In a world where technology evolves at breakneck speed, it is extremely important that parents monitor teenagers' activity on social networking sites. It is not an easy task, but their safety is worth your effort.

Did you know ..

Did you know that Facebook stipulates that a user be a minimum of 14 years of age before they have an account?

facebook = 14+

Potential Problems With Ask.fm

Taken from … nobullying.com/ask-fm-cyber-bullying/

Ask.fm is a question-and-answer social networking site that has enjoyed an explosion in popularity among young teenagers all over the world. As of November 2014, it had 42 million users. The website has **NO PRIVACY SETTINGS** and so allows users, whoever they may be, to ask anyone (including susceptible teenagers and adolescents with little sense and more curiosity) to pose questions to each other anonymously. Because the website has become so popular, the element of anonymity has allowed ask.fm the concern is that the website could become a haven for cyber bullies, who have the ability to target their victims online without the fear of ever being discovered. Most of the victims actually know their tormentors, who are usually frustrated schoolmates who are often online "friends" with their victims on other sites such as Facebook, but reveal a more villain-ish side when on Ask.fm, where the option to conceal their identities is available. Bullied adolescents and teenagers are left hurt and agonized, not knowing which of their "friends" has turned against them.

The site also allows users to put up video answers, meaning their identities can be revealed. For the past few months, children's protect charities as well as online safety experts, school administrators and education chiefs have been warning about the dangers of ask.fm cyberbullying, especially after the suicide incidents of several teenagers which have been linked to the Ask.fm bullying.

"The tool that enables it to be anonymous can facilitate young people to say things that they might not say face to face or if their names were attached to it. So it releases their inhibitions, which can be very dangerous. Sites like ask.fm lack even the most basic child safety mechanisms. They are of huge concern to us and the young people we work with".

According to the Daily Mail, many experts have suggested that some methods of tracking those who persistently use social media sites to abuse others should be brought forward so that criminal charges could be brought against the perpetrators. However, it is not believed that closing the website would be of benefit, as an alternative would soon replace it.

What are the rules of ask.fm?

Children must be at least 13 years old to sign up to the site, but there's nothing to stop them lying when registering—which takes seconds. The site asks only for a name, email address and date of birth. Most sign up via their Facebook pages, automatically notifying their Facebook friends that they've joined ask.fm.

The site comes under Latvian law, and the terms of service include an extensive disclaimer that says "You understand that in using the ask.fm service you may encounter content that may be deemed objectionable, obscene or in poor taste, which content may or may not be identified as having explicit language. The ask.fm service allows for anonymous content which ask.fm does not monitor. You agree to use the ask.fm service at your own risk and that ask.fm shall have no liability to you for content that you may find objectionable, obscene or in poor taste."

> **"By way of example, and not as a limitation, you will not, directly or indirectly:**
>
> Transmit any pornographic, obscene, offensive, threatening, harassing, libelous, hate-oriented, harmful, defamatory, racist, illegal or otherwise objectionable material or content.
>
> Transmit or encourage the transmission of unlawful, harassing, libelous, abusive, threatening harmful, vulgar, obscene or otherwise objectionable material of any kind or nature"

While refusing to admit that their site presents a threat to youngsters, the creators of the site have introduced a "report" button, enabling users to notify the site of abuse they receive. They've refused to disable the anonymous function which experts say lies at the heart of the problem.

OMG! Yesterday it was your little secret, but today it's EVERYBODY'S business!

OUR SCHOOL IS A MEMBER OF

STOP A BULLY
SAFE & ANONYMOUS

Internet Resource Sites

A Thin Line (MTV) - www.athinline.org
MTV's A Thin Line campaign was developed to empower you to identify, respond to, and stop the spread of digital abuse in your life and amongst your peers.

Above the Influence - www.abovetheinfluence.com
Our goal is to help teens stand up to negative pressures, or influences. The more aware you are of the influences around you, the better prepared you will be to face them, including the pressure to use drugs, pills, and alcohol. We're not telling you how to live your life, but we are giving you another perspective and the latest facts. You need to make your own smart decisions. We want teens to live Above the Influence.

It Gets Better - www.itgetsbetter.org
The It Gets Better Project was created to show young LGBT people the levels of happiness, potential, and positivity their lives will reach – if they can just get through their teen years. The It Gets Better Project wants to remind teenagers in the LGBT community that they are not alone — and it WILL get better.

Love is Respect - www.loveisrespect.org
We are proud to call loveisrespect.org the ultimate resource to engage, educate and empower youth and young adults to prevent and end abusive relationships.

