

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM UPDATE

Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects is funded by the Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.



SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE PREVENTION PROJECTS NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025

VOLUME 1: ISSUE 7

NEWSLETTER DATE

K-12 SAP Trainings & SAP Thematic Workshops

K-12 SAP TRAINING Dates: 2025-2026 dates TBD. Trainings are held at the Fred Rogers Conference Center, Saint Vincent College.

The Training is designed for new members of either a secondary or elementary S.A.P. team. This is also appropriate for Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Liaisons, Treatment Staff, and School-Based Probation Officers who have been assigned the role of "ad hoc" S.A.P. team members. Those individuals needing to make up a training session from a prior training will be able to complete those requirements at these trainings. For additional information or to register, please call Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.

SAP Thematic Workshops: 2025-2026 Dates TBD. Workshops are held at the Fred Rogers Conference Center, Saint Vincent College.

Training announcements will be emailed and also posted in the newsletter. For additional information or to register, please call Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.

Awareness Days

You can easily take advantage of special events to raise awareness of an important issue or cause. **Here are a few up-coming events for the next several months:**

- National Alcohol Awareness Month—<https://recovered.org/alcohol/alcohol-awareness-month#why-is-alcohol-awareness-month-important>
- Alcohol Free Weekend—<http://www.whatthehealth.com/awareness/event/alcoholscreeningday.html>
- National Distracted Driving Awareness Month—<https://www.nhtsa.gov/april-distracted-driving-awareness-month>
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month—<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/>
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month—<https://nomore.org/campaigns/saam/>
- National Counseling Awareness Month—<http://www.counselingpsychology.org/april-celebrate-counseling-awareness-month>
- Stress Awareness Month—<https://www.dnaweekly.com/blog/stress-awareness-month/>
- Autism Awareness Month—<https://autismsociety.org/autism-acceptance-month/>

Welcome
Back!



SVCPP mailing
Address:

300 Fraser
Purchase Road,
Latrobe, PA
15650

Phone:
724-805-2050

Fax:
724-420-5930



Trainings, Workshops, Events, & more...



Thematic Workshops— We offer Workshops 3 times a year. Each of these will have a SAP process, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse focus. The 2025-26 dates have not been determined. The training announcements will go to your email address and appear when appropriate in our monthly newsletter. For more information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050. The cost of the training is \$40.00, and this includes continental breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria. Act 48 credits will be given.

K-12 SAP TRAINING— Additional trainings have not been confirmed as of yet, but we will notify you when dates have been confirmed. Training is designed for new members of either a secondary or elementary S.A.P. team who have not completed the initial training with their team. This is also appropriate for Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Liaison, Treatment staff and school-based probation officers who have been assigned the role of "ad hoc" S.A.P. team members. Those individuals needing to make up a training session from a prior training will be able to complete those requirements at this training. For information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050. The cost of the training is \$360 which includes Training materials, lunch and continental breakfast both days.

Free Recreational Nights @ Sage's Army, Inc.

6044 Lincoln Highway Suit 400, Greensburg, Pa 15601

Movie Night: Movie playing is, "Twisters"

Date and Time: Wednesday, March 26, 2025, 5:30-8 pm

(Pizza, Popcorn, non-alcoholic drinks and snacks provided)




Game Night: Card games and Board Games, a lot of games and cards are already provided but feel free to bring your favorites.

Date and time: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 5:30-8pm (Pizza non-alcoholic drinks are provided)



Questions can call 724-863-5433 Both of the following activities are held at the above address.

ACT to build a safe and strong family.

Come to the **ACT Raising Safe Kids** program.

Classes are fun and provided in a friendly environment.
Through these classes, you will:

- Learn discipline that works •
- Find out how to deal with tantrums and fights •
- Get a program certificate •


FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN BIRTH – 8 YEARS OLD

WHEN: Wednesdays, March 26th-May 14th, 2025
12:30pm - 2:00pm



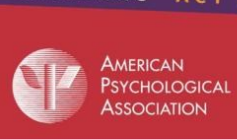

WHERE: Wesley Family Services
521 Plymouth St
Greensburg, PA 15601

TO REGISTER, CONTACT: Shana
Ph: 724-217-8303, or parentwise@wfspa.org

Classes and incentives provided through a grant from Westmoreland Drug & Alcohol Commission.



