Guide to The Social You: Connecting with Others

Students learn how to differentiate between Internet friends and in-person friends.

Lesson topics include: Social interaction via forums, blogs, chat rooms, and online games; how to avoid spam and phishing scams; the importance of keeping personal information private; and strategies for responding to uncomfortable requests.

Digital Lesson References

Important note: Resources provided here are meant to be used on personal devices, not on school-owned or managed devices.

Forums
Allow for online conversation and discussion of topics. The world's biggest ones are listed here:

Gaia Online – www.gaiaonline.com/forum
Bodybuilding.com – forum.bodybuilding.com
XDA-Developers – forum.xda-developers.com
Pistonheads – www.pistonheads.com/gassing/

Blogs
Allow for online journaling. Here are the most popular platforms:

Blogspot – www.blogspot.com
Tumblr – www.tumblr.com
Wordpress – www.wordpress.com

Chat Rooms
Allow for back-and-forth conversations with strangers. Because I recommend staying away from chat rooms altogether, I'm not going to list any sites here. There are no safe chatting sites.

Online Games
Allow for social interaction during gaming, often in a virtual world.

zOMG! – www.gaiaonline.com/games/zomg
World of Warcraft – us.blizzard.com/wow
Club Penguin – www.clubpenguin.com
Activeworlds – www.activeworlds.com
Free Realms – www.freerealms.com

Email
Allows for electronic mailing between anyone with an email address. Since you're under age 13, your parents will need to sign up for an account for you, or sign a permission slip if you're using email at school.

Gmail – www.gmail.com
Hotmail – www.hotmail.com
Yahoo! Mail – mail.yahoo.com
iCloud Mail – www.icloud.com

Private Information

Things that should never be revealed online, even when contained in a photograph:

Addresses – where you live

Names – your real name and the names of your family members

Phone Numbers – your house and cell phone numbers

Pets – the names, types, and appearance of your animals

Locations – where you are

License Plates – the letters and numbers specific to your vehicle

Sports Uniforms – the colors and logos that identify your team

Uncomfortable Requests

Strategies for responding to requests that make you feel nervous, scared, or uncomfortable:

Change the Subject – talk about something else

Ignore the Request – don't respond and don't acknowledge the request

Block the Person – add them to your blacklist or block them from contacting you

Tell a Trusted Adult – ask a parent, guardian, teacher, or other adult for help

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Online Polling

Didn't get to participate in this session's polls? Cast your vote at the websites below.

What's the best reason to be careful about what you share online? – www.bit.ly/lol2-6

What's the riskiest thing about online chatting and online gaming? – www.bit.ly/lol2-7