



Social Media Parent Forum

Berry Middle School
November 19, 2013

Why are we here?

By the end of this session, TPW:

- describe current social media trends.
- explain the potential dangers of unmonitored social media use.
- give examples of appropriate parental monitoring of adolescent social media use
- understand the roles of student, parents, and school personnel in safe social media use.

The Starting Lineup.....

You, the parents

Cameron McKinley, Technology Coach

Rachel Sizemore, 6th grade counselor

John Aufdemorte, 7th grade counselor

Kathy Hartwiger, 8th grade counselor

Bryan Monosky, Hoover Police Officer / SRO

The Starting Lineup (cont'd)....

Margaret Kneisley, Assistant Principal

Terry Lamar, Assistant Principal

Kari Tibbs, Assistant Principal


Chris Robbins, Principal

Session Format

- Start with a short presentation, then....
- Largely discussion and parent-need driven
- You may ask questions or raise a topic of concern at any time
 - ◆ Raise your hand, or....
 - ◆ Devices are spread out around the room (or you can use your smartphone) - feel free to submit a topic or question for discussion - <http://bit.ly/19CFjeX>

Session Agenda

1. Welcome | Introduction | Agenda
2. “What’s Going on in their Brains?” - Counselors
3. “What Parents Need to Know” - Cameron McKinley
4. “What’s a School to do?” - Chris Robbins
5. “What’s a Parent to do?” - Everyone
6. Open Discussion | Panel Q and A



**“What’s Going
on in their
Brains?”**

What's Going on in their Brains?

- Current brain research has much to say about the behavior, problem-solving, and decision-making abilities of our teens.
- How do we see this impact their use of social media?
- See handout relating to brain research.



**“What Parents
Need to Know”**

SPEND SOME TIME
WITH YOUR KIDS ONLINE



What Parents Need to Know

11 Social Media Tools Parents Need to Know About Now

Twitter

Instagram

Snapchat

Tumblr

Google+

Vine

Wanelo

Kik Messenger

Ooovoo

Pheed

Ask.fm

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=50155197n>

What Parents Need to Know

1. **Twitter** is a microblogging site that allows users to post brief, 140-character messages -- called "tweets" -- and follow other users' activities.

Why it's popular

Teens like using it to share quick tidbits about their lives with friends. It's also great for keeping up with what's going on in the world -- breaking news, celebrity gossip, etc.

What parents need to know

- **Public tweets are the norm for teens.** Though you can choose to keep your tweets private, most teens report having public accounts ([Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2013](#)). Talk to your kids about what they post and how a post can spread far and fast.
- **Updates appear immediately.** Even though you can remove tweets, your followers can still read what you wrote until it's gone. This can get kids in trouble if they say something in the heat of the moment.
- **It's a promotional tool for celebs.** Twitter reels teens in with behind-the-scenes access to celebrities' lives, adding a whole new dimension to celebrity worship. You may want to point out how much marketing strategy goes into the tweets of those they admire.

What Parents Need to Know

2. **Instagram** is a platform that lets users snap, edit, and share photos and 15-second videos -- either publicly or with a network of followers.

Why it's popular

Instagram unites the most popular features of social media sites: sharing, seeing, and commenting on photos. Instagram also lets you apply fun filters and effects to your photos, making them look high quality and artistic.

What parents need to know

- **Teens are on the lookout for "Likes."** Similar to Facebook, teens may measure the "success" of their photos -- even their self-worth -- by the number of likes or comments they receive. Posting a photo or video can be problematic if teens post it to validate their popularity.
- **Public photos are the default.** Photos and videos shared on Instagram are public and may have location information unless privacy settings are adjusted. Hashtags can make photos even more visible to communities beyond a teen's followers.
- **Mature content can slip in.** The terms of service specify that users should be at least 13 years old and shouldn't post partially nude or sexually suggestive photos -- but they don't address violence, swear words, or drugs.

What Parents Need to Know

3. **Snapchat** is a messaging app that lets users put a time limit on the pictures and videos they send before they disappear.

Why it's popular

Snapchat's creators intended the app's fleeting images to be a way for teens to share fun, light moments without the risk of having them go public. And that's what most teens use it for: sending goofy or embarrassing photos to one another. Snapchats also seem to send and load much "faster" than email or text.

