FAMILY TIP SHEET

Social Media and Body Image

How do teens' experiences on social media influence their body image? Today's teens not only have the ability to share their thoughts, their photos, and their videos, they also have 24-hour-a-day access to their social media profiles no

it's no surprise that teens are lured by the appeal of peer feedback and the opportunity for social approval. But social media create unique challenges for parenting, particularly related to body image.

- **Ask your teens how they decide which photos of themselves to share.**
  A perfectly curated online identity looks effortless. But in reality, people are intentional about what they share, and quite a bit of thought and effort goes into portraying a certain image. Invite your teens to think

  process about what you post or don't post. What motivates all of us to share, or not to share, certain snapshots of our lives online?

- **Encourage your teens to view** **ning** **oen** **e** **p**

  beautiful and perfect. The second way is through the feedback that teens individually receive about their photos. They may begin to believe what people say about them, or even develop insecurity when no one comments. Counter the perception that everyone else is always camera-ready by explaining how photos don't tell the whole story, may have been digitally altered, or simply may be taken out of context. Help your teens deal with online comments by asking questions about both the photos that they view and the feedback that they receive.

- **Praise your teen for things other than his or her looks.**
  It may seem obvious, but you need to help balance the feedback teens receive online. It can be intoxicating to receive likes and positive reinforcement in response to a flattering picture. Try to focus your feedback on other aspects of your teen's identity — skills, hobbies, and interests. Encourage them to curate a positive digital footprint online by presenting an identity that is balanced and highlights their whole character.

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What makes cyberbullying so toxic, invasive, and harmful? How do teens think about cyberbullying — and how can they help be part of the solution instead of part of the problem? Cyberbullying has been a major buzzword

Today's social media makes photo sharing easy. Kids love to follow friends' photos, share casual moments visually, and simply stay in touch. However, kids don't always think through what they post. Photos they thought were private can easily go public. Likewise, their choice of photos can affect others as well. Together, discuss the importance of showing respect to oneself and others when sharing photos online.

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Discuss your family's values and expectations around photo sharing. Photos that show illegal behavior (for example, underage drinking or texting while driving) are clearly a no-go. But agreeing where to draw the line on certain other photos — for example, pictures of your daughter in her bikini or your son making a rude gesture to the camera — may pose a challenge. Start by discussing the possible consequences of posting these types of pictures. How will they affect your kids' reputation? Remind your kids that once they post a picture online, it's out of their control — such photos could be seen by a friend's parent, a college admissions counselor, or a future employer. Online content is easily searchable and often ends up in hands

them to stop and ask, "Hey — I'm going to put this on Instagram, is that okay with everyone?" Ask your kid to think honestly if every person in the photograph would be comfortable with the photo going online. If she misjudges and someone asks her to take a photo down, tell her it is her responsibility to remove the photograph. The best way to drive this concept home is to set an example. If you want to upln ()8(xi)4Ca(m)4(p)e

Online privacy is tricky. The information that we put in digital form can now be readily accessed by unintended viewers, whether because of an oversight in selecting privacy settings, the vulnerability of “secure” online data, sharing passwords that grant others access to personal accounts, or simply because a friend’s eyes wander to read personal text messages. Work together with your kids to be vigilant about keeping private information private.

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We want to help our kids develop healthy perspectives about sex, and not let the media be their only source of information. On the Internet, even innocent searches can lead to sexual imagery or pornographic content. So, it's important to talk early and often to make sure your kids get the messages you care most about communicating.

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Identify your own personal concerns: What are you most worried about with respect to sexual imagery on the Internet? Why? How might the Internet interfere with your goals for your child's healthy sexual development? What alternative messages do you want to make sure they receive?

It may be awkward, but it's important to talk to your kid about:

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At the same time, you can encourage your kids to view media messages critically. Point out that sex often gets everyone's attention, so in the media sex is often used to sell something. It is important that your children understand that scripted sex is not reality. Pornography is extreme and not representative of the vast landscape of human sexuality; plus it can convey an exploitive and degrading perspective.

