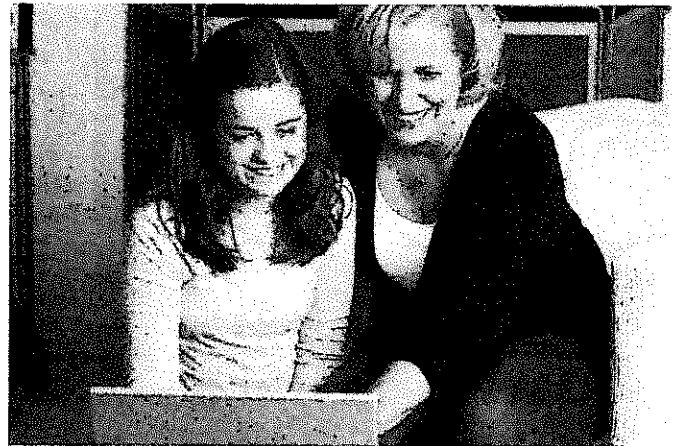
Cyberbullying

Do you ever argue or post hurtful updates on your Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or other social media site? Why?

Have you ever had to delete a post or comment on your page that was written by someone else?

Does cyberbullying happen a lot? Would you feel comfortable telling me if you were being cyberbullied?

Do you think your school takes cyberbullying seriously?

Have you ever had to contact a teacher or someone else at school because of a cyber-threat? If so, did they do something about it and did it help?

Does your school have a way to anonymously report bullying and cyberbullying?

Do you feel like your friends would be supportive of you if you told them you were being cyberbullied?

Do you ever get verbally attacked during online games?

Have you ever had to leave an online game because someone was bothering you online?

Have rumors ever started about you in school, based on something said online?

Did you ever find out who started the rumor? What did you do when you found out?

Have you ever blocked somebody online because you felt harassed? If so, did that make it stop?

Sexting

Do you send pictures through text? Do you receive pictures? If so, from who?

Are kids in school taking a lot of pictures with their cell phone cameras? What do they do with them?

Do you ever Skype or FaceTime with friends?

Do you use Snapchat? Can you explain to me how it works? Do you think pictures are really completely gone?

Have you ever had anyone do or say anything inappropriate on Skype or Snapchat?

Do you know what sexting is? Has any adult at school ever talked with you about sexting?

Has a stranger ever sent you explicit texts? What did you do with these texts?

Has a friend ever sent you explicit or offensive texts or pictures?

Do you know about the consequences that can result if you send inappropriate pictures (child pornography laws)?

Safe Online Social Networking

What social networking site do you use most frequently? How many friends or followers do you have?

What kind of people are you meeting on Instagram and Facebook? Are you connecting with people that you know? Or are you meeting people around the world?

Do you get a lot of friend or follow requests from strangers? If so, how are you handling that?

Do you use Twitter? What for? Who do you follow and who follows you?

Do you know how to use the privacy settings on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter?

Do you have them set so that only those you accept as friends can see what you post? How do you know who can see your information?

What kind of personal information are you posting online? Have you ever posted your full name? Age? School? Phone number? Current location?

Have you ever been tagged in a picture in a way that made you upset?

Do you know how to edit your privacy settings so that if somebody wants to tag you in a post or photo, you have to approve it?

Do you know how to untag yourself in pictures?

Do you feel like social networking sites should be used to vent your frustrations? Do your friends vent on social media? Do people comment? What do they say?

What kind of videos are you watching on YouTube? Do you ever post videos?

Have you ever reported inappropriate videos that you have seen on YouTube? Or any other website?

Does anyone else know your password or passcode for any site or social media app? What about for your laptop, or cell phone?