



Social Media and Kids: What Parents Should Know

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Social media consists of online interaction where people can communicate, collaborate, discuss ideas and play games. Although children and teenagers are very digitally savvy, they still don't have the life experience and good judgment that comes with age. It is very easy to post a picture or make a comment, but it's almost impossible to take it back once it is posted and shared. There are also adults who pose as other children and teens to gain their trust but then take advantage of them.

How do I make sure my child is safe?

1. Know what platforms your child is using, and make sure you know how to use them, too.
2. If your child has an account, you should have an account, and you should be online "friends" with them in every platform they use. Make sure to visit their pages periodically to see what

they are doing if you are not actively using the same platforms they do.

3. Keep the computer in an area where you can see what they are doing. For older children who have their own smart phones, make it a rule that you get to look at their browsing history and texting logs whenever you want.
4. Be clear that you will not tolerate posts that are mean, gossip or anything that's untrue, potentially harmful or embarrassing. This is known as "cyberbullying" and is a very real problem for kids today.
5. Remind them there is no real privacy online, and in the future, employers and colleges could see what they posted today.
6. Set rules and boundaries for when and how long digital devices can be used. Make meal times "screen free." Set a reasonable bedtime and make sure the computer, cell phone and tablet stay out of the bedroom to ensure your child is not having his or her sleep interrupted and is not staying up too long.

Whether you like it or not, social media is part of life today, and hopefully you can help your child safely use it and take advantage of the benefits it offers. Maybe your child will open your eyes to something new online that you love, too!



Oatmeal: An Overnight Breakfast Sensation

Hy-Vee Dietitian Janine Albers has some great information about the nutritional benefits of oatmeal:

1. Oatmeal supports a healthy weight as it is an appetite suppressant.
2. With its low-glycemic index, oatmeal is beneficial when it comes to reducing the risk of diabetes.
3. Foods rich in whole oat sources of soluble fiber have been linked to good heart health and lowering of the LDL or “bad” cholesterol.

Try this overnight slow cooker oatmeal recipe and wake up to a quick and easy on-the-go breakfast!

Overnight Slow Cooker Oatmeal

Ingredients:

4 cups water
1 cup steel cut oats
¼ teaspoon sea salt

Directions:

Combine water, oats and salt in a slow cooker. Cover with the lid and cook on low overnight (7-8 hours). In the morning, wake up to whole-grain goodness!

Makes 4 servings.

Top cooked oatmeal with nuts for extra protein and healthy fats, and fresh fruit such as blueberries or strawberries for additional fiber. Store leftover cooked oatmeal in the refrigerator to have throughout the week.

New Year, New You? Children and Resolutions

Tips provided by **Debbie Lancto**,
Avera Health Plans Health
and Wellness Champion

Even children and teens can make resolutions to improve their health, such as getting more sleep or spending less time on social media. Here are a few tips to help your child stick with his or her goal:

Be specific. When creating a resolution, help your child be specific about exactly what he wants to do — like going to bed at 9:30 p.m. on a school night.

Write it down. Ask your child to write down the resolution, and then schedule it into her day. Once it’s put in writing, it’s more likely to happen.

Take it slow. If your child isn’t used to going to bed earlier or logging off of social media, make gradual changes. Have him create a strategy that he can do for an entire year, not just the first week or month.

Be realistic. She may stumble along the way and fall back to old habits every once in a while. Convey to your child that a stumble doesn’t mean failure — encourage her to just pick up where she left off.

Find positive reinforcement. Your child should surround himself with people who will be supportive of him in reaching his goal.

Keep track. It’s really easy to lose track of a goal if progress isn’t measured. It could be a blank notebook to write it all down by hand.