# THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE

Tips from Facebook and MediaSmarts

We always hear that sharing is a good thing. And thanks to technology, we can share our ideas, opinions, pictures and videos with our friends and other people.

Most of the time, sharing *is* good. But if we aren't thoughtful about how we share, we run the risk of hurting ourselves or someone else. Also, remember that the things you share with your friends can end up being shared with others. That's why it's important to think before you share.

## YOUR OWN STUFF

Whenever you're sharing things about you – whether it's a picture, video or personal things like your phone number – keep in mind that it could easily end up being seen by people you didn't want it sent to.

Also, it's not a good idea to share things when you're feeling really emotional – whether you're angry, sad, or excited. Calm down first and then decide if it's really a good idea.

**Next, ask yourself:**

- Is this how I want people to see me?
- Could somebody use this to hurt me? Would I be upset if they shared it with others?
- What's the worst thing that could happen if I shared this?

**Passwords are not social:** There's some things you need to be really careful about sharing. Sometimes friends share passwords with each other when all is good, but unfortunately this can turn into a nightmare later.

**An image lasts forever:** Some