

## Creating and Maintaining Positive Online Relationships

**Questions to ask yourself when communicating with someone online**

- Has this person asked to keep anything about our relationship secret?
- Has this person hinted at or asked about anything sexual or personal?
- Have I felt manipulated or pressured by this person?
- Has this person attempted to learn things about me that I haven't told them?
- Do I feel true to myself - standing up for what I believe in - when I communicate with this person?

**Strategies to use if you feel uncomfortable talking to someone online**

- Change it up. If something feels like it might be getting risky, it probably is. But if you are not sure, try changing the subject, making a joke, or saying you want to talk about something else. If you still feel pressured or uncomfortable, you need to take further action.
- Log off or quit. You need to remember that at any time they can just stop typing and log off if a conversation gets uncomfortable online. You can also take action to block or report another user, or create a new account – whether for email, IM, or virtual world – to avoid contact with that person again.
- Know it's ok to feel embarrassed or confused. It's not always easy to make sense of situations that make you uncomfortable online. Nor is it easy for you to ask for help if you feel embarrassed about what you've experienced. You should know these feelings are normal.
- Talk to a friend or trusted adult. You should know that it's okay to reach out. Even if you feel you can handle a tricky situation alone, it's always a good idea to turn to friends, parents, teachers, coaches, and counselors for support.

**REMEMBER: once something is online it will be there forever so be very careful about you send information to and who you share information with!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hour: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Scenario 1: You have just received the following email from an unknown sender. Is it risky? What would you do?**

To: You@PWschools.org  
From: [aQWefa234@unknown.com](mailto:aQWefa234@unknown.com)  
Subject: I need help! Please!

Hello,

You may not remember me but we met at summer camp a few years ago. I am travelling in Europe and all of my money was stolen! I know it seems crazy but you were so nice and I have no one else to ask. I have money in the bank but I have no identification because it was stolen with my money. They need someone to prove who I am, all you need to do is reply to this email with your name, address, birth date, and any other important information and stating that you know me. Please help, I'm so desperate.

Thanks!

**Scenario 2: You have a new message in your Facebook inbox, you don't know the person but you see that they are friends with some people that you know. Is this risky? What would you do?**

Hey!

What a crazy time at that party last Friday! I can't believe how much fun we had! I really want to hang out with you again, maybe you should come over to my place this week, if you're busy just tell me where you'll be at this Friday and we can be sure to meet up again! If you don't think it would be weird, would you send me a picture of yourself? I'll send you one back, I just want to be able to show all my friends what you look like!

Later!

**Scenario 3: You received the following email in your inbox recently, you recognize that the email is from a family friend but not someone that you know very well. Is this risky? What would you do?**

Hello there,

I heard recently that you were interested in studying accounting. I work for the accounting department at GM and thought it would be a good opportunity for you to come and see what type of work a real accountant does. I already talked to your parents and they thought it was a good idea. Email me back and let me know if you are interested and then we can set something up!