What parents need to know

- **Many schools have yet to block it**, which is one reason why teens like it so much ([Pew Internet & American Life Project](#), 2013).
- **It's a myth that Snapchats go away forever.** Data is data: Whenever an image is sent, it never truly goes away. (For example, the person on the receiving end can take a screenshot of the image before it disappears.) Snapchats can even be recovered.
- **It can make sexting seem OK.** The seemingly risk-free messaging might encourage users to share pictures containing inappropriate content.

What Parents Need to Know

4. **Tumblr** is like a cross between a blog and Twitter: It's a streaming scrapbook of text, photos, and/or videos and audio clips. Users create and follow short blogs, or "tumblelogs," that can be seen by anyone online (if made public).

Why it's popular

Many teens have tumblrs for personal use -- sharing photos, videos, musings, and things they find funny with their friends. Tumblelogs with funny memes and gifs often go viral online, as well (case in point: "[Texts from Hillary](#)").

What parents need to know

- **Porn is easy to find.** This online hangout is hip and creative but sometimes raunchy. Pornographic images and videos, depictions of violence, self-harm, drug use, and offensive language are easily searchable.
- **Privacy can be guarded, but only through an awkward workaround.** The first profile a member creates is public and viewable by anyone on the Internet. Members who desire full privacy have to create a *second* profile, which they're able to password protect.
- **Posts are often copied and shared.** Reblogging on Tumblr is similar to re-tweeting: A post that's reblogged from one tumblelog then appears on another. Many teens like -- and in fact, want -- their posts reblogged. But do you really want your kids' words and photos on someone else's page?

What Parents Need to Know

8. **Kik Messenger** is an app-based alternative to standard texting that kids use for social networking. It's free to use but has lots of ads.

Why it's popular

It's fast and has no message limits, character limits, or fees if you just use the basic features, making it decidedly more fun in many ways than SMS texting.

What parents need to know

- **It's too easy to "copy all."** Kik's ability to link to other Kik-enabled apps within itself is a way to drive "app adoption" (purchases) from its users for developers. The app also encourages new registrants to invite everyone in their phone's address book to join Kik, since users can only message those who also have the app.
- **There's some stranger danger.** An app named *OinkText*, linked to Kik, allows communication with strangers who share their Kik usernames to find people to chat with. There's also a Kik community blog where users can submit photos of themselves and screenshots of messages (sometimes displaying users' full names) to contests.
- **It uses real names.** Teens' usernames identify them on Kik, so they shouldn't use their full real name as their username.

What Parents Need to Know

11. **Ask.fm** is a social site that lets kids ask questions and answer those posted by other users -- sometimes anonymously.

Why it's popular

Although there are some friendly interactions on Ask.fm -- Q&As about favorite foods or crushes, for example -- there are lots of mean comments and some creepy sexual posts. This iffy content is part of the site's appeal for teens.

What parents need to know

- **Bullying is a major concern.** The British news website MailOnline reported that the site has been linked to the suicides of several teens. [Talk to your teens about cyberbullying](#) and how anonymity can encourage mean behavior.
- **Anonymous answers are optional.** Users can decide whether to allow anonymous posts and can remove their answers from streaming to decrease their profile's visibility. If your teens do use the site, they'd be best turning off anonymous answers and keeping themselves out of the live stream.
- **Q&As can appear on Facebook.** Syncing with Facebook means that a much wider audience can see those Q&As.

What Parents Need to Know

6. **Vine** is a social media app that lets users post and watch looping six-second video clips. This Twitter-owned service has developed a unique community of people who post videos that are often creative and funny -- and sometimes thought-provoking.