[HTTP://ACTAGAINSTVIOLENCE.APA.ORG](http://actagainstviolence.apa.org) ACT RAISING SAFE KIDS PROGRAM



presents:



SAVE THE DATE!!

Suicide Prevention with Kevin Berthia & Kevin Briggs

Kevin Berthia is a Suicide Survivor, Advocate, and Speaker. Kevin pours his heart into sharing his powerful story of growing up in silence, always feeling the need to hide the unbearable pain he was in. Through high school and into his early twenties, Kevin was known as the life of the party. Until his very public suicide attempt at the Golden Gate Bridge changed everything.

Kevin Briggs, a retired California Highway Patrol sergeant, spent many years patrolling the Golden Gate Bridge. While on patrol, he encountered numerous individuals who had lost all hope and were contemplating suicide. Through compassion and the ability to "Listen to Understand," he encouraged several hundred individuals over his career not to end their lives but to begin a new chapter. These challenging but rewarding efforts earned him the nickname "Guardian of the Golden Gate."

Please join us for a captivating story of compassion and survival

Friday, May 16th, 2025 from

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

at the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit at

102 Equity Dr. Greensburg

Lunch and Provider Updates from 1 PM to

4PM to follow

Sponsored by:

WESTMORELAND COUNTY



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Registration Coming Soon

Kevin Berthia

Suicide Survivor, Advocate, Speaker



Kevin Berthia FOUNDATION



Kevin Briggs

Veteran, Author, Speaker





WESTMORELAND COUNTY
JUVENILE PROBATION

PRESENTS

family
**FUN
FEST**

TWIN LAKES PARK & NATURE CENTER

MONDAY, JULY 21, 2025
3:00 TO 7:00 P.M.

Bring the whole family for a day filled with laughter, excitement, and unforgettable memories

Event Highlights

- EXCITING GAMES & ACTIVITIES**
- FOOD & REFRESHMENTS**
- LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**
- CRAFTS & WORKSHOPS**

Join Us for a Spectacular Family Fun Day!



FOR MORE INFORMATION: MICHELE WENTZEL
MWENTZE2@WESTMORELANDCOUNTYPA.GOV
724-830-4266



April is Alcohol Awareness

SAMHSA

Check Your Alcohol Use:

- Set a daily and weekly drinking limit
- Write down your limit and keep it with you
- Record how much you drink each day
- Avoid situations and triggers that cause you to drink
- Ask a friend to help you stay within your limit
- Talk with a doctor about your alcohol use

What is a Standard Drink?

- 12 ounces of beer (5% alcohol content).
- 8 ounces of malt liquor (7% alcohol content).
- 5 ounces of wine (12% alcohol content).
- 1.5 ounces or a "shot" of 80-proof (40% alcohol content) distilled spirits or liquor (e.g., gin, vodka, rum, tequila, whiskey, brandy).

[samhsa.gov/find-help/atod/alcohol](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/atod/alcohol)

HELP IS
AVAILABLE

APRIL

**ALCOHOL
AWARENESS
MONTH**



Are You Drinking Too Much?

Signs of Drinking Too Much:

SAMHSA

- You drink more or longer than you intended
- You try to cut down or stop drinking, but are not able to
- You need to drink more than you once did, to get the effect you want
- You continue to drink even though it makes you feel depressed or anxious - or adds to another health problem
- Loved ones or trusted friends have made comments about your drinking
- You spend a lot of time drinking or thinking about alcohol
- You find that drinking interferes with daily activities, family, friends, or work
- Or maybe...
 - You have had legal problems due to drinking
 - You have experienced symptoms of withdrawal when you don't drink (such as shakiness, sweating, tremors, headaches, anxiety, irritability, and/or insomnia)

HELP IS
AVAILABLE

APRIL

**ALCOHOL
AWARENESS
MONTH**

[samhsa.gov/find-help/atod/alcohol](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/atod/alcohol)



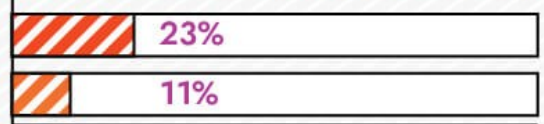
Peer Pressure or Social Media - Which Influences Teens to Start Drinking in 2024?

