



Empowered by Instagram: Talking to your child about cyberethics and privacy

If you are a parent of young children, you have either already been confronted by (or soon will be!) the request by your child for an Instagram account. Instead of saying “No,” use this wonderful opportunity of exuberant enthusiasm (on their part, obviously) as a teachable moment with your child.

Follow the guidance below to learn how to teach your children to think about cyberethics and privacy as they create their new account and begin a lifetime of maturation while using social media. The items discussed here can be tailored for each social media platform your child may wish to use as they grow up online. Please note that the word “picture” is used below, but it can mean both video and still images.

1. Username must not include any personal/private information
2. Password must be different than your other passwords (and not easily guessed!)
3. Leave account info blank. If there are required fields, discuss using alternatives with your parents or trusted adult
4. Profile picture should have nothing that can identify you (these are public images!)
5. Set your account profile to private
6. You will accept your parents follow request and not remove them
7. You must know all your Instagram friends in the physical world (school, neighborhood, sports team, etc.)
8. Tell your friends not to share your pictures without asking for your permission first



9. Only accept people as followers that you know in the physical world
10. Only follow people that you know in the physical world, exceptions are companies or organizations
11. You can follow a company or organization but do not let them follow or see your pictures
12. Do not take and/or share inappropriate pictures
13. Always ask someone before taking their picture
14. Do not post/share/repost pictures unless you ask the person or people in the picture first
15. Pictures of yourself and other people must be fully clothed (even if they ask or threaten)
16. Bathing suit pictures may only be taken at the beach/pool
17. Everything you post must be nice and positive no matter what context it is
18. If someone else posts something mean, do not negatively engage (ex. - comment, like it);
Add something positive, tell an adult, and/or ignore
19. If a mean comment is made towards you, **do not** take it personally; people can be mean for no reason at all. Tell your parent, make a positive comment towards it, block or remove the poster and then ignore the creator of the mean context
20. Never ask someone to take an inappropriate picture of you, them, or someone else
21. If you are not sure if the picture you are about to take or share is inappropriate, think of what a parent or grandparent would say if they saw it
22. Once you take a picture and share it, you can never take it back (even if you delete it)
23. If you take too many selfies people may not like you because they will think you only care about yourself and not others
24. It is not appropriate to create a fake (shadow) profile, if you need another account, let's talk about it