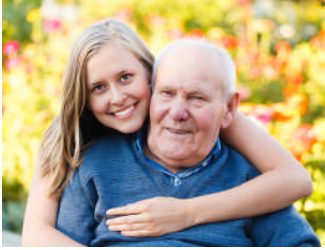


# What Young People Want Their Parents to Know About Social Media



*Older people have embraced social media to connect with family and friends and reconnect with old friends and acquaintances. Children and parents (and grandparents) are sharing this communications medium which creates potential areas of conflict and difficulties in the relationships.*

*I asked young people what guidelines they would like me to share with their parents and grandparents. Here were the replies:*

- **Don't friend your child's friends.** Most felt that it was acceptable if their friend initiated the request with the parent. Young people often feel awkward refusing an adult's request.
- **Don't complain about your child's teacher or school officials online.** They have to live with the consequences of your rants, complaints, or "suggestions for improvement."
- **Don't complain about child discipline problems in public forums.** Social media is not the place for "I'm so frustrated that my child just..." Do not reprimand them or correct them publicly. This also includes "How do you deal with a child who has .... problem?" posts.
- **Don't brag too much about them—they feel embarrassed.**
- **Don't embarrass them.**
  - **Don't post about potty training or the bowel movements of kids** (just...don't)
  - **Don't post embarrassing pictures or video (like kids on anesthesia) without asking permission** (and even then, ask yourself what you hope to accomplish by posting a potentially humiliating picture or video of your child for all to see).
  - **Don't assume they can take a joke** Sensitivity changes quickly in young people.
- **Don't comment on all of your child's posts and pictures.**  
Ask grandparents and excessively "interested" adults to refrain as well.
- **Don't tag your child in EVERYTHING that you post.**
- **Don't get involved in your kids drama.** They can handle it, we did.  
If they feel they need help they will talk with you.
- **The really heavy stuff that makes you panic is probably a song lyric or movie quote.**