Peer pressure has always been an issue for teens but the rise of social media has meant that teens are subjected to even more influences that encourage them to participate in underage drinking.



According to the C.D.C. alcohol is the most commonly used substance among teens in the U.S.

2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey of High School Children



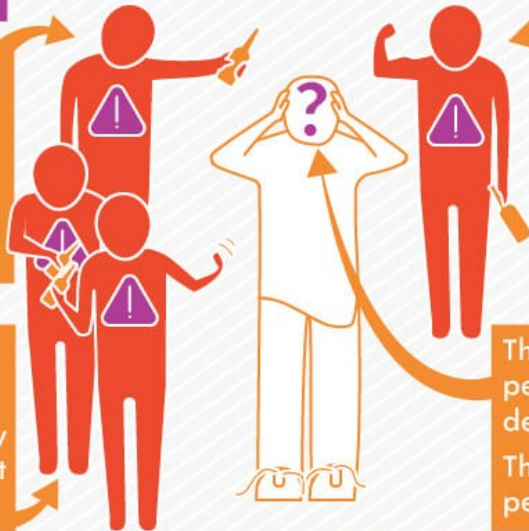
- Drank alcohol over the past 30 days
- Admitted to binge drinking.

How Peer Pressure Impacts Teens to Start Drinking

Peer pressure is a leading risk factor for underage drinking.

Being asked to drink or watching others drink can lead to this activity.

Teens constantly desire to fit in and be accepted. This may cause them to try alcohol in order to be part of a particular group.



To fit in and be acknowledged, teens may 'brag' or exaggerate about their alcohol consumption. Even if they themselves are not drinking it can lead others to do so.

The prefrontal cortex which determines personality and judgment is still developing in teenagers. This means they are less able to fully perceive risky behavior or consequences.



emberrecovery.org



National Alcohol Screening Day: April 10, 2025

Raising awareness and encouraging people to consider the negative effects of alcohol abuse and dependency, National Alcohol Screening Day offers opportunities for individuals to be proactive in protecting themselves and their families.

How to Observe National Alcohol Screening Day

Show some care and help for individuals and the community by participating in National Alcohol Screening Day.

Attend an Alcohol Screening

One important way to get involved with National Alcohol Screening Day is for a person who is concerned that they may have an alcohol problem to attend a screening. The most commonly used test at these screenings is the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), which contains a series of ten multiple choice questions that help to identify how much a person drinks and how often. The answers to the questionnaire are scored on a points system and a medical professional or counselor can help to assess whether that person's alcohol use is in danger of becoming an addiction or chronic disease.



History of National Alcohol Screening Day

The original observance of National Alcohol Screening Day was held in 1999 when it was founded in the United States as an initiative by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in cooperation with the Surgeon General. The annual event is sponsored by the Screening for Mental Health initiative that offers free, anonymous screenings for anyone who is concerned about potential alcohol problems. The day takes place during April as part of the larger public service event of Alcohol Awareness Month.

For more than two decades, various events all over the US have been organized in honor of National Alcohol Screening Month. These include spaces such as hospitals, health care centers, and alcohol treatment facilities as well as university and college campuses.

Info from: <https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/national-alcohol-screening-day/>



Awareness Month Information



Distracted driving has become a deadly epidemic on our roads. Cell phone use — specifically, texting, talking, and social media use — has become the most common distraction. Other risky actions include adjusting the radio or GPS, applying makeup, eating and drinking. By driving distracted, you’re robbing yourself of seconds that you may need to avoid a close call or deadly crash.

Drive Responsibly

In 2022, distracted driving killed 3,308 people. April, which is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, is a good time to regroup and take responsibility for the choices we make when we’re on the road. Follow these safety tips for a safe ride:

- Need to send a text? Pull over and park your car in a safe location.
- Designate your passenger as your “designated texter” to respond to calls or messages.
- Do not scroll through apps while driving. Struggling not to text and drive? Put the cell phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of the vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

The Consequences

During a portion of Distracted Driving Awareness Month, from April 7 through 14, you may see increased law enforcement on the roadways as part of the national paid media campaign Put the Phone Away or Pay. This campaign reminds drivers of the deadly dangers and the legal consequences — including fines — of texting behind the wheel.

