

# BEST PRACTICES FOR TECHNOLOGY USE

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can be a great way to stay connected to friends and family. It can also cause stress and drama. Here are some tips for keeping it good and staying safe.

- Figure out settings- know how to block someone, hide a profile, or unfriend. Turn off location sharing.
- Notice when something you see is making you feel bad or mad. Is it time for a break? Do you need to block that person? Do you need to talk to someone about what's going on? Doing something works better than ignoring how you feel or what's happening.
- Consider ways to make other people feel good online by sharing positive messages.
- Reach out with direct and private messages when you are feeling bad and need someone to talk to- this can help build friendships and support.
- Be a good friend online, but be careful of drama- if you are working so hard to support friends that it is bad for your mental health, take a break. It's ok to say you think an adult or another friend needs to step in.
- Notice what friends online make you feel good, talented, happy, smart, connected, independent, and loved. (And the opposite!) Be wary of friends who tell you how to act or are only friends if you do what they say.



## FOCUS ON HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

How do you know you are in a healthy friendship or relationship online? Healthy friends do things like these:

- encourage you to reach your goals
- listen to you as much as you listen to them
- tell you when they think you are making a mistake
- keep your conversations private
- make you feel good about yourself
- make you feel hopeful about the future

*Think about your online relationships. Are they healthy? Are you a healthy friend to other people?*



## TECHNOLOGY DURING COVID-19

Kids in foster care right now are feeling all kinds of ways. Some of them miss school, family visits, friends, activities, and other things. They may be stressed out or worried. The good news is that this is temporary. Here are some ways technology can help you get through this.

- Make a YouTube or Spotify playlist of songs that make you happy. Share it with your friends or other people you care about.
- Learn something new that is not homework. Knitting or sewing or a skateboard flip or making pretty letters for your journal? There's a how-to video for everything!
- Throw a costume party. Get your friends to meet up on video at a certain time dressed in silly outfits.
- Learn a TikTok dance. If you're not on TikTok you can find them on YouTube. Then try to make up your own dance to your favorite song and teach it to a friend.
- Find a good recipe on YouTube or AllRecipes, and learn how to cook something new. Maybe you can even make dinner for the family.
- Join a group: there are great groups for foster kids online who know what you are going through. Check out [Foster Club](#) and [National Foster Youth in Action](#), they are both national advocacy and support groups that have places for kids to talk online.