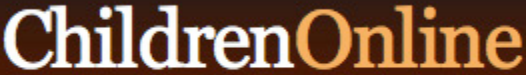


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Devoted to the safety of children and teens online

Phone: 413-214-1225  
A Division of Web Safe Consulting

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**Articles About  
Recent Facebook  
Issues & Scams:**

1. [Class Action Suit in the Works for Victims of Social Gaming Scams](#) by Ryan Tate [Nov. 12, 2009]
2. [Are You Getting Scammed by Facebook Games?](#) by Belinda Luscombe [Nov. 06, 2009]
3. [Is Facebook a Paradise for Scammers?](#) by Daniel Lyons [Nov. 6, 2009]

**Issue: #30****November 2009****30th Edition of the Children Online Newsletter.**

Our research with thousands of teens has demonstrated that the most popular social networking site for teens is Facebook. The great majority of students in grades 7 - 12 have Facebook accounts and children as young as nine in fourth grade are creating accounts.



As wonderful as Facebook is for adults and older teens who wish to connect with friends and family, it is first and foremost a business designed to make money. Therefore the decisions made by Facebook don't always have our children's privacy or best interests in mind. For example, just a couple of years ago Facebook recommended that users be at least 16 years old to use Facebook. Today the recommended age to use Facebook is thirteen. You can be certain that the recommended age did not decrease because Facebook research determined their site to be developmentally healthy and appropriate for thirteen year-olds to use. The decision, no doubt, was based on marketing and an attempt to increase revenue streams for Facebook.

Facebook has grown so tremendously large that it is impossible for them to successfully police all areas, uses of their site and all third-party applications. Scams are rampant and very successfully directed at naive, trusting, and unsuspecting teens. Below are several tips and suggestions to

4. Can a team of 150 Facebook "police" protect millions of young teens from inappropriate content? [Walking the Cyberbeat: To make Facebook advertiser-friendly, its 'porn cops' delete risquÃ© content and enforce decorum](#) by Nick Summers [May 1, 2009]

5. Want to understand the flame wars concerning Facebook's Terms of Service? Join the Facebook group devoted to the topic. [MILLIONS AGAINST FACEBOOK's NEW LAYOUT & TERMS OF SERVICE](#)

6. [Revised TOS Gives Facebook Perpetual Rights to User Content](#) [Feb 4, 2009]

7. This article is a bit "tounge in cheek" but makes very good points why our teens have some difficulties with using Facebook. [Facebook Made Me Do It - Seven lies we tell ourselves about social networking](#) by

discuss with your teens regarding their Facebook accounts. We encourage you to play an active role in their use of this very popular online hangout.

As always, we invite your comments, as well as ideas for future newsletters. Our telephone number for Children Online is 413-214-1225.

Best wishes,  
Marje Monroe and Doug Fodeman

Contact Marje or Doug via email at [marjem@childrenonline.org](mailto:marjem@childrenonline.org) or [dougf@childrenonline.org](mailto:dougf@childrenonline.org) for information about our programs or consulting services.

### Facebook Savvy - Taking the first steps

Among the thousands of students we work with in grades 7-12, YouTube and Facebook are always listed as the top two websites of choice. Facebook chat is often listed as the online communication form of choice for teens, beating out Instant Messaging and Texting. Even "tweens" flock to Facebook eager to be part of this fun and vibrant online community. And while it is fun and vibrant, Facebook also contains many risks and challenges for young people. To complicate matters, Facebook rules and privacy settings change to better suit their marketing and commercial strategies and often without any consideration or notification to users. Sorting through the maze of privacy settings, Terms of Service and safety settings can be a daunting task.

As a follow up to our very popular January 2009 newsletter on Facebook, we offer an in-depth look at the challenges of navigating the safety settings in place on the site. Facebook has made many changes to their safety and privacy settings in the past 12 months. Here are our insights and recommendations.

#### **1. Read the Terms of Service**

When we speak to students in grades 7-12 we show them the Terms of Service on Facebook and ask students to study the language, analyze the terms and fully understand their rights

Raina Kelley [Feb 20, 2009]

Finally, we invite you to read the article from Children Online that was published both by the National Association of Independent Schools [Jan. 2009] and Teacher Librarian magazine [June, 2009]: [The Impact of Facebook on Our Students. \[pdf\]](#)

### **Farmville and Spamming - exposing social network scams:**

**We are often asked by students in our workshops if a website, plug-in, or free application is safe to use. We try to teach students that on the Internet, there is often a price to pay, even for "free" things. Farmville is a perfect example. Farmville is a very popular farm simulation game developed by Zynga.com and used on Facebook. Sounds downright educational and it can be! It can also steal your money if you fall prey to some sleazy marketing practices perpetrated in it. To learn how this game,**

on the site. We recommend all parents and teens read the terms of service together and discuss what they mean. Look carefully at the language and wording and work with the teens to fully understand the implications of using the site. This includes posting pictures, chatting, lack of privacy, their right to retain information and the marketing realities.

Ask the students how the language and wording affects them and what, exactly, are their rights on the site. Ask your child to be a "critical consumer" and fully explore all of their rights on the site. Discuss the inherent risks that arise from the loss of personal information and lack of privacy in social networks such as Facebook. Remind them that there is NO PRIVACY on Facebook and even Facebook cannot completely monitor how third party applications scrub for and use their personal information.

Keep in mind that the Terms of Service often change in Facebook and HAVE changed in just the last few weeks.

### **2. Review and Discuss the Privacy Settings**

Many teens set their sites to "friends of friends" allowing their friends' friends to view their private information. With the typical teen user having hundreds of friends on Facebook, this option leaves the teen's private information in the hands of tens of thousands of viewers. We recommend setting the restrictions to "friends only", allowing only their own friends to view their information. Encourage your teen to think carefully about how they define a "friend" on Facebook and who they want to trust with their personal information.