To Write Love on Her Arms - www.twloha.com
To Write Love on Her Arms is a non-profit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide.

Parental Control Solutions

The basic idea of parental control software is that it blocks access to websites or categories of websites that a parent may deem to be inappropriate. Parental control software may also include other features such as selecting specific times when your child can browse the Internet, or filters that block personal information from being sent from your computer.

- **Website filtering by category**: Virtually all parental control software packages can filter sites based on pre-defined categories such as pornography, gambling, hate speech and others.
- **Editable website filter list:** This feature enables parents to create their own list of sites to filter. This could be useful if you wanted to prevent your child from accessing a specific site, or list of sites.
- **Chat monitoring:** This feature allows parents to record chat sessions that take place on their own computer. Note that most chat programs allow you to do this, however parental control software may have the ability to protect the log files from deletion.

Selecting a parental control solution

A search will yield many different software packages that may include some or all of the features listed above. Before purchasing a software package, be aware that some Internet Service Providers (ISPs) will offer parental control features with a security software suite for free, or a small monthly charge. These security suites typically include other important software such as antivirus and firewall protection. Select your ISP below to visit their security software page.

Telus: http://telus.com
Shaw: http://shawsecure.shaw.ca
Rogers: http://www.hispeed.rogers.com
Bell: http://www.bell.ca
Videotron: http://www.videotron.com
MTS: http://www.mts.ca
Eastlink: http://www.eastlink.ca
Cogeco: http://www.cogeco.ca
Aliant: http://productsandservice.bellaliant.net

If your ISP is not listed above, you may want to contact them to see if they offer such a service. If your ISP does not provide a parental control solution, there are many software vendors who sell this type of software. Typing the phrase "security software suite" or "parental control software" into your favourite search engine should give you a good starting point.

Search engines and filtering

Most search engines give the ability to turn on a safe searching feature. Typically this feature can be turned to a specific level to filter sites which contain inappropriate content. This can be used in combination with parental control software, although many already include a search filtering capability. Links for enabling this with search engines such as Google, Yahoo! and Bing are provided below.

Take a look at Google's/ Yahoo's/ Bing's filtering options.

Personal Boundaries and Internet Safety

An integral part of Internet safety involves teaching children about respecting personal boundaries. Individuals who present a risk to children usually begin by breaking boundaries with them — this is true for both the offline world but also the online world.

Adults sometimes break personal boundaries with other adults by being too forward or asking questions that are too personal – these situations can often be awkward to handle. Children's experiences are no different. It can be very uncomfortable for children to manage a situation with an adult who is breaking their personal boundaries.

It is always up to adults to establish and maintain boundaries with children and to re-establish boundaries if a child crosses the line. Children should be encouraged to tell a safe adult about any inappropriate/uncomfortable or unsafe interactions they experience with adults.

Building personal boundaries should begin when children are very young. It is typical for kids to break boundaries regularly as they are trying to figure out who they are. Point out and explain to your child when s/he has crossed the line with others. Re-establishing boundaries should be an ongoing practice.

Boundaries can be described as personal space that needs to be respected around:

Our bodies	Our thoughts	Our personal things
Our privacy	Our exposure to things	Our roles (child v. adult)

Examples of children breaking boundaries:

- Asking personal questions when you do not know someone well (online or offline)
- Asking personal questions in front of others to embarrass a person
- Making fun of a person
- Putting a person down
- Making sexual remarks about a person and embarrassing her/him
- Wanting access to adult material and information (e.g. movies, TV shows, websites, etc.)
- Sending or posting personal pictures of others

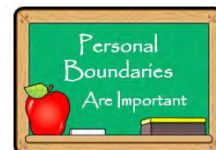*Examples of children respecting boundaries:*

- Stopping a behaviour that is bothering someone when asked to stop
- Asking permission before using something that belongs to another person
- Refusing to forward inappropriate emails or text messages, including pictures

Practice what you preach: Don't break boundaries

Adults who respect children's personal boundaries help reinforce how children should expect to be treated. When adults break children's personal boundaries, it compromises their sense of safety and security.

Guidelines you can use to help teach your child about personal boundaries

- Model appropriate boundaries for your child and re-establish boundaries when they are broken. If your child invades personal space, asks personal questions or misplaces her/his authority with an adult, supportively re-establish the boundaries by explaining the appropriate behaviour expected.
- Teach your child to respect personal space and privacy. Establish family privacy rules for using the bathroom, bathing and changing. Designate a personal space in the home for each person's belongings (e.g. a bedroom, closet, drawers, shelves, etc.).
- Establish and reinforce the role of your child within the family. Establish boundaries when your child wants to listen to adult conversations pertaining to adult decision-making and adult-related topics. Children should be separated from adult issues.
- Avoid involving your child in adult relationship issues such as intimacy trouble. This clarifies the child's role in the family and builds their security.
- Teach your child the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships online and offline, including both friendship and dating relationships.
- Teach your child how to protect personal information when using technology and how to stay safe online.
- Encourage your child to tell you when s/he thinks others, including adults, are breaking her/his boundaries.