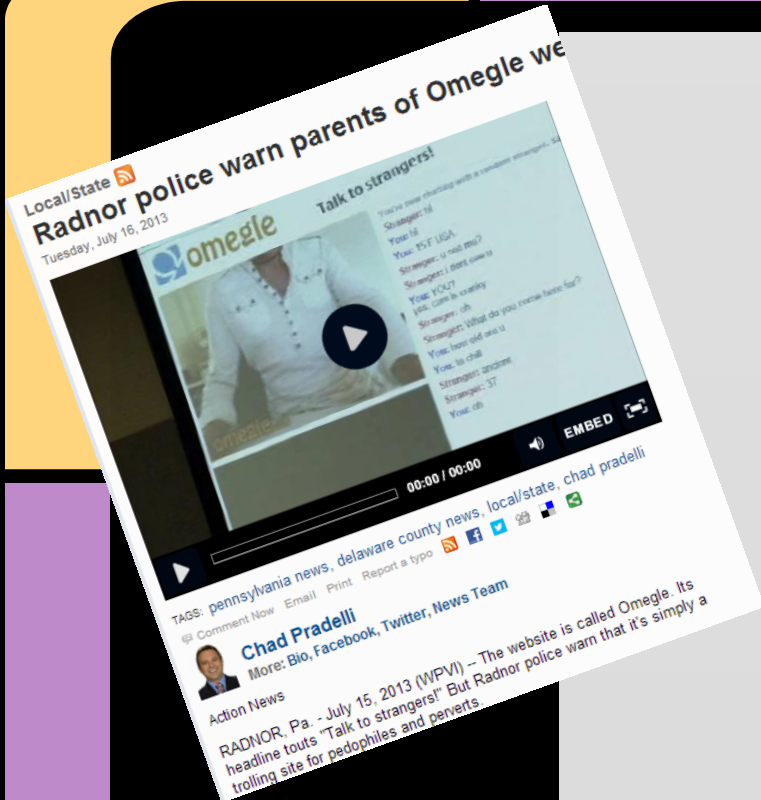
Why it's popular

Videos run the gamut from stop-motion clips of puzzles doing and undoing themselves to six-second skits showing how a teen wakes up on a school day vs. a day during summer. Teens usually use Vine to create and share silly videos of themselves and/or their friends and family.

What parents need to know

- **It's full of inappropriate videos.** In three minutes of random searching, we came across a clip full of full-frontal male nudity, a woman in a fishnet shirt with her breasts exposed, and people blowing marijuana smoke into each other's mouths. There's a lot of funny, clever expression on Vine, but much of it isn't appropriate for kids.
- **There are significant privacy concerns.** The videos you post, the accounts you follow, and the comments you make on videos are all public by default. But you *can* adjust your settings to protect your posts; only followers will see them, and you have to approve new followers.
- **Parents can be star performers (without knowing).** If your teens film you being goofy or silly, you may want to talk about whether they plan to share it.

What Parents Need to Know



red flag sites

- snapchat
- ask.fm
- vine
- omegle



**“What’s a
school to do
about social
media?”**

What's a school to do?

- What is Berry's approach to addressing safe social media use for our adolescents?
 - ◆ Educate students relentlessly
 - Trainings | TV Broadcasts | Intercom | Assemblies | Connections lessons
 - ◆ Be a resource to families continuously
 - Forums | Situational Support | Connection to Resources | Network / Collaboration with

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

What challenges does Berry currently face when it comes to adolescent social media use?

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

- Students posting too much information about themselves or making their accounts “public” (name, school, friends, etc.)
- Cyberbullying / harassment of others
- Threatening statements / taunting

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

How does Berry respond when issues or concerns arise regarding adolescent social media use?

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

- Engage students in finding out all of the facts.
- Inform the parents of all students involved.
- Contact local agencies (HPD, DHR, etc.), if necessary.
- Educate all of the parties regarding the social media implications.
- Collaborate with others within the building to note trends and commonalities.



What's a school to do? (cont'd)



What about school-based discipline for misuse of social media?

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

- School policy effectively addresses incidents which occur on school grounds or at school-sponsored events.
- ◆ Schools easily show a clear disruption on the educational process when these incidents occur.
- ◆ Schools are able to contact parents, issue consequences, and correct the behavior. The issue is resolved.

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

- However, when the incident takes place in the social media world, the connection to school is often less clear.
 - ◆ Are there legal issues to consider?
 - ◆ Are there issues of a student's free speech to be considered?
 - ◆ *How has the educational process been disrupted?* (ref. Tinker vs. Des Moines.)

What's a school to do? (cont'd)

Ultimately, students can receive school-based consequences based upon the disruption the social media incident causes, not for the posting itself.

**“What’s a
parent to do
about social
media?”**

What is a parent to do?

