

How to Stay Safe Online

Military Youth on the Move, podcast transcript

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Between updating your status on Facebook, posting videos to YouTube, and emailing your friends and family, you probably spend a good chunk of time online each day. So take a few minutes right now to make sure you're being safe and smart about it.

First of all, keep your privacy and safety in mind while using social networking sites. Limit access to your information to a select group of people that you know. You will probably have to change your settings to do this; it won't happen automatically. In addition, keep valuable information to yourself. There is no reason to post your full name, age, address, phone number, email address, or any other private information about yourself.

You also need to think about the material you are posting online. Many parents, school officials, employers, and college admissions counselors are now looking at teens' online activity. If you post wild pictures of your weekend parties or write posts using foul language, think about who might see it and how it could affect your future.

Remember, you can't take your online activity back. Once you send that message or photo, you can't control where it ends up. Don't assume things over the Internet will stay private. If you aren't comfortable with what you're sending, don't send it.

Be wary of strangers online. Don't agree to meet up with people you don't know and don't accept friend requests from total strangers. If a stranger is trying to communicate with you, tell your parents and avoid communication.

Lastly, don't get caught up in cyberbullying. This includes gossiping or spreading rumors through email or text message, sending out embarrassing photos, and posting rude comments online. Cyberbullying is becoming a bigger issue each day and it's important to stay away from it. Many young people are getting hurt and many others are getting in serious trouble. If you wouldn't say it to the person standing face-to-face, don't post it either. If you are experiencing cyberbullying, be sure to get your parents and someone at your school involved immediately.

To read more about this issue, check out Military Youth on the Move. We've got articles and tips on several topics written just for you! Find out about creating a resume, selecting a college, and much more.

For a complete listing of podcasts offered by Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP), visit the [MC&FP Social Media Hub](#) located on MilitaryHOMEFRONT.

