

# PARENT TIPS TO SOCIAL MEDIA

DEMAREST, NEW JERSEY 07627

## Message from Mr. Fox:

As the Superintendent of Schools, I recognize both the benefits and liabilities of social media. It can provide important information quickly, share the great work going on in the schools and service as a tool to promote positive social change. Today, with the easy access and instantaneous reach of social media, students and families are in the continuous loop of information. This same benefit could potentially become a tremendous harm to a child, causing unnecessary distractions to schoolwork, and negative social implications with the spread of misleading information.

As we know, when a person makes an inaccurate statement with no support or truth, often times, this is magnified,

spread via numerous platforms and now what was untrue, becomes part of a public conversation. Let's teach our children the importance of truth and accuracy when posting information.

As a school district, we promote kindness in our schools. And yet, on occasion, one can witness cruelty on social media. It is human nature to forget there are people behind the posts, and that all of us have feelings. It is helpful to remind children that negative postings are not just words; they hurt real people emotionally.

Social media has been a great benefit in so many ways and it is here to stay. In the Demarest Schools, we spend a tremendous amount of time teaching digital citizenship and the importance of

what is being posted on social media platforms. One constant goal my administrative team and I have is to continually work with students to make a positive impact on our community and beyond. The focus this year has been how to use social media platforms as a way to send out positive messages.

Join the entire staff and me at Demarest Public Schools to be positive role models on social media!



## BENEFITS/RESOURCES

## BUILT IN PARENTAL CONTROLS

### BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- Article about teens using social media for positive change. <https://tinyurl.com/ycroy66n>
- Blog post regarding five of the most positive benefits of social media use among teens. <https://tinyurl.com/ycawdrpc>

### TOP PARENT RESOURCE

This website provides ratings and information on a wide variety of media, including website, apps, music, movie and television. Ratings come from other parents, children and experts on child development, with complete disclosure as to the source of the review.

<https://www.common sense media.org>

iPhone: Visit <https://tinyurl.com/y7d8998y> to set up parental controls on your child's iPhone.

iPad: Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ybwnd3op> for information on locking down your child's iPad.

Android: Visit <https://tinyurl.com/kddovlc> for information on locking down your child's Android.

Kindle Fire: Access the Kindle Free Time Control that is preloaded on the device.

Computer Web Browsers: Visit <https://tinyurl.com/yassqjmu> to read about setting up controls on Firefox, Chrome and Safari.

## PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS

### PARENTAL CONTROL SOFTWARE

NetNanny: Very reliable product. Offers a wide range of services including parental controls, web filtering, pornography blocking, social media monitoring and more. Pricing based on the number of devices. \$40 per year for computers, between \$9 and \$12 per device for tablets, phones, and etc.

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## STUDENT COMMITTEE COMMENTS

During our Social Media Student Committee meetings, I discovered some interesting student perspectives. We discussed the role of parents in the process of children obtaining social media usage with parental permission. Students felt it was up to the parents to decide an age requirement for the use of social media; though they admitted this may be difficult to enforce because kids can always “find a way”. Examples are ghost applications that are disguised as an app such as a calculator, but is secretly a picture sharing app.

We also discussed the importance of parents creating a contract to be used with their children. Students made suggestions about social media use and amount of time per day, such as placing the phone in a designated area of the home when going to bed, rules when attending sleepovers, and use of codes for students to use when

not comfortable in a social situation. It was noted that students stated they watch their parents spend a lot of time on social media.

Next, we discussed the importance of knowing who is following them on social media and how parents need to be part of this process. We talked about the importance of having an understanding of the privacy settings in these accounts.

Furthermore, we spoke about a few items that seemed to be highly important to the students such as family time and being with friends without the use of social media. We discussed the importance of dinnertime whether in the home or in a restaurant. The consensus was that this is a special time for family, and cell phones should not be allowed at the table. Students stated that these types of rules need to be established by the parents. The students gave great ideas on how to spend time with family without the use of cell phones or social media. Recommendations from the

committee were to play card games, board games, walks with the family pet, bike rides, or create games in or outside.

Finally, in our committee work, we concentrated on the positive uses of social media. Students shared many examples of how they could promote a cause for positive change and use a social media platform to make a difference. Students read articles and identified various apps that showed how social media can be beneficial.

In the end, I would like to thank all of the students who participated in the committee meetings. They shared a great deal of interesting information, and showed very mature insight on social media usage.

