



**etb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
an Chabháin agus Mhuineacháin  
Cavan and Monaghan  
Education and Training Board

## Social Media Safety

### Guidelines for the safe and responsible use of Social Media

- **Use strict privacy settings.**

Review all of the options on your privacy settings page. Many sites default settings tend to keep information public until a user makes it private (although Facebook is a little stricter with minors' accounts). "Friends Only" is a good choice for most items, but you can be even more selective.

- **Be selective and control what you post.**

Be selective about what you share by customising the recipients of your posts. Activities on Facebook, including the applications teens use and games they play, can be viewed by others. Remember: Everything online happens in front of a vast, invisible, and often anonymous audience. Once something is out there, it doesn't go away as it can be copied and forwarded easily and quickly. Everything leaves a digital footprint.

As a rule of thumb if you wouldn't be comfortable posting something (pictures comments etc.) on a noticeboard in the school corridor then don't post it online.

You should never post personal details such as your phone number, email address or home address.

Remember that irresponsible online behaviour can damage your real life reputation.

- **Be selective with friends.**

Be careful who you make friends with online. In general it is better to restrict friends to people you know and trust in the real world.

- **Pre-approve tags.**

Choose the settings that allow you to see everything you've been tagged in (including photos) before the tag links to your page.

- **Use notification settings.**

You can tell Facebook that you want to be notified of any activity performed on your name, including photo tags.

- **Never post your location.**

Facebook lets users post their location on every post. You should not do this for safety and privacy reasons. It also allows you to "tag" friends' location. You can prevent anyone from tagging your location in the 'How Tags Work' section of the website.

- **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying can involve unwanted text messages, phone video recordings or web posts being used to threaten, abuse or harm someone. It is like physical or verbal bullying, but it uses technology instead.

Cyberbullying, like all bullying, is difficult on the victim. It can be hard to prove and difficult to get the courage to report it.

If you are experiencing this form of bullying, it's vital you don't suffer in silence. Also, if you

have witnessed cyberbullying, it's important that you take action and address the problem.

Further information for Parents/Guardians and Students/Learners is available from the following publication produced by Barnardos and the NCTE:

<http://www.hotline.ie/documents/Cyberbullying.pdf>.

Read the Office for Internet Safety's Guide to cyberbullying, which includes information on when and how to contact service providers if you are being cyberbullied.

<http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/DPCY-7LYJ4V1343473-en>

### **Beat Cyberbullying**

- Don't reply to the messages or get into any online arguments.
- Save the evidence (photo/email/video/web post, etc.) as proof. Take a screenshot of any comments that are threatening.
- Make a note of the time and date that messages or images were sent, along with any details you have about the sender.
- Tell a trusted adult, such as a close relative, a family friend, a Class Tutor, Year Head, the Deputy Principal or Principal or any Teacher in the school, health professional or a youth worker, someone who will be able to help you and give you support.
- Contact a free confidential support service such as Samaritans - telephone 1850 609090.
- Report the bullying to the police or Gardaí.
- Report the bullying to the technology providers such as the mobile phone company, web host or website owner.

## **Text bullying**

Texting is cheap, easy and can be great for quick conversations. Unfortunately it can also be used to harass, bully and frighten people. Text bullying or harassment can be texts that frighten, insult, threaten you or make you feel uncomfortable. Email, social networks like Facebook/Twitter/BBM and phone calls can be used to harass in the same way.

It is illegal to bully or harass someone by text, phone, Internet or email and if the harassment is getting out of hand you should report it to the police or Gardaí.

### **If you're being bullied by texts:**

- Don't stay quiet about the bullying. Tell a friend, your parents, a Class Tutor, Year Head, the Deputy Principal/Deputy Director or Principal/Director/Centre Manager or any Teacher/Tutor in the School/Institute/Centre, health professional or a youth worker, someone who will be able to help you and give you support.
- Don't reply to the messages or get into any text arguments. If there's no answer, hopefully they will get bored and stop harassing you.
- Don't delete the messages, you can use them as evidence for reporting the crime. Make a note of the time and date that messages or images were sent, along with any details you have about the sender.
- Report the bullying to the police or Gardaí and your phone company. If they are aware of the problem and can give you a new phone number or caution the person harassing you.