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It is important to remember that how you talk to your teen regarding this subject is just as important as what you discuss. Your tone and body language will communicate as much as your words! Think of two

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A great way to start the conversation is by simply asking your child if any of their friends have had

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When it comes to discussing social media, it's important that adults and kids speak the same language. What grown-ups think of "cyberbullying" might be explained away by kids as "digital drama." But it's not trivial. Digital E 8 may seem simple, but ask your kids how they are doing on a daily basis. Also, watch for telltale signs

that they are suffering from digital drama — a change in mood or behavior — as your kids interact with their phone and other devices. They may be absorbing subtle social messages in not-so-healthy ways. Ask lots of questions to determine how your kids view media and interact with technology. What are their GBWPSJUF UPPMT 8IZ EP UIFZ WBMVF UFDIOPMPHZ 8IBU BSF TPNF C world?

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If your child is on the receiving end of someone else's hurtful online behavior, encourage him to "take it PGnJOF w *U NBZ CF UFNQUJOH UP DPOUJOVF UIF DPOWFSTBUJPO PO constructive. The lack of body language, facial expressions, and tone with online communication easily can lead to misunderstandings. Encourage kids to "walk in another's shoes" to make sure that they are DPOTJEFSJOH BMM QFSTQFDUJWFT "U UIF WFSZ MFBTU iUBLJOH JU to act — rather than just react.

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With the popularity of photo sharing, kids often receive evidence that they were not included … which then leads to feelings of exclusion. Imagine your child seeing a photo of friends at dinner and realizing that she was not invited. While it is true that no one is included in everything, it is a hard rite of passage for kids to learn — and often they just need a sympathetic ear or an alternative social activity. Unfortunately, some kids use online photos to intentionally tag the kids who weren't invited — a not-so-

When it comes to video games, it's important to remember that not all games are created equal. Today, there are a ton of age-appropriate games that are engaging, stimulating outlets for kids to have fun. There are also many well-designed games, packed with educational content. (You can check out a few of our favorites here: www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/10-most-violent-video-games-of-2015-and-what-to-play-instead)

- Learn about the games your kids are playing.

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  before you react. There are many different kinds of games, and understanding the ins and outs of a game will help you decide whether the real issue is the content of the game or simply the quantity of the game. Within some games, there are different settings that can be turned on or off to determine the level of violence a player sees. Scholars tend to agree that some kids may be especially vulnerable to the effects of media violence. Consider your kid's temperament, and pay attention to how they react after playing HBNFT XJUI WJPMFODF *G ZPV LOPX ZPVS LJE IBT B UFOEFODZ UP JE
  some nonviolent substitutes to keep him or her occupied.

  Hint for parents of kids under 7: Younger kids can't consistently distinguish between fact and fantasy, which makes exposure to media violence especially problematic. Whatever you decide about violent video games for your older kids, it's a good idea to keep violent games out of younger kids' play routines — at least for the early years.

- Analyze the building blocks of the games.

  Professor James Paul Gee looks at how some good video games include learning principles such as identity and production, risk taking and system thinking. Building off of the diet metaphor, you may want to ask yourself questions about how and why a particular game might be appealing to your child: How does it appeal to kids' imaginations? Are they put in the driver's seat? Is it age-appropriate and aligned to interests? Can kids cr9 (.d106 0 Tc 10 0 0ki)xeaptptæo ieas? Are t5 (t)16.7 (e)3(g)86(t)5

Advice by age

- 2- to 4-year-old kids often see cartoon violence. But keep them away from anything that shows physical aggression as a means PG DPOnJDU SFTPMVUJPO CFDBVTF UIF IFZ TFF
- For 5- to 7-year-olds , some of the cartoon rough-and-tumble, slapstick, and fantasy violence can actually makes kids thinks it's okay and funny to see these sanitized versions of violence. Violence that could result in death or serious injury can also be too scary, so it's better to keep these types of exposure to a minimum.
- 8- to 10-year-olds DBO IBOEMF BDUJPO IFSP TXPSE mHIUJOH PS HVOQMBZ
- For 11- to 12-year-olds , historical action — battles, fantasy clashes, and duels — is OK. But close-ups of gore or graphic violence (alone or combined with sexual situations) aren't recommended. Keep in mind that this age is exposed to A LOT of socially aggressive tween shows that involve lots of mean acts that are supposed to be funny. Kids are more apt to learn behaviors from those main characters they are exposed to, so it warrants the need to check on what types of messages those main characters are giving.
- Kids age 13 to 17 can and will see shoot-'em-ups, blow-'em-ups, high-tech violence, accidents with EJTmHVSFNFOU PS EFBUI BOHFS BOE HBOH mHIUJOH 1PJOU PVU UI suffering, and limit the time they're exposed to violence, especially in video games.
- Most M-rated games aren't right for kids under 17. The kid down the street may have the latest cop-killer game, but that doesn't mean it's good for him. The ultra-violent behavior, often combined with sexual images, affects developing brains. Just because your child's friend is allowed to play violent games or watch violent movies doesn't mean they're OK for your child.

