

## To help adults understand the value of social networking you can:

- Talk to them about how you use social networking software.
- Show that you keep personal information private and practice safe and responsible use of social networking services.
- Teach adults how to use social networking sites that match their interests.
- Volunteer at your library.
- Show adults educational uses of social networking. Find examples at <http://tinyurl.com/2ylmes>
- Make and share a video or podcast that shows positive uses of social networking.

## How Can I Make Sure My Access to Social Networks is Not Taken Away?

- Stay informed about what is happening in your state regarding lawmakers' decisions about online social networks.
- Contact a lawmaker to let him or her know how online social networks are used. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/25p2qs> for tips on how to get in touch with your legislators.
- Talk to your local librarian and ask how you might become involved in this issue, and volunteer to educate your community about social networking by teaching a class to parents or other teens
- Spread the word about positive uses of social networking sites. Use the **30 Positive Uses of Social Networking** for ideas: [www.leonline.com/yalsa/positive\\_uses.pdf](http://www.leonline.com/yalsa/positive_uses.pdf)

## Who Can I Talk To? Where Can I Go for More Information?

Don't overlook trusted adults in your community. These may be family members, coaches, librarians, teachers, neighbors, clergy, or family friends. Check out these Web sites as well:

### Social Networking Sites: Safety Tips for Tweens and Teens

[www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/tech/tec14.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/tech/tec14.htm)

A short and useful list of reminders for staying safe online.

### X-Block

<http://xblock.isafe.org>

X-Block trains teen mentors, hosts teen-produced vodcasts, and sponsors contests. There are free online tutorials, printable newsletters and more.

### NetSmartz

[www.nsteens.org/](http://www.nsteens.org/)

Besides a library of information (NetSmartz411), there are links to videos of "Real Life Stories" with activity cards and related news stories.

### WiredSafety

[www.wiredsafety.org/youth.html](http://www.wiredsafety.org/youth.html)

You can seek advice through the online chat help service or become "teenangels" ([www.teenangels.org](http://www.teenangels.org)), 13-18 year-old volunteers who have been trained by law enforcement and other safety experts in online safety, privacy, and security.

*This pamphlet was created by YALSA, a 501c3 non-profit serving librarians who work with teens*

# Social Networking

## A Guide for Teens



from

**yalsa**  
Young Adult Library  
Services Association  
[www.ala.org/yalsa](http://www.ala.org/yalsa)

Celebrating 50 Years • 1957-2007

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## Why Do We Call This Social Networking?



Chances are, you and your friends don't use the term "social networking." You might say, "I'm using MySpace" or "I'm updating my blog."

Websites like blogs, wikis, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Ning all allow users to create their own content and/or to connect with other people. You may also hear this called "Web 2.0."

Lumping these kinds of sites together by referring to them as "social networking sites" can give some adults the impression that these sites are used mostly for meeting people you don't know, which is not usually the case.

### Learn More:

#### Social Networking Web Sites and Teens: An Overview

[www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/198/report\\_display.asp](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/198/report_display.asp)

#### That's Not Cool

[www.thatsnotcool.com](http://www.thatsnotcool.com)

## Why Do Adults Treat Social Networking Differently Than I Do?

There are many reasons adults treat social networking differently than they treat other web sites and services. Including:

- They may not really understand what it is or realize that they have used social networking software themselves. Many people do not understand that sites like Amazon and eBay are built with social networking functionality and principles.
- They may not think social networking has any value.
- They have seen news reports that stress the risks and dangers of using social networking software.
- There ARE risks associated with using social networking software and adults want to protect children and teens.
- They have not seen reports of responsible and meaningful uses of social networking software, particularly by teens.
- They don't really understand how teens use social networking software and the role it plays in their lives.



*YALSA's Teen Tech Week™ strives to ensure that all teens are competent and ethical users of technology. Learn more at [www.ala.org/teentechweek](http://www.ala.org/teentechweek).*

## What's safety got to do with it?



While using a social networking site, someone you don't know and who isn't who they say they are might contact you. If you let that person know something about you—your name, where you live, where you go to school— that could jeopardize your safety.

Keep your profile and photos private and do not let strangers find out personal details about you.

### If Someone Threatens You

If a stranger contacts you and does anything that makes you afraid or uncomfortable, immediately tell a trusted adult and contact the Cyber Tipline at [www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com) or by calling 1-800-843-5678. Sometimes you may even feel threatened or disrespected by someone you know. If friends are making you feel uncomfortable, don't be afraid to cut off communication.

### What's Privacy Got To Do With It?

Have you heard the stories of people who went for job interviews and found out that the employer checked out their Facebook profile? You can't be 100% sure who is going to see what you post about yourself, your friends, and what you do with your spare time.

It's important to think about what you keep private in social networking sites to stay safe. It's also important to make sure potential employers, college admissions officers, have the right concept of who you really are.

Identity theft is a growing problem. Keeping your personal information private can also help ensure that your identity isn't stolen. Learn more at: [www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fraud/websites/idtheft.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fraud/websites/idtheft.html)