Take Action

Remind your friends and family: If you’re in the driver’s seat, it’s the only thing you should be doing. No distractions.

If your driver is texting or otherwise distracted, tell them to stop and focus on the road.

Ask your friends to join you in pledging not to drive distracted. You could save a life. Share your pledge on social media to spread the word.



Available Services Through SVCPP:



LOOK FOR THE SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE PREVENTION PROJECTS AT MANY SCHOOL EVENTS THROUGHOUT WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Special Speaker Presentations

Presentations are available to your community group, business or organization at minimal cost or FREE. Topics include: Current Drug Trends, Power of Parents, Gambling/Gaming Awareness, Responsible Gambling, Talking with your Kids and The Dangers of Underage Drinking, Mobile Bedroom, Social Media, Click-Bait and Other On-Line Potholes, and more.

RADAR (Free Materials)

Regional Alcohol/Drug Awareness Resource, Information Center

The Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects provides free materials (pamphlets, brochures, posters, etc.) to schools, organizations, community groups, and to the general public on various topics that include: alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence prevention, child guidance, and medications and the elderly.

To schedule a program for your business, school or organization, please contact Beth Potochnik, Prevention Education & Community Outreach Services Manager at Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050 or email beth.potochnik@stvincent.edu





Available Intervention Services Through SVCPP:



The following Tier II Intervention Programs are offered to all Westmoreland County Secondary Schools at NO cost to the school districts:



N.O.T. (Not on Tobacco) Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists deliver 6 sessions covering facts vs. myths, triggers and advertising nicotine products, identifying support strategies, benefits to quitting nicotine use and how your body responds, creating healthy habits, and ways to stay nicotine free. N.O.T. explores the various delivery systems, i.e. vape devices, chewing, smoking, etc. N.O.T. is an American Lung Association program aimed to recognize dependence on nicotine and to identify replacement strategies to restore health.

The Blues Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists provide early intervention service groups for adolescents with observable behaviors displaying depressive symptoms or are at-risk for depression. These are 6 session groups provided weekly within your school.

Marijuana Brief Intervention Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists use this evidence-based program for early intervention with students who may be experimenting with marijuana in its various forms. During the 6 weekly sessions, students will identify triggers, how their environment can contribute to usage, and practical evidence-based ways to reduce/eliminate marijuana use.

In-Depth Program

The American Lung Association's INDEPTH® (Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health) program is an alternative to suspension or citation program that is offered as an option to students who face suspension for violation of school tobacco or e-cigarette use policies. This program is administered by a trained adult facilitator in either a one-on-one or group format and can be offered in a school or community-based setting. The program consists of four sessions of approximately 50 minutes geared toward youth and focused on tobacco use, including e-cigarettes, nicotine dependence, establishing healthy alternatives and making the change to be free of all tobacco products. Because the program is offered as an alternative to suspension or citation, attendance is mandatory to fulfill the obligation for the infraction. While INDEPTH is not a cessation program, steps toward cessation are strongly encouraged. Students may decide to quit or reduce their tobacco/nicotine use as result of their participation in the program.

If your school district can benefit from these services, please email: Christina Weimer, SAP Coordinator and Intervention Services Manager, Christina.weimer@stvincent.edu



Westmoreland County Information



1200 Maronda Way, Suite 300, Monessen, PA
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

724-243-2220

<http://wedacinc.org>



Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services, Inc.

203 S Maple Ave, Greensburg, PA 15601
Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30am-9:00pm
Friday 8:30am-5:00pm

724-834-0420

<http://www.sphs.org>

Outside In

To the Fullest...

Outpatient Services
PHONE 724-837-1518

Residential Programs
PHONE 724-238-8441

PO Box 639
Greensburg, PA 15601



First Floor Suite 110, 40 N Pennsylvania Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601
(724-830-3617)

<http://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/>



SVC Prevention Projects

Christina Weimer

Intervention & SAP Manager

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Office: 724-805-2050

Donna Cartia

Assistant SAP Coordinator

Donna.Cartia@saintvincent.edu

Office: 724-805-2050

Cell: 724-771-4776



Map from: <https://www.city2map.com/en/us/pa/westmoreland-county.html>



Underage Drinking: How To Talk With Your Child About Alcohol Use

Why to Have the Alcohol Talk Early...