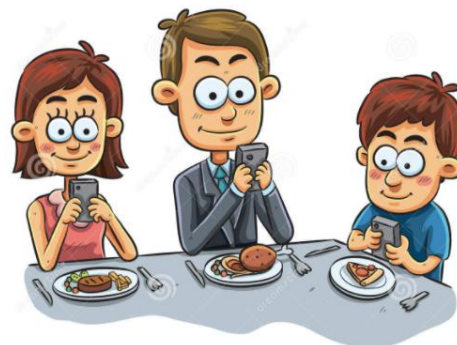


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## APPS TO BE WARY OF

- **Music.ly** – Private account keeps your child from being seen by others, but they are still able to see everything posted. There is a fair amount of adult content and pornography.
- **Ask.fm** – Children can post anonymously, making this site a hotbed of cyber bullying.
- **Snapchat** – Please visit <https://tinyurl.com/y8qnewxs> and <https://tinyurl.com/yb63sdag> to read about concerns regarding this app. There is potential for cyber bullying and “sexting” with this app that parents and children should be aware of.



## RECOMMENDED APPS

- **AZOOMEE: KIDS' GAMES, TV, CHAT (6+)**  
Fun, safe place to play, learn, and communicate.
- **Calm (7+)**  
Meditation and relaxation for all ages.
- **Plum's Photo Hunt (7+)**  
Fun nature missions get kids outside; safe sharing options.
- **GeckoLife (8+)**  
Safer social media option for family sharing.
- **DIY App – Creative Community for Kids (8+)**
- **Everloop: Goobit (10+)**  
Mobile version of tween social network; parents can monitor.
- **Oyoty (10+)**  
Robot guides kids to reconsider iffy social media posts.
- **Skit! Kids Video Maker (11+)**  
Social media storytelling in a safe space for tweens.
- **Virtual Geocaching – Xnote (12+)**  
Send personalized, virtual treasure hunts to any smartphone.

## RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

- **Ruff Ruffman: Humble Media Genius (6+)**  
Digital media dog offers a super primer for young users.  
URL: <http://pbskids.org/fetch/ruff/>
- **The Carnegie Cyber Academy (10+)**  
Complete fun challenges, learn how to be safe online.  
URL: <http://www.caregiocyberacademy.com>
- **Jabbersmack (10+)**  
Safe, social networking for kids under 13.  
URL: <http://animoto.com>
- **WordPress.com (15+)**  
Slick source for blogging; watch out for adult content.  
URL: <http://wordpress.com>



## TOP TEN PARENT TIPS

1. Discuss with your child appropriate internet use and establish guidelines for its usage.
2. Use an internet use contract (see last page) with your child to document the guidelines.
3. Talk to your child about “cyberbullying”, “sexting”, and inappropriate use of social media and the consequences of such behavior.
4. Discuss with your child the importance of privacy and what information is appropriate to be shared on social media platforms.
5. Talk to your child about never sharing passwords and why.
6. Learn the security settings of all platforms your child uses and its appropriate age limits.
7. Monitor your child’s activity on the internet and cell phone daily.
8. Use filtering blocks and other monitoring devices to help your child stay safe.
9. Educate yourself on social media and discuss how these platforms should be used for positive means.
10. Stay informed on new apps and trends in your child’s age group.

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## THE INTERNET CONTRACT

### SETTING UP

- I will ask my parents permission before joining any social media network.
- I will share with my parents my passwords to all of my social media networks and no one else.

### SHARING

- I will not post or share photos of myself without my parent's permission.
- I will not post or share photos of my family or friends without their permission.
- I will never share personal information online, such as my full name, address, age, school name, or what I look like.
- I will never share or post anything that could be hurtful or inappropriate.

### CONDUCT

- I will not meet anyone in person who I have met through social media.
- I will not engage in online bullying, including making unkind comments.
- I will let my parents know if I am the victim of online bullying.
- I will put my phone away during family time such as dinnertime.
- I will follow my parents' rules regarding time limits for online use.
- I will close any websites with creepy or inappropriate photos and tell my parents(s).

### CONSEQUENCES

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, AGREE TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS FOR USING SOCIAL MEDIA. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT MY PARENTS ARE SETTING THESE CONDITIONS BECAUSE THEY LOVE ME AND WANT ME TO BE SAFE.

CHILD'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_