



Kentlyn Public School

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Dear Parents / Carers,

SOCIAL MEDIA CONCERNS

As we all know social media can have really positive benefits, however, if used inappropriately or at a young age without supervision it can have devastating outcomes and long-lasting impacts. Cyber safety is covered in our teaching and learning programs and we do talk to students about being safe online, however, we do find that the social pressures of growing up and being sociable can influence students to perhaps make some poor or uninformed choices.

Social media platforms and their functionality are always changing so it's a good idea to keep up to date with the social media your child uses. You could ask your child what platforms are popular and which ones he/she likes. You could also get your child to show you how they work.

You could consider checking whether your child's social media choices are appropriate for his/her age. Some social media platforms have age restrictions. For example, to have a Facebook or Instagram account your child needs to be 13 years old. But it's often hard to enforce age restrictions on social media because it's easy to lie about your age online. Also, many platforms don't have specific age limits. Others, like online multiplayer game environments, let you interact with people of all ages all over the world.

As parents you will make the decision with regards to your child's use of social media, however, I am kindly asking you to speak to your child and to be aware of apps they are using and what they are accessing. Some issues that we have previously dealt with in school are:

- Students writing inappropriate comments to each other over apps such as Tik Tok, Snapchat, Instagram, group chats through different games etc.

I certainly understand how hard it is to keep up to date with technology and social media, however, there are websites that can assist you in making informed decisions as to what apps are appropriate and also how to increase your child's safety when online. Websites that we refer to are:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/entertainment-technology/digital-life/social-media>

We are also inviting our Police Liaison Officer, Louise Michell, to once again come and have a chat to our students from grades 3 – 6. All students will be learning about online safety and anti-bullying as part of our Personal Development programs throughout the year.

The Department of Education has released a new Digital Policy for all primary students. The policy is attached. We ask that you discuss this policy with your child and return the permission slip back to school with the other administrative permission slips.

Thank you for your continued support with this matter.

Kind regards,
Androula Kavallaris
Principal