

Share with Care: Activity 1

When not to share

Compare pretend secrets with your children to start thinking about zones of privacy.

Goals for children



- ✓ **Understand** what kinds of personal information should be kept private.
- ✓ **Remember** that everyone deserves to have their privacy decisions respected.
- ✓ **Identify** other types of personal information that can be found online.

Let's talk



Why does privacy matter?

Your digital footprint is what represents you online. This could mean photos, audio, videos, texts, “likes,” and comments you post on friends’ profiles. Just like it’s important to be a positive presence offline (like at school), it’s important to keep it positive online too.

The Internet makes it easy to communicate with family, friends, and people who love the same things that you do. We send messages, share photos, and join conversations on social networks – sometimes without thinking about who else can see them too. A picture or post you think is funny and harmless today could be seen and misunderstood by people you never thought would see it – now or way off in the future. Once something’s out there, it’s hard to take it back. Remember:

- Like everything else on the Internet, your digital footprint could be seen by people you’ve never met.
- Once something by or about you is online, it could be there forever. Think of this like you’d think about a permanent marker: The marks it makes can never be erased, even if you realize you meant to write something else.

That’s why your privacy matters. You can protect it by sharing only things that you’re sure you want to share – in other words, by being careful about what you post and share online. Why else might privacy be important?

It’s also good to know when to post nothing at all – not to react to somebody’s post, photo, or comment or not to share something that isn’t true. Everybody’s heard “think before you post,” and that’s because it’s really good advice.

Continued on the next page →

The way to respect your own and other people's privacy is to think about what's okay to post, who might see your post, what effect it could have on you and others, and when not to post anything at all. Some questions for further discussion :

- When is it okay to share a photo or video of someone else?
- Why are secrets so hard to keep?
- Is it ever okay to tell someone else's secret?
- What about if they're someone you care about and they're posting something that makes you feel they're in danger? If you think you should share that secret, should you tell them you're thinking about that before doing anything? Should they know you're worried?

Activity



1. Invent a character around your age: ask your children to draw or write the character's name in the middle of a piece of paper, and around the outside, draw or write 'personal' information about this person.

2. Now look at each piece of 'personal' information and identify whether it's OK to share that information online or not. What effect might sharing have on the character's online reputation?

Takeaway

Secrets are just one type of personal information that we might want to keep private or share only with trusted family or friends. Once you've shared a secret, you're no longer fully in control of where it can go. What other kinds of information should we be careful to protect?

- Your home address and phone number
- Your email
- Your passwords
- Your usernames
- Your schoolwork and other documents you create