Parents/Guardians worry about the dangers of cyberbullying. The Office of Internet Safety booklet "Get With IT!" is a Guide to Cyberbullying. This booklet is intended to increase awareness of all aspects of cyberbullying in the new media world and to help parents and their children understand the often confusing issues of new media technologies and tools which children and young people are using for this behaviour.

This publication was produced as a joint initiative between the Office for Internet Safety, the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE), O2 and Barnardos

<http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/DPCY-7LYJ4V1343473-en>

### **Using Social Media on your Mobile Phone.**

If your profile is linked to your mobile phone, you should use the website's privacy settings to ensure that your phone number is not visible.

**Chat & VOIP services. (These allow for communication that may be typed or spoken with or without webcam access)**

When using the above you should only communicate with people you trust and remember that other people may be able to view all aspects of the communication.

### **Watch the clock.**

Social media sites can be real time wasters. Hours and hours can go by online - time that should be spent doing homework, studying, reading or exercising.

Use the links below for resources to assist in educating students on the responsible use of the Internet and Social Media.

<http://www.makeitsecure.org/en/young-users.html>

<http://www.make-it-safe.net/>

<http://www.webwise.ie/>

<http://www.facebook.com/safety/groups/teens/>

<http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/safety-en>

[www.watchyourspace.ie](http://www.watchyourspace.ie)

[www.thinkb4uclick.ie](http://www.thinkb4uclick.ie)

[www.safekids.com](http://www.safekids.com)

<http://www.spunout.ie>

### **Procedure for Alerting Facebook in the case of Bullying or the posting of inappropriate images.**

The link below can be used to report the above to Facebook who generally take such reports seriously and quickly remove the offensive material.

<http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=178608028874393&ref=bc>

### **Procedure for Reporting a Fake Profile on Facebook.**

The first piece of action to be taken by a person, in respect of whom a fake profile on Facebook has been set up, is to contact the Facebook Help Centre immediately and require Facebook to remove the fake profile. This can be done using the link to the Help Centre below. Facebook state that the profile will be removed within 24 hours from notification.

<http://www.facebook.com/help/?faq=167722253287296>

### **Procedure for having inappropriate or offensive clips removed from YouTube**

YouTube may be alerted to inappropriate uses by selecting the 'Flag' option beside the clip. YouTube will then ask you to select one of six reasons why the video is inappropriate: Sexual Content; Violent or Repulsive Content; Hateful or Abusive Content; Harmful Dangerous Acts; Infringement of Personal Rights; Spam. Once you have indicated the reason YouTube will review the clip within 48 hours and delete it if necessary

More information on how Facebook may be incorporated safely into the classroom and the creation of groups may be obtained from the Facebook Safety Centre (see link below).

<http://www.facebook.com/safety/groups/teens/>

## Unacceptable uses of Social Media sites and their consequences.

Unacceptable use of Social Media sites will include:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images that may cause harm to any member of the school community.
- Forwarding or 'Liking' material that is likely to cause offence or hurt to a third party.
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the School's image or reputation.
- Creating a fake profile that impersonates any another member of the school community.
- Sending or posting material that is confidential to the School.
- Uses that violates copyright law, fail to observe licensing agreements or infringe on others intellectual property rights.
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of inappropriate images or obscene material.

While all cases involving the inappropriate use of social media will be dealt with on an individual basis, the centre and its Board of Management considers the above to be serious breaches of our Code of Behaviour. Disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion may be exercised in certain cases.

Please see the centre's Code of Behaviour for information on the full range of sanctions the centre employs and our appeal procedures.