

# Safety Newsletter



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## **ONLINE SECURITY WITH SOCIAL NETWORKS**

Technology has evolved tremendously in a short period of time. The internet and online world has changed the way we interact with each other, talk to each other, and receive and put out information. New risks also come with the sensation of online connectivity. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Counterintelligence division, cybersecurity and awareness is necessary as online hackers, bullies, and criminals attempt to exploit users of the web. Some are known as social hackers. Social hackers exploit connections through social networks by manipulating people through social interactions to get what they want. Their tactics are often disguised as harmless and legitimate actions. It is important for both adults and kids to understand the risks involved when participating in social networking and media.

Social networking sites are internet-based services that allow people to communicate and share information with a group. Some popular social networking sites include: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, and YouTube. One area vulnerability many online users do not understand is the impact a posting can have on those around them, including themselves.

### **A diamond is forever...and so is your social network postings.**

Once information is posted to a social networking site, it is no longer private. The more information you post, the more vulnerable you may become. Even when using high security settings, friends or websites may inadvertently leak your information. The personal information and pictures you share can be used to trace where you work, live, or go to school. So how can we avoid being a victim of an online predator? Below are some general tips you can follow to minimize your risk and vulnerability:

- **Limit personal data** – limit personal information you share such as job titles, locations, hobbies, likes and dislikes, or names and details of family members, friends, and co-workers.
- **Pictures**- Be mindful of public picture postings. Some pictures can reveal personal information. Are you taking a picture in front of your house? A predator can easily figure out where you live if they recognize the location or address. Take the extra step to disable location services in your cellphone settings. Some cellphones, like iPhones, provide location services or geotagging. This enables the

GPS to record the approximate location the picture was taken. A predator can use this information to trace your whereabouts.



- **Password**- Set up a secure password and don't give it out to anyone. Remember, no legitimate service or network administrator will ask you for your password. When setting up security questions that will help retrieve forgotten passwords, try not to provide information about yourself that others can easily answer.
- **Friend requests**- Be wary of strangers who contact, or direct message you, online through these networks. An unknown person can pose as anyone, with a fake account, in an attempt to infiltrate your social circle. Granting them a friend status will make it easier for them to phish. Phishing is an internet term used to describe a scam, disguised as a legitimate action, to request confidential information under false pretenses.
- **Online etiquette**- Believe it or not, your online reputation matters. More and more, businesses and schools are using social networks to find more information on their candidates before making the final hiring or admittance decision. How you portray yourself by how you interact with others, what you post, what you "like", and the language you choose to use all have a positive and negative impact on you. It will also have a positive and negative affect on the others you include in your postings. Be mindful of what you post. If you wouldn't actually do or say it in front of others, then you should refrain from posting it on your social network.

In addition, take the time to learn about the privacy and security settings your social network has to offer. Each network should have basic privacy settings every user should be aware of. Learning and understanding how to set accounts to private instead of public view, when you choose to do so, will help keep your online presence more secure.

## **CONCUSSION AWARENESS**

A concussion isn't just a sports related injury that happens during an athletic event. A concussion can occur when a person falls and hits the ground, gets into a car accident, or even has something thrown or dropped on them. Concussions are very serious and often can be fatal. It is important to understand what a concussion is, how it's caused, and what the signs and symptoms of the injury are.

**What is a concussion and how is it caused?** The Center for Disease Control defines Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI), also known as a concussion, as an injury which is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. This physical trauma can cause the brain to bounce or twist within the skull cavity leading to chemical changes in the brain which can result in stretching or even damaging brain cells.

**What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?** A concussion is an invisible injury. The injured person may have a normal outward appearance, but still have an internal injury such as a concussion. If you know someone who suffered a traumatic blow to the head or body, of any degree, watch for these signs and/or symptoms:

- Headache
- Confusion
- Memory loss
- Difficulty concentrating
- Dizziness
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Irritable, emotional, or depressed
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Blurry vision
- Slow or delayed reaction time
- Loss of consciousness



Symptoms can last for days or even weeks. Some may even suffer from Post-Concussion Syndrome which can last for months or even years if left undiagnosed and untreated.

Concussions can be tricky. The onset of symptoms may not appear immediately after the traumatic event. A delayed onset of symptoms may occur hours or days after the event. A person suffering from even a mild form of concussion must make a full recovery prior to returning to physical activity. A secondary concussion, also called Second Impact Syndrome, following the initial concussion can result in serious and even fatal consequences. Ensure the injured person seeks medical attention and has a physician's approval to return to physical activity.

### DISTRACTED WALKING



The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that the number of pedestrian deaths is on the rise. Last year over 5,000 pedestrians suffered a fatality while walking down the street. In addition, the Department of Labor reports that the leading cause of workplace injuries is from a slip, trip, or fall. This only proves that pedestrians are vulnerable whether that is from the open roadways and vehicles, ill repaired walking

surfaces, or even from environmental conditions like inclement weather. Unfortunately, you can't control what is happening around you. However, one of the things you do have control of is your awareness and attention to your surroundings.

### Minimize your distractions

Take control by minimizing your distractions and putting your attention and focus on the surface you are walking on, where you are stepping, and any obstacles in your path of travel. This will require you to make some sacrifices that will be well worth the while. Here are some ideas on how to minimize your distractions and take control of your pedestrian safety:

- Put your phone down and look up while walking! Talking, texting, or scrolling through social media postings can be a big distraction and will affect your ability to be safe while on your feet. Instead of looking at your phone look in front and around you. Try to stick to paved walkways and avoid taking shortcuts over surfaces that are not properly maintained for pedestrians.
- Take off your headphones, and not just when you are crossing the street. Being able to hear approaching cars, construction equipment, bicyclists, or even other pedestrians will help you to avoid them.
- Don't trust others to stop their vehicles because you should have the right of way as a pedestrian. Make eye contact with drivers or even bicyclists to ensure they know you are there and so you can react and get out of the way if you notice that they don't see you.

### IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET A FLU SHOT

Definitely not. In fact, it's a better idea than ever. Every year, millions of Americans suffer from influenza, a largely preventable respiratory infection caused by one or more flu viruses. The flu shot is the best weapon we have to fight this common but potentially serious illness.

**How Does the Flu Shot Work?** Flu shots assist to your body's natural ability to defend itself. The flu vaccine teaches your body's immune system how to recognize types of flu. If and when your immune system encounters the flu virus, it will know just what to do. That's why it's not too late to get a flu shot: It teaches your body how to fight these viruses. That simple shot might prevent you from having to take time off of work or making a trip to the hospital. Depending on your age and health, it may even save your life. In addition to getting vaccinated, wash your hands frequently, especially before eating. Between hand-washes, avoid touching your face.