How much do young people drink? Many adults assume it's not a lot, but the latest research paints a very different picture. Here are some statistics that may surprise you:

- People aged 12 to 20 drink nearly 4% of all alcohol consumed in the U.S.
- Nearly 25% of 14-to-15-year-olds admit they've had at least one drink in their lifetime.
- Around 4.2 million teens say they went on a drinking binge at least once in the last month.
- 44% of all high schoolers who binge drink consume 8 or more drinks in a row.

Why do kids drink?

There are several factors that might motivate kids and teens to drink.

Peer pressure

Between 11 and 18 years of age, young people are especially open to the influence of people around them. They generally focus on what kids their own age do and say, but family members, the media and the surrounding community matter, too. If everyone they admire and trust seems to be drinking, kids may feel pressured to try it.

Stress

Most young people worry about school, their social standing, what's happening to the world around them and a lot more. Many use alcohol to mute the fearful voices inside them. Sources of stress might include going from middle school to high school, breaking up with a friend or romantic partner, or facing a family separation or divorce. A major move, a serious illness or any other traumatic event might also make kids want to escape their troubles. For some, alcohol may seem like an easy escape.

Environment

If children grow up hearing that drinking—even heavy drinking—is normal, fun, or helpful in coping with life's stress, they will likely experiment with alcohol at an early age. The example that parents and others in their lives set for them will shape their own attitudes about alcohol.

Family history

Kids from families (birth or adoptive) in which others struggled with addiction will face higher risks for problems with alcohol. We know that alcohol use disorder is a complex disease that involves genetic risk. However, adopted children who grow up in homes where alcohol is misused also face higher risks for alcohol use disorder.



From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources

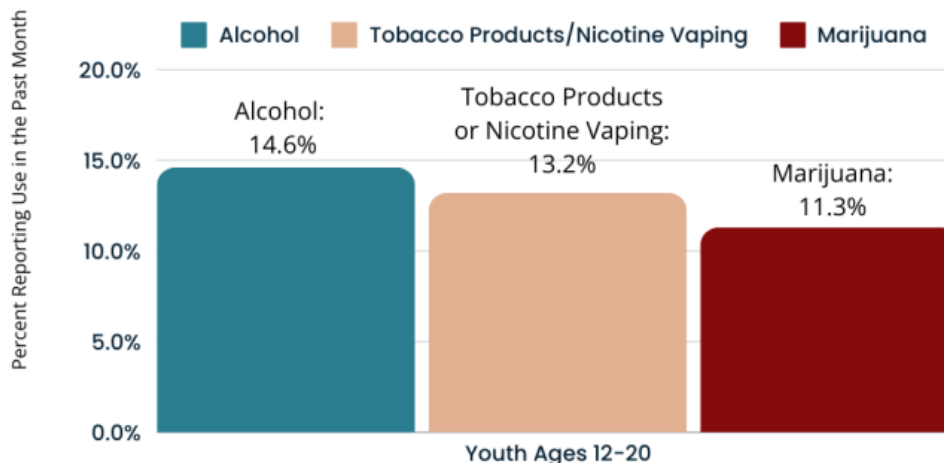


6 Tips to Remember

1. Start the conversation about alcohol use early. Keep the dialogue going as your child moves through elementary, middle school, and high school.
2. Be calm, loving, and supportive. Emphasize that you want them to be safe and healthy, now and throughout their life. Don't be afraid to set firm, age-appropriate rules and limits to protect them.
3. Ask your pediatrician for support. Your child's doctor can be an excellent source of information and perspective as you work to set boundaries and create a positive dialogue.
4. Seek out specialized resources if you need them. For example, you may want to review this list of mental health resources for families of color, published by the Mental Health Coalition. If you are parenting a child who identifies as LGBTQ+, The Trevor Project offers in-depth resources.
5. Make it safe for your child to tell you anything. Try not to overreact when your child tries alcohol, even if they get very drunk. You don't have to pretend you're not disappointed, but staying away from shame and blame will signal that your child can trust you when things go wrong and they need you the most.
6. Don't end the conversation when your child moves out or goes to college. Encourage them to come to you anytime they need perspective and support.

