

HS Intro to Social and Online Media Lesson:
Social Media Posts Can Have Consequences
April 7, 2020

Learning Target:

Students Will Examine Instances Where Social Media Had
Negative Consequences for Posters and Then Analyze ways
to Post Responsibly

Let's Get Started:

1. Think about your past use of social media - no matter the platform
 - a. Is there something you wish you haven't posted?
 - b. Has anyone ever questioned something you posted or called you out for?
 - c. Have you appeared in or posted any videos you wish were not associated with your name?

2. Now, think about what you would say to an employer, a college or a scholarship committee if they ever saw it and brought it up to you in an interview or a meeting.
 - a. What would you tell them?
 - b. How would you justify what they came across?

How Has Social Media Cost Others in the “Real World”

1. Read through the nine examples in this article:
[Yes, You Can Get Fired for Your Social Media Posts: 9 Times People Learned This Lesson the Hard Way](#)
2. Do any of these situations surprise you?
3. Was the consequences right for the action? If not, what would your consequences have been?
4. Have you or a friend ever posted something similar?

What Should You Avoid Posting

1. Profanity
2. Abusive Content
3. "Adult" Content
4. Illegal Content
5. Offensive Content
6. Negative opinions about your job / employer / boss / professor
7. Drug related content
8. Poor grammar
9. Poor spelling
10. Threats

Do any of your past posts fall into any of these categories?

What Can You Do To Use Social Media Responsibly

Courtesy of: <https://sdvirtualschools.com/how-to-use-social-media-responsibly/>

1. Be Friends with Your Parents or Another Adult That Would Hold You Accountable

I'm sure this sounds awful. But students need accountability, and that should start with your parents. If your parents aren't on social media, find another (or several) trustworthy adult who can help you with accountability and wise social media usage. If you know a parent or other adult is seeing what you do, you might think twice.

2. Consider the "Front Yard Test"

The front yard test is a great way to stay accountable to yourself and really think about what you're posting. The test is simply this: is this post (or picture, comment, response, etc.) appropriate to be put on a giant sign and posted in your front yard (or another very public space)?

3. Remember That the Internet Never Forgets

This is hard for teens to grasp sometimes because life moves so quickly and it just doesn't seem possible that something posted today could impact anyone in 10 years. But the cold hard truth is that the internet is indeed forever. It never forgets.

What Can You Do To Use Social Media Responsibly

4. Take an Inventory of Your Time

Social media and the internet, in general, both have a way of sucking away valuable time without us even realizing it. Allow your phone to track your screen time or set limits for yourself on your tablet when it comes to how much time you're on social media. Social media has almost nothing to do with being productive, so your time spent on it should be very limited.

5. Check Your Emotions

When everyone you know is on social media, it can be easy to get caught up in online drama. Whether someone posted a horrible picture of someone else or people are simply arguing about politics, you need to stay as uninvolved in the drama as possible and really check your emotions before saying or doing anything.

6. Make Wise Decisions About Followers & Friends

This tidbit is half about being safe and half about making social media work for you. First, don't follow or be friends with anyone that you don't know personally or who doesn't have a lot of information on their profile. This is a red flag and unless this individual has a specific reason for sending you a friend request or asking you to follow them, you should simply avoid strangers online. Additionally, if someone from school or work that is incredibly dramatic or that you don't get along with asks to be your friend, it's okay to say no.

What Can You Do To Use Social Media Responsibly

7. T.H.I.N.K.

Before posting anything online, go through the THINK acronym and ensure that what you want to post will benefit you and those who see it. T stands for true – Is this post/picture/comment truthful or is it possibly based on a rumor? H is for helpful – Will this help someone or will it potentially bring harm or hurt to someone? I is information – Is this actual information based on fact or is it gossip or unnecessary chatter? N is for needed – Is this something that people need to hear or it is irrelevant? K stands for kind – Is what you want to post kind and nice, or is it harsh or rude?

8. Be Wary of Oversharing

Fairly simple. Some info is to be shared. Some should not. Oversharing can cause security risks and also other issues.

9. Be Intentional About What & Where You Post

Social media can absolutely offer advantages to those who know how to use it wisely and responsibly. Choosing the right platform for certain posts and ensuring you are wise about what you post will help you make the most of social media. For example, if you're a great athlete or an amazing artist or a budding author, you can use social media to "publish" what you're doing. This not only shows your passion and aptitude, but it also puts your talent out there in a public setting where potential universities or employers could come across it.

Checking Your Social Media Responsibility

1. Think back to the questions from the introduction. After reading some of these stories and learning about social media responsibly, are there any more posts or social media actions that you wish you could have back or change?
2. Will you be any more careful about your social media use in the future? Why or why not?
3. Now, I want you to explore the web for examples where people have faced consequences for their social media use.
 - a. Find one example where a person lost a scholarship for what they did on social media.
 - b. Find one example where someone was fired for what they posted.
 - c. Find one example where someone was kicked out of college for what they did on social media.
4. As you look at these, think about these questions:
 - a. Do you feel that the post crossed the line or was inappropriate in any way?
 - b. Did the punishment fit the crime? What would your punishment/consequence have been?
 - c. Have you or someone you know done something similar on social media? If so, does this story make you rethink that post?

Other Resources - But can it really hurt me?

Here are more two stories to think about that have had an effect on high school students and their futures.

[Social media cost this star athlete his Division I scholarship—now he's trying to educate others](#)

[Don't let one bad tweet ruin an athlete's future](#)