

## Family Tech Tips

- Don't use passwords that are easy to guess, such as nicknames or pet's name.
- Don't download games or videos to a computer or device without an adult's permission.
- Online talk should generally be with people your children know, like family and friends.
- Kids shouldn't answer questions online that make them feel uncomfortable. They also shouldn't talk about adult topics with strangers.
- Discuss ways kids can support friends who are bullied and report bad behavior they see online or offline.
- Kids should ask an adult's permission before filling out online forms, and they should always keep their Social Security number, birth date, address, and full name private.
- Your computer can be protected from viruses, spyware, and other security problems by using up-to-date security tools.
- Help teens take control over their own information by: 1. disabling internet "cookies" so companies cannot track online behavior, 2. limiting clicking on ads, and 3. examining a website's privacy policy before revealing any information on it.
- Just because your kids are disguised online doesn't mean they can't be identified. They must be responsible for their actions, whether they're portrayed as a penguin or a person.
- Everything leaves a digital footprint. Whatever gets created may never go away. If they don't want to see it public tomorrow, they'd better not post it today. Explain to them that nothing is really private online – no matter what they think.
- Make sure your kids use privacy settings on their social network pages. Encourage kids to think carefully about the nature of their relationships (close friends, family, acquaintances, strangers) and adjust their privacy settings accordingly.
- Remind kids to protect their friends' privacy. Passing along a rumor or identifying someone in a picture (called "tagging") affects other people's privacy. If your kids are tagged in friends' photos, they can ask to have the photos or the tags removed. But beyond that, there's not too much they can do.
- Compare multiple sources. Kids and teens should draw on several sites, for better accuracy. This will help them determine whether a piece of information is fact or fiction.
- Connected culture can be positive or negative – it's what people make it. When guiding our kids, it's important for them to understand that they have a choice in all of their online relationships. They can say something positive or say something mean. They can create great community support around activities or interests, or they can misuse the public nature of online communities to tear others down.