Info from: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Why-to-Have-the-Alcohol-Talk-Early.aspx>

More adolescents use alcohol than tobacco products, nicotine vaping, or marijuana



SOURCE: 2023 NSDUH, Tables 2.8B, 2.2B, 1.7B

Info from: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/underage-drinking>



EVERY CHILD DESERVES A HERO!

SET PROTECTIVE BOUNDARIES FOR CHILDREN EVEN WITH PEOPLE THEY KNOW AND TRUST

Child abuse can happen to children of any gender and socioeconomic status. It can happen at the hands of ANYONE, most often someone you know and trust. Because of this, we have to set protective boundaries for children, no matter who they are with.

PROTECTIVE BOUNDARIES CAN LOOK LIKE...

TEACH kids they are the boss of their body and it is okay to tell if anyone is making them feel uncomfortable them even if that person is someone that is an authority figure or someone they love.

LIMIT isolated situations between a child and an adult or older child. Make all private interactions observable and interruptible. For example, make sure private tutoring for your child is held in a public space such as a library where all interactions are observed.

CHOOSE youth serving organizations for your child that have strong policies to prevent abuse. Ask whether staff receive regular training regarding how to recognize and respond to incidences of child abuse.

KNOW what children do in their online world and set boundaries to ensure interactions are safe. Setting boundaries can include utilizing privacy settings on devices, setting rules on who children are allowed to interact with online, and regular monitoring and communication to ensure safety.



CHECK OUT OUR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
MONTH PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE RESOURCES!





EVERY CHILD DESERVES A HERO!

HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH CHILDREN ABOUT HOW TO BE SAFE ONLINE

Age Appropriate Conversation Starters:

ELEMENTARY

- The internet is a BIG place and not everything we see is meant for kids. If we see something online that is not okay, it is important that we talk to a trusted adult such as our parent or caregiver.
- Some information is private and can be dangerous to share online. If a game or website asks for your personal information, we need to ask for permission from our caregiver before sharing.
- Not everyone online is a safe person, even if they seem nice and friendly. When playing video games or using social media, it is best to only interact with people we know in real life.
- If a stranger online or on video games asks you personal questions, asks you to send pictures or does anything that makes you feel uncomfortable, talk to your trusted adult and show them any messages or interactions.
- You deserve to have a safe and fun space on the internet. If anyone is making hurtful comments or is being a bully, you can block them. Sometimes even if you block someone, their mean comments and actions still hurt. You have lots of people in your life that care about you and want to help. Talk about your feelings with your caregiver, teacher, counselor, or other adult.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Online, everyone has a digital reputation. Your digital reputation, or digital footprint, is essentially a history of everything you've ever done online.
- Even if you delete a post or picture from the web or a device, once it is shared or posted online, anyone can save or re-share your post; it can remain permanent. A great rule is to not share anything online you would be embarrassed to share with EVERYONE.
- People may want to start a friendship with you for the purpose of hurting you. When playing video games or using social media, it is best to only interact with people we know in real life. If a stranger online does or says things that make you feel uncomfortable, talk to a trusted adult.

HIGH SCHOOL

- Sexting is sending or receiving nude/revealing photos or sexually explicit texts. Sometimes teens sext because they feel like their phone gives them the privacy and freedom to do what they want, or it feels adventurous. Sexting, however, can have dangerous consequences. Pressuring someone to send revealing photos, re-sharing private content or sending unsolicited sexual images can have serious criminal consequences.
- If someone online makes a promise that is too good to be true such as making large sums of money, getting a car or a place of your own in exchange for working for him/her, that may be a scam or exploitation.
- A person that cares about you in a healthy relationship, should not be pressuring you to do something dangerous or something you do not want to do. If that occurs, put yourself first and talk to a trusted adult to help you handle this situation.



CHECK OUT OUR CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION
MONTH PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE RESOURCES!

