

## **Parent Guidelines on Social Networking Sites:**

If your child meets the minimum age requirements (i.e. face book (13) and myspace (14)) and you decide they are mature and responsible enough to have their own social networking profile page, the below guidelines will help you establish a private account together. Remember: it is recommended that the computer remain in an open area of the home. The establishment of firm internet guidelines and time limits, as well as continued parental supervision, helps your child remain “safer” online.

## **Suggestions for Parents when allowing children to Set-up Profiles on Social Networking Sites:**

- Make sure your child meets the minimum age requirement, is ready to follow your guidelines, and use the site or sites responsibly.
- Set-up the profile together and make a record of all user names and passwords. Keep this in a safe place and periodically “check-in” on your child’s page.
- Do not post private personal information including full name, home address, home phone number, cell number, school name and location on profiles.
- Use a generic, gender neutral email address (i.e. Ott3rs@yahoo.com or galaxy4@hotmail.com...not [sallyatlanta@aol.com](mailto:sallyatlanta@aol.com)).
- Set the profile to private not public.
- Check all the privacy settings on the social networking site and ensure they are set to private.
- Set it so that people can only view the profile if they are approved as a friend.
- Set it so that comments have to be approved before they are posted on the page.
- Make sure your child only accepts friends he or she knows in “real-life”.
- Consider setting up your own profile and becoming a friend on your child’s page.
- Before pictures or videos are posted make sure they do not contain information on your child’s location or personal information (i.e. tag number, school name, sub division name).
- Never post provocative pictures.

- Ensure your child knows and understands to never agree to meet “online pals” in person.
- Create open communication and dialogue about internet safety with your child. Make sure they understand they can come to you if there is a problem or anything makes them feel nervous, uncomfortable, or scared.
- Report inappropriate content or messages to the social net working site and your ISP (internet service provider).
- Report cyberbullying to your ISP (internet service provider) and your local police.
- Save the messages as evidence. Do not respond to the messages.
- Create new accounts if cyberbullying or cyberstalking persists. Again, make sure these incidents are reported to your local authorities.
- Report child sexual exploitation including the possession, manufacture, and/or distribution of child pornography; online enticement; child prostitution; child sex tourism; extra familial child sexual molestation; and unsolicited obscene material sent to a child. [www.cybertipline.com](http://www.cybertipline.com) or 1-800-843-5678 Tip line is open 24 hours 7 days a week.