

# GYDSI Social Media Safety Tips

*A practical guide to help youth & families use social media safely, responsibly, & confidently.*



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## 1. Protecting Personal Information

- Keep account profiles private whenever possible.
- Share your location only with trusted family members — or keep it turned off entirely.
- Do not publicly post your school schedule, home address, phone number, or other identifying details.

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## 2. Being Thoughtful Before Posting

- Pause and ask: “Would I be comfortable if a teacher, future employer, or family member saw this?”
- Avoid posting when upset, angry, or emotional.
- Remember that screenshots can make temporary posts permanent.

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## 3. Managing Friends and Followers Safely

- Only accept friend or follow requests from people you know in real life.
- Review your follower list regularly and remove unknown accounts.
- Block anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable — you do not need a reason to protect yourself.

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## 4. Spotting Scams, Fakes, and Red Flags

- Be cautious with unexpected links or messages, even when they appear to come from friends.
- Look for duplicate profiles, strange usernames, or accounts asking for personal information.
- Never share passwords, authentication codes, or financial details through messages.

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## 5. Staying Safe in Group Chats and Direct Messages

- Exit group chats that become inappropriate, hostile, or uncomfortable.
- Avoid sharing personal photos, private details, or sensitive information in DMs.
- Report harassment, threats, or bullying to a trusted adult and to the platform’s safety tools.

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## 6. Protecting Your Digital Reputation

- Search your own name occasionally to understand what is publicly visible.
- Remove outdated or inappropriate posts that no longer represent who you are.
- Think of your online presence as part of your future résumé and personal identity.

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## 7. Balancing Social Media and Real Life

- Establish device-free times, such as during meals, bedtime, or family activities.
- Turn off notifications that disrupt sleep or cause unnecessary stress.
- Use social media with intention, not habit.

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## 8. Speaking Up When Something Feels Wrong

- Trust your instincts — discomfort is a signal worth listening to.
- Share concerns immediately with a parent, guardian, teacher, or mentor.
- No one should navigate unsafe digital behavior alone — GYDSI stands ready to support safe choices.