The reality today is that lots of people want access to your child's private information and are getting it. There are dozens of applications available which can be used to "suck out" the private information of everyone in a connected network once friended into that network.

### **3. Be aware of the default public search option in the settings**

In 2008 Facebook added a public search option on their site, which allows Google, and other major search engines, to search users profile information. Facebook opted in all users as their default setting. This means that for many teens who do not know there is a public search option, their profile information can be searched openly on Google.

### **4. Set the posting of ads shown by Facebook & third**

and others, have earned millions of dollars fraudulently visit:

[Scamville: The Social Gaming Ecosystem Of Hell](#) by Michael Arrington [October 31, 2009]

To gain a deeper understanding how readily our teens have been manipulated in social networks by unscrupulous marketers, read this anonymous article by a Spammer posted recently at TechCrunch.com. To paraphrase one of the author's points...

While he can't get kids to pay for things directly on Facebook, he can easily trick them into doing one of three things:

- a) installing a spyware or adware toolbar
- b) giving up their email address
- c) giving up their cell phone number

This article is an eye opener for anyone who had doubts that our kids were being manipulated and targeted by scamsters. Visit [How To Spam Facebook Like A Pro: An Insider's Confession](#) [Nov. 1, 2009]

### **party apps to "No One"**

A new feature coming to Facebook concerns Ads and News Feeds. In the privacy settings, under the "News Feed and Wall" selection is a tab called "Facebook Ads." In the future, your photos and content may be used in advertising to your friends and those in your networks. Advertising may be created using your personal content by either third party applications or by Facebook. The current default setting for displaying these ads is "only my friends." We recommend restricting both of these types of ads to "No One" and not allow ads created with your content to be posted on anyone's pages. Note that a great deal of marketing is done on Facebook and personal information is regularly "scrubbed" for help in personalizing and customizing marketing ads to users.

### **5. Be aware of and view networks joined by teens on Facebook**

Many teens are part of several networks including schools, camps, towns, cities, or organizations. While the networks help teens feel connected to communities, they can also present a greater risk of exposure of their personal information. Restricting networks allows tighter control of personal information and reduces the risks involved with too many people having access to private information. Educate teens about the risks that arise from the loss of privacy. Talk to them about their "online reputation" as well. Explain that colleges, camps, police and potential employers are searching Facebook for any information that will help them in make decisions about hiring, granting admission, etc. The wider their network is, the easier it is for others to view their private content.

### **6. Educate teens about the numerous scams and tricks aimed at Facebook users**

With the explosive popularity of Facebook, new scams, tricks and trojans are found attacking Facebook users daily. Within the past year alone, the numbers of scams and tricks targeting users on Facebook has skyrocketed. It is critical for teen users to become savvy in protecting themselves against these hazards. Here are a few suggestions:

A. Never click a Facebook link in an email. Do not trust links, instead use your browser to go to Facebook and follow up on emails.

B. Avoid using Facebook applications before researching them first. Applications on Facebook such as "Snowball Fight" may be connected to spyware or adware that can

## About Children Online

Children Online offers innovative and comprehensive workshops on Internet safety and online education to students, parents, faculty and administrators. Our approach, unique in the field of Internet safety, combines a thorough understanding of Internet technologies, child development and counseling, to focus on the impact of the internet on the social, emotional and language development of young people.

Doug Fodeman and Marje Monroe, experts in technology, counseling and education, work together to provide invaluable research and tools for parents and schools with practical real-life solutions to the issues faced by young people online. Since 1997, Marje and Doug have spoken to thousands of students, teachers and parents. They have several

be potentially dangerous to your computer and privacy. Use the wisdom of Google to search for information on the application using search terms such as spyware or adware connected to the application name. Example: Google: Snowball Fight spyware adware

C. Avoid clicking on the ads listed on the sidebar of Facebook. Educate teens about the risks of spyware and adware and assume they can be found in many of the marketing and advertising sites found on Facebook. Remind them to NEVER enter their cell phone number into any advertising field or give out other personal information online without your permission.

D. If it seems too good to be true, it is. Accounts are often hacked or phished and then used to send out bogus messages to others in an attempt to trick them into clicking links that cause computer infections. Teach teens never to click links from friends that direct them to visit external sites.

Facebook is a unique and fun tool for communicating that is revolutionizing the way people connect with one another. This can be exciting and wonderful. On the other hand Facebook also contains many hidden risks to young people and requires a great deal of thought and strong decision-making. We encourage parents to help your teen avoid using Facebook until age 16. When Facebook is used earlier, we recommend knowing your child's password or "friending" them to help keep them safe.

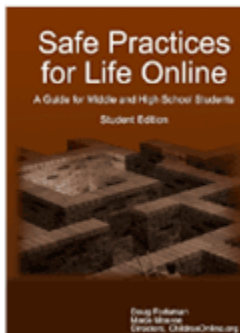
## INTERNET SAFETY CURRICULUM

### Safe Practices for Life Online

Children Online has a curriculum on Internet Safety that includes nearly 100 student exercises and lots of information on many topics including social networks, instant messaging, cyberbullying, online marketing, scams directed at kids, protecting privacy online, avoiding identity theft and impersonation, creating strong passwords and more.



publications in the area of Internet safety and offer a free online newsletter. More detailed information can be found at [ChildrenOnline.org](http://ChildrenOnline.org).



There is also a student edition which includes cartoons and "Did you know" sections of interesting facts for students.

To learn more or place an order visit our [publications page at ChildrenOnline.org](http://publications.page.at/ChildrenOnline.org) or go directly to our publisher's pages:

[Teacher's Edition at ISTE](#)  
[Student Edition at Lulu.com](#)

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