- Think long term.

  Posting photos of your kids creates a digital footprint — a kind of electronic paper trail — that forms your kids' identities in a world they haven't chosen to enter. Someday your preschoolers will grow up, and they NJHIU OPU XBOU EPDVNFOUBUJPO PG UIFJS EJBQFS EBZT IBOHJOH PV post a photo online, you lose control over it. Someone could easily copy the photo, tag it, screenshot it, save it, or otherwise use it — and you might never know. Do a quick mental exercise before you share:

- Take the pulse on their posting.

  It’s easy to watch the way kids pose and pout in front of the camera and panic that their behaviors are a

FAMILY TIP SHEET

Managing Screen Time

- Start by taking a pulse on your family's media use.
  You shouldn't be afraid to make — and modify — rules that make sense for your family, but it's helpful to start by getting a realistic picture of what your kids' media use looks like. Lessening screen time effectively starts with becoming aware of when and how your kids are actually engaged with their screens. Take a 24-hour period and track kids' media use (feel free to use to our media log to help). What kinds of media are they engaging with? How does media use differ on weeknights versus weekends?

- Not all screen time is created equal.
  There's a huge difference between an hour spent shooting zombies and an hour spent learning vocabulary from a smartphone app or composing music online. Think about what kids are doing, in addition to how long they're doing it for. And, although there's nothing wrong with a little mindless entertainment, you can maximize your kid's screen time if you consider the 4 C's:
  - Connection. It's really important that kids connect on a personal level with what they're watching, playing, or reading. Are they engaged? Engrossed? Maybe even enlightened? Getting into a story line or identifying with characters primes kids for more learning.
  - Critical thinking. Look for media that takes a deep dive into a topic, subject, or skill. Maybe it's games in which kids wrestle with ethical dilemmas or strategize about bypassing obstacles. Rote quizzing and simple Q&A-style games may be fun and seem educational, but they may not help kids m O E E Flearning when they get to put their own spins on the experience.

  - Context.)FMQ ZPVS LJET VOEFSTUBOE IPX UIFJS NFEJB mUT JOUP UIF particular, the discussions and activities surrounding games or movies are key. Being with kids while UIFZ QMBZ PS XBUDI BTLJOH RVFTUJPOT BCPVU XIBU UIFZ SF UBLJ activities can extend learning.

  Keep in mind that regular breaks from technology are also important — they not only make a difference in the amount of screen time, but also help kids get comfortable disengaging and putting devices away.

- Get to the root of the problem.

- Talk to your c such as the

  Hour of Code

- Encourage the 4 C's for 21st-century learning.
  The Partnership of 21st Century Skills (P21) outlines 4 C's — learning and innovation skills that relate to 21st-century readiness: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. So how can you complement what your child is doing at school or a math problem, reading music, or learning another language.

  for 21st Century Skills (P21): www.p21.org/storage/documents/4csposter.pdf

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  Aligned to the constructive theory of learning, it gives kids ample time for trial and error, experimentation, exploration, and failing forward. Seymour Papert (Schwarz, 1999), one of the best-known advocates for teaching computer science and programming in schools, s5 ((l)4 (s t)05 (5 (i)6.3 (8)5.1s u)5.1p w)12nA (o0.4 (c)(e)3.5y

  the computer's true power as an educational medium lies — in the ability to facilitate and extend children's awesome natural ability and drive to construct, hypothesize, explore, experiment, evaluate,

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  squelched by our current educational system."

- Find resources online.
  There is a plethora of coding opportunities online. From YouTube videos to sites like Scratch to games like Minecraft, kids (and adults) can learn the fundamentals through many easy-to-follow online activities.

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