Healthy Digital Boundaries — For Kids

Healthy digital boundaries help us know what we want to SEE, DO and FEEL while we are online. They also help us know how we want to be treated by others online.

This can look like…

Treating other people how we want to be treated

Respecting the rules of a website or app

Speaking up for our friends when others are not kind

Thinking about what information is OKAY to share and what information is NOT OKAY to share online
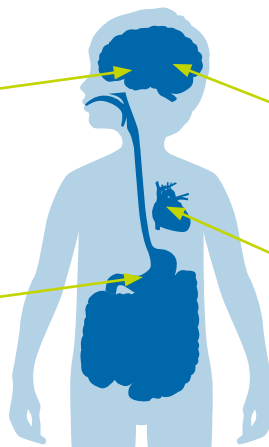
Knowing 3 trusted adults that you can talk to about anything.
This could be a parent, caregiver, teacher or another adult who you can trust

The internet can be fun! Sometimes, it can also be a place where we feel unsafe or not quite right.

You might feel sad — like your body is heavy and hard to move.

You might feel anxious — like your body can't stop moving.

You might feel uncomfortable — like an upset stomach.

You might feel worried — like your heart is pounding.

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It's important to trust your feelings. Sometimes, we might not know what to do when this happens. Here are some ideas to help keep you safe.

What to do if…

You want to SHARE something about yourself online.

Sharing can help us feel good, make new friends, learn new things and help us take action.

- ☐ **PERSONAL information** is something that can't be used to identify you because it is also true for many other people. PERSONAL information can sometimes be used to identify you, depending on the nature of the information. Example: your favorite music, how many siblings you have and the name of your pet. It is **OKAY** to share this with permission from a trusted adult.

- ☐ **PRIVATE information** is something about you that can be used to identify you because it's unique. Example: your address, phone number, the name of your school or your password.
  It is **NOT OKAY** to share this online.

  - If a website or app asks for PRIVATE information, ask a trusted adult for help.

  - Sometimes, another person online may want to SHARE something with you. It is not safe to share PRIVATE information with someone who says that they want to send a gift to you.

- ☐ **Remember your parents care about your safety too,** so talk with them about other ways to stay safe when sharing information with others online.

You SEE something that makes you feel unsafe or not quite right,
like adults fighting, people without clothes on or bad language.

- ☐ **You always have the right to turn off the screen,** close out or press the home button.

- ☐ **You can help keep your friends safe** by not sharing the content.

- ☐ **It is OKAY to tell a trusted adult. It is NOT OKAY if someone asks you to keep it a secret.** A trusted adult can help explain what you may have seen and report the content so other kids may not have to see it too.

- ☐ **You can report** (tell an app or website about something unsafe) **or block** (stop someone from reaching out to you on an app or website) if something feels not quite right.

- ☐ **Before going online,** talk with your parents/caregivers and make a plan for what to do if something uncomfortable happens when you are online.

(Continued)

Someone from an online game or social media app wants to meet you IN REAL LIFE.

☐ **While many people are honest online, some people pretend to be someone they are not.** For example, an adult may say they are younger to earn your trust and become friends.

☐ **If someone wants to be your friend or follow you** on an app, it's important to talk to a trusted adult before accepting a request.

☐ **It is OKAY to make friends online with permission from a trusted adult. It is NOT OKAY for online friends to ask you to meet in person without permission,** especially if it makes you feel unsafe or not quite right.

☐ **Before making plans to meet someone online**, talk with your parents/caregivers about this person and whether it is okay to meet them or not.

You see online bullying in a game, social media or on a website.

☐ **It is OKAY to be respectful and use kind language online. It is NOT OKAY to spread rumors or make negative comments towards others.**

☐ **If someone treats you in a way that makes you feel unsafe,** you can block the account, report the unsafe behavior, and keep the messages to share with a trusted adult.

☐ **If someone else is being treated in a way that makes them feel unsafe,** you can tell a trusted adult and show support for the person by leaving kind comments.

Source: Common Sense Media

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