



Home Connection

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Today in class, your child learned about the appropriate and inappropriate personal and social use of technology. Instruction included the potential health, academic, career, and legal consequences of engaging in sexually explicit communication (sexting). In addition, students learned about strategies for responding to/dealing with inappropriate online communication. As the primary educator of your child, it is important that you share your viewpoints on the appropriate use of technology.

Fairfax County Public Schools is committed to educating students on how to become emotionally and socially healthy in middle school and guide students toward becoming digital leaders to leverage social media in a positive health way throughout their lives. We invite parents and guardians to read and view media on this topic available at <https://www.common sense media.org/blog/talking-about-sexting>. We hope that you will take this opportunity to discuss appropriate use of technology and social media best practices with your child and ask them about the lesson in which they participated. You may wish to review the FCPS Best Practices for Social Media with your child (<https://www.fcps.edu/resources/technology/digital-citizenship-internet-safety/social-media-best-practices-students>):

- Please be polite. Treat people the way you would want to be treated.
- Profanity and racial or ethnic slurs are never acceptable, nor is vulgar media (photos, gifs, videos, etc.).
- There is no need to shout. Avoid using all capital letters and/or numerous exclamation points in your messages.
- Do not tag @fcpsnews on tweets to friends that contain vulgar or unacceptable language.
- If you wouldn't want your family, principal, or your entire school to see your tweet or post, then don't share it. Once it's online, you can't take it back.
- Be truthful. For example, if you didn't witness an accident, if you're not a victim of a crime, if your bus was not an hour late, please do not tell us that these situations occurred.
- The FCPS Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram feeds are not monitored 24/7. If you or someone you know is in crisis, please text NEEDHELP to 85511, call 1-800-273-TALK, or dial 911. If you witness something inappropriate on- or offline, tell your teacher, principal, parent, or another trusted adult immediately.
- Be yourself. Don't represent yourself as another person when communicating with us or anyone else. Creating fake FCPS social media accounts is not acceptable either.

School counselors, psychologists, and social workers are available to help connect students and their families with services in our community. You may also contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for additional information for online safety tips at <http://www.missingkids.com/home>.

Thank you for partnering with the schools to help students make healthy decisions and to keep our students safe. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Health Education Teacher