

# Supporting Pre-Teen and Teen Students in the Digital World

BTS School-Family Partnership Series  
November 2024  
Lauren Zugale, Principal



# Resources

*This slideshow has been created using materials directly from:*

*<https://www.commonsense.org/education>*

*This is a resource used in our Instructional Center and Advisory courses as well.*

*“Common Sense is dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive.”*



# Why is this important to you as a parent



n?

- ★ Safety
- ★ Devices have become a constant companion in the lives of teens → connection, creativity, distraction, etc.
- ★ Developing positive habits
- ★ Creating trust as a parent/child
- ★ Creating a balance between technology and life

# Finding Balance

- ❑ Establish screen-free times and areas of your house
- ❑ Use settings to your advantage
  - ❑ Limiting notifications
  - ❑ “Turn off” times
- ❑ Model the behavior you want to see
- ❑ Help kids identify healthy behaviors
  - ❑ Self-esteem
  - ❑ Socialization
  - ❑ Active lifestyle
- ❑ Acknowledge how tech companies target youth
  - ❑ Ads
  - ❑ Selling data
  - ❑ Scams



# Digital Footprint

- ❖ What does this mean for a middle schooler?
  - Short term
  - Long term
  - Creating an “image”
  - Information being collected by companies
- ❖ Video link



# Creating Profiles and Maintaining Them

- How to create strong usernames and passwords
- Discuss why strict privacy settings are important (ex: opt out of sharing your location)
- Be careful with personal information
- Review how to identify “real” websites and avoiding downloads (ex: spyware)
- Skip anything that’s not required
- Updating passwords regularly
- Who to share passwords with and how to remember them



# Cell Phones



- **Texting**
  - Be respectful
  - Assume that private texts can become public
  - Discuss when a text is appropriate versus a phone call
  - Discuss the difference between a text thread and individual text recipients
- **Phone calls**
  - Verify who the caller is; if you don't know the person, don't answer the phone
  - Develop rules for answering the phone call of a parent and/or adult
- **Photos and videos**
  - Ask permission before you take a photo or video of someone else
  - Photos and videos are positive memories and shouldn't be used to embarrass or hurt others
- **Apps and downloads**
  - Have clear guidelines about when to use them, who downloads them, costs, etc.
  - Set parental controls if needed, such as in-app purchases



# Smartwatches

- Many students are using as a “workaround” with cell phones
- Similar discuss discussions and limits for cell phone use apply to smartwatches
- Model expectations for appropriate use





# Making Friends, Talking to Friends and Interacting with Others Online SAFELY

- Model how to write a text or a social media post
- Watch what they're saying and doing rather than policing
- Speak up if you see or hear aggressive trash-talking, hate speech, rude images or anything hurtful
  - Words have consequences!
- Empathize with the pressure to overshare
- Develop positive instincts and trust their gut



# Helping Your Child Post, Comment and Upload Responsibly

- ❖ Be a role model
  - Before you post, ask if it's okay to share
- ❖ Use privacy settings
  - Show your privacy settings
  - Talk about why certain information is private or limited to a small group
- ❖ Look at other posts together
  - Talk about how one's image is affected by what they post
  - What kind of image do you want to create?
- ❖ Search yourself
  - Are you comfortable with what's out there?



# Popular Apps for Teens

Snapchat



Instagram



Tik Tok



Discord



Minecraft



Roblox



Fortnite



YouTube



# Other things to consider...

- ❖ [Recommended Apps by Common Sense](#)
- ❖ [AI](#)
- ❖ [Family Tech Planners](#)
- ❖ Music lyrics and videos