Personal Boundaries Are Important

FROM THE LIBRARIAN

The advent of the internet has allowed everyone unprecedented access to information. This is both fantastic and terrible. It means that we, as adults, must be responsible for how our students and children are using the information so readily available to them.

Take projects; It is so very simple to find information for projects that students are looking for, but is the information they obtain accurate? Wikipedia entries can be created and edited by anyone. I always tell my students to check more than one source because there have been MANY incidents where pranksters change Wikipedia entries so that they're humourous, or inaccurate to see how long it takes someone to catch on (for example, I came across an entry once about how a lion's mane turns blue when he reaches the age of 50.)

Another one of the issues to watch out for is inadvertent plagiarizing. Make sure that when your children are handing in essays it's their own words, and not just something they've copy-pasted from the internet.

There are AMAZING things I've learned because I have access to the internet, and when used well it can be a treasure chest waiting to be opened.

> Getting information off the internet is like drinking from a fire hydrant.
> ~ Mitchell Kapor ~

> "Google can bring you back 100,000 answers, a librarian can bring you back the right one."
> Neil Gaiman

Do you know who's seeing your messages? Maybe more people than you think!

FYI: If you receive harassing text messages...
- Stay calm.
- Don't respond. Block messages.
- Save or print the messages.
- Tell parents or trusted adults.
- If you feel scared or threatened, tell the police.
STOP — NO CYBERBULLYING

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES

Faux Paw The Techno Cat®
The Faux Paw books and animated DVD series will captivate the attention of your young children and illustrate the important principles you desperately want to teach them about the safe and responsible use of technology.

Google Digital Literacy Tour
Digital Literacy Tour workshops are interactive discussions helping students learn, through hands-on scenario activities, how to steer clear of cyber tricks and be responsible digital citizens. Each workshop contains a resource booklet for both educators and students that can be downloaded in PDF form, presentations to accompany the lesson and animated videos to help frame the conversation.

Parent's Guide to Facebook
Designed to teach parents how to help their teens strengthen their privacy and safety on Facebook, the guide features important topics such as risks involved in social networking, how to parent Facebook users, managing reputation in the digital age, managing your privacy on Facebook, reporting problems and more. The guide will also be translated into other languages such as Arabic and distributed internationally

> I read on the Internet that I was dead.
> ~ Fiona Apple

INTERNET facebook my SAFETY

> The Internet has always been, and always will be, a magic box.
> ~ Marc Andreessen
>
> The Internet is the first thing that humanity has built that humanity doesn't understand, the largest experiment in anarchy that we have ever had.
> ~ Eric Schmidt

Before you send, ask yourself: Would you want it on a billboard?

Three things parents can do today:

- KEEP CURRENT with the technology and web services your child uses. "Friend" them on Facebook, and pay attention to who their friends are. Know how to use the reporting and privacy functions and set an example of flagging inappropriate content or behavior when you see it.
- KEEP COMMUNICATING. Have a conversation today about when to call 911; explain that you don't have to know an address or even a full name to engage professional help during a crisis. Show them how to use the reporting mechanisms (flagging/tagging) provided on the sites they use and encourage them use them when they see any bad behavior. Explain that everyone benefits when all users join in self-policing their community.
- KEEP CHECKING your child's internet and cell phone activity. Watch for "bread crumbs" of risk, such as drug/alcohol use, self-harm (cutting, mutilation), eating disorders (often labeled "pro-ana," "pro-mia" or"thinipiration"), or violence and be ready to engage the public health community on their behalf.

The growing information revolution therefore is not merely technological, it is fundamentally social and ethical.

The New Mantra☺
hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil, post no evil

facebook privacy policy

Whether your child is a tween or a teen, **talk to them about responsible Internet use**:

- Talk to them about reaching out to an adult at the first sign of a threat. Don't take for granted that your child will: only 8 per cent of teens who have been bullied online have told their parents.
- Chill! Kids refuse to confide in their parents because they fear that once they find out about the cyberbullying, they will take away their Internet or cell phone.
- Let them know that action must be taken when faced with cyberbullying. Not reporting it is tantamount to approving it.
- … and, of course, set the example with your own ethical online behavior.