

**Social Media and Mentoring**

With 9 billion photos uploaded to Facebook every month and 300K new users per month on Twitter, Social Media is just getting started! As adults we may not agree with, or understand the growing use of Social Media, but it can be a way to contact, connect and begin important conversations with youth. As a mentor, you play a different role in the life of your youth than their parents do so we’d like to give you some tools to add to your mentoring toolbox.

**Different forms of Social Media youth use most:**

**Snapchat**

“Snapchat is a text-, photo- and video-messaging app that you use to send messages that will disappear one to ten seconds after your friend receives them. You determine how long the recipient(s) can view the message.” (<http://www.verizonwireless.com/mobile-living/apps/what-is-snapchat-how-to-sign-up-use-filters-effects/>)

**Facebook**

“A place for users to create status updates about what they're doing or thinking, share pictures, videos, messages, and links, play games, and run apps.” ([http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2389428,00.asp](http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0%2C2817%2C2389428%2C00.asp))

**Instagram**

Instagram is a free photo and video sharing app and people can comment and like posts shared by their friends. There is a privacy option so only approved users can view posts. (https://help.instagram.com/154475974694511/)

**Twitter**

“Though technically a micro-blogging service, Twitter does play in the social networking space. Tweets are, essentially, the same as status updates or links on Facebook; they're just limited to 140 characters. You can follow anyone and anyone can follow you, and you don't have to do anything to make this happen (unlike Facebook, where making "friends" requires approval from both sides).” ([http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2389428,00.asp](http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0%2C2817%2C2389428%2C00.asp))

“The platform allows complete strangers to come together over common interests and ideas and to participate in conversations that range from the relatively mundane to the incredibly important.” (<http://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-social-media/twitter>)

**Things to explain to your youth –**  Once they press send there is no taking it back, it’s out there for the world to see! Photos remain in cyber space (even on Snapchat) , sexting (Snapchat) and cyber-bullying can occur. A lack of moderation can lead to isolation. Statuses and photos remain online for many years, and youth can fall prey to predators. Looking into the future, it is important to remember that“86% of employers research potential job candidates on social media.” (<http://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-social-media>)

**Helpful Tips:** (<http://www.internetsafety101.org/snssafety.htm>)

* Be as anonymous as possible
* Use privacy settings
* Think before they post
* Avoid in-person meetings
* Be honest about their age
* Remember social networking sites are public spaces
* Avoid posting anything that could embarrass them later or expose them to danger
* Remember that people aren’t always who they say they are

**How to Report Abuse on a Social Networking Site**

* If you feel you and/or someone you know are in danger, contact law enforcement immediately.
* Do not respond to messages from the individual and be sure to keep copies of messages or correspondences from the individual.
* Block the individual from contacting you and remove the individual from your “Friend List.”
* Delete any comments the individual has left on your profile page.

**Thank you for all that you do to better the lives of youth! We appreciate you!** **Note from Match Coordinators: The above topics are simply suggestions. We would love to hear about any fun and/or meaningful experiences you have with your youth to pass along to other mentors. As always, we are here to support you as you build your mentoring relationship. Please do not hesitate to contact us at 303.756.9285 if you have specific questions or just need additional ideas along the way.**