Based on current research from multiple sources (CommonSenseMedia, etc.), here are several guidelines / self-checks for monitoring your adolescent's use of social media:

#1 - Start the Dialogue.

- Ask them about current trends they are seeing with their friends and at their friends' houses.
- Seek to understand what technology they are using and how it works.
- Define technology “acceptable use” for them.

#2 - Conduct a tech inventory.

- Find out what devices you have in your home and what they can do.
 - ◆ Kindle, Nooks, iPads, Xbox, smart phones, iTouch, Chromebooks, laptops, gaming systems, etc.
- Find out where they are kept in your home.

#3 - Create accountability.

- Establish boundaries in your home for....
 - ◆ WHAT devices will be used.
 - ◆ WHEN the devices will be used.
 - ◆ HOW the devices will be used.
 - ◆ WHERE they will be used.
 - ◆ And, when they will be turned off for the evening, turned into parents, or placed in a off “spot”.
 - ◆ Consider a written contract.

#4 - Clearly outline web expectations.

- Discuss what websites are acceptable for viewing.
- Discuss what websites are NOT acceptable for viewing.
- Employ a web filter on your home network.
 - ◆ Adolescents should not have unfiltered web access to the internet.
- Talk to their friends' parents about theirs.

#5 - Discuss online safety regularly.

- Discuss the dangers of giving out personal or identifiable information online - make all accounts private.
 - ◆ Includes photos, addresses, school, school teams, phone numbers, first and last names, parents' workplaces, etc.
 - ◆ Predators often “stalk” their victims over time, and are patiently putting pieces of a puzzle together that the student gradually reveals over time

#6 - Practice “What do I do if...”

- Outline how you expect your child to respond if they are in a situation which is uncomfortable or unsafe, such as....
 - ◆ exposure to pornography
 - ◆ cyberbullying
 - ◆ plagiarism
 - ◆ online predator / stalking
 - ◆ harassment
 - ◆ “sexting”

#7 - Check up on them.

- Monitor your child's usage of social media
 - ◆ know all passwords.
 - ◆ if they have it, you should have it.
 - ◆ check internet history.
 - ◆ monitor postings, friends, etc.
 - ◆ look at photos and videos on devices, both sent and received.
 - ◆ talk about their "privacy" and how far it extends in your home.....

#8 - Communicate with the school.

- Contact your school counselor or administrator with concerns or questions.
 - ◆ “What are you seeing at your house?”
 - ◆ “What are you seeing at the school relating to _____?”
 - ◆ “Have you heard of this before?”
 - ◆ “How should I handle this situation?”

In summary....

what device your middle schooler is using,
when they are using their device,
how they are using the device,
where are they going in their online world,
and with whom they are interacting.



**Panel
Discussion |
Open Forum**

In the end....

- We are partnering with you, our families, to try to keep our kids safe in an ever-changing, ever-threatening, technology-rich environment.
- Therefore, student-safety must remain our first priority when addressing these issues.

The background features a black field with several colorful, rounded rectangular shapes. A large purple shape is in the top-left corner. Below it is a blue shape. To the right of the blue shape is a horizontal bar divided into four segments: purple, yellow, yellow, and red. A yellow shape is in the bottom-right corner.

**Thank you for
taking the time
to attend!**

Other Resources

Parent Tip Sheets <http://www.common sense media.org/educators/educate-families/tip-sheets>

Cyberbullying Tips for Kids

[http://www.common sense media.org/videos/cyberbullying-prevention-tips-for-kids\](http://www.common sense media.org/videos/cyberbullying-prevention-tips-for-kids)

Top 10 Cyberbullying Questions

<http://www.common sense media.org/blog/parents-top-10-cyberbullying-questions>

Omegle

<http://www.bewebsmart.com/internet-safety/what-is-omegle-is-it-okay-for-kids/>

Web Filtering

Third party web filtering software can filter objectionable content from all programs. While no software can completely block all objectionable contact, third-party software exists that can provide a very high filter level. Some of the options are for software to be downloaded to the device and others are changes for your router so every device whether plugged in or wireless is protected. Some examples:



OpenDNS



There are also a few sites which review the effectiveness of such filters:

- [PC Magazine](#)
- [FilterReview.com](#)
- [Internet Filter Review 2006](#)