

Social Media Etiquette for Children

1. The Golden Rule:

Treat others as we ourselves would like to be treated and in the time of anonymous comments, it is more important than ever. It is our responsibility to teach our children to be kind.

2. Take care of your digital footprint:

Teach that **everything** we share on the Internet is permanent and can very easily turn public. When they are 13 this may not be such of an issue but we have to think long-term. Research shows that 31% of college admission officers visit applicant's social media profiles to know more about them. More disturbingly, about 30% of them have already rejected an applicant due to information they found online.

3. Pay attention to spelling and grammar:

You as a teacher/parent will have to set an example with the way you talk, speak and otherwise express yourself. Try to write as grammatically correct as possible. This is also part of your digital footprint and the message you send to the world.

4. Use different usernames and passwords:

Talk about the issue of online privacy as soon as possible. Try to use different usernames and passwords for every service or app you sign up for. Adjust your privacy settings, keep your password unique and turn on two-step identification whenever possible. That way, even if someone gains access to one of your online accounts, remaining ones will still be safe.

5. Don't share personal or confidential information online:

There is no reason why children should share their home address, phone number, Social Security number, credit card numbers or passwords online, even if the social network they are part of has that option.

6. Don't talk to strangers:

Children often feel pressured about accepting friend requests and following people back. Talk to them and explain that if you would not spend time with someone offline, there is no reason to do it online, and that we all have the right and privilege to choose our own company.

7. Never type when angry:

Both online and offline, it's always better to sleep it off, calm down and clear your head before addressing an issue, or else you may say something you will later regret.