

January 14, 2019

Dear South High School Families:

As we make our resolutions for a new year, we wanted to take a moment to remind all of our students, staff and families about the importance of using social media in safe, responsible and respectful ways. Unfortunately, it has become all too common for middle- and high-school students to send or receive inappropriate messages, which could result in lasting harm to a young person and potentially violate the law.

The Snapchat app is particularly concerning due to its high popularity among pre-teens and teenagers, and the nature of the app. Because Snapchat automatically deletes photo, video or text messages shortly after they are opened by the person receiving them, young people may falsely assume messages sent through Snapchat — particularly those containing bias-based, sexually explicit or other offensive images or comments — will be destroyed forever.

However, this is not always the case. The receiver of the Snapchat message can easily take a screenshot photo or video before the message is actually deleted, and then share the harmful messages with others. There are also cases of adults illegally soliciting teens and pre-teens for sexual images through fraudulent accounts.

Out of an abundance of caution, we ask all parents and guardians to speak with their children about their social media habits. The circulation of bias-based, sexual or other offensive images and comments can not only psychologically damage a young person, but also may break the law.

If your child is in possession or has been the recipient of bias-based, sexually explicit or other offensive messages on social media, please report this to your school's principal or to Salem-Keizer's Prevention and Protection Coordinator Debbie Joa at 503-399-3061 or joa_debbie@salkeiz.k12.or.us.

You can report unsafe, threatening or illegal activity 24 hours a day through SafeOregon. Managed by the Oregon State Police, SafeOregon has helped to prevent acts of violence and even loss of life. You can text/call 844-472-3367 at any time or make reports through the SafeOregon app.

On the following page, we have provided tips for enhancing safety on social media. The safety of students and staff is always our top priority, and we invite everyone to join us in this effort.

Sincerely,

Lara Tiffin
Principal

SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

- **Use Social Media Responsibly:** Common Sense Media ([commonsensemedia.org](https://www.commonsensemedia.org)) provides a wealth of resources to help young people thrive in a world of social media, the internet, texting and other technology. [Among its tips for social media users](#), the organization suggests:
 - **Be a good digital citizen.** A good rule to follow: If you wouldn't do something in real life, you shouldn't do it online.
 - **Parents should visit the site's safety section with their child.** Sometimes you can find these sections under "About Us" or "Privacy Policy." Review the rules and find out how your child can report mean or inappropriate content.
 - **Avoid strangers.** People aren't always who they say they are online. If someone you don't know communicates with you, do not respond, and tell a trusted adult.
 - **Keep some information private.** Your name, address and phone number should stay private.

- **Consider Using Monitoring Apps:** A March 2018 *Psychology Today* ([psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)) article titled, "[Parent's Guide to Social Media Use for Kids](#)," lists apps parents can use to monitor their children's social media use, including:
 - **Norton:** Sets phone time limits and filters web content.
 - **TeenSafe:** Tracks your child's calls, texts, GPS and social media activity.
 - **MobSafetyRangerBrowser:** Enables you to view your child's website browsing and set time limits.
 - **Qustodio:** Sets a curfew when phones shut down.

- **Enable Security Settings on Apps:**
 - **Snapchat:** In a blog post titled, "[Parents' Ultimate Guide to Snapchat](#)," Common Sense Media suggests parents enable privacy settings with their children. *"...Sit down with your kid and together go into the app's settings (the little gear icon next to your profile image). Scroll down to 'Who Can...' This is where you can control important safety features such as who can see your location and who can view your story. This is a perfect time to talk to your kid about using their Snapchat account safely and responsibly."*
 - **Instagram and Facebook:** Common Sense Media [urges teenagers to use privacy settings](#) to limit their audience on Instagram and Facebook to people they know well.

- **Download the SafeOregon App:**
 - Report unsafe, threatening or illegal activity 24 hours a day. Managed by the Oregon State Police, SafeOregon has helped to prevent acts of violence and even loss of life. You can also visit the [website](#) or text/call 844-472-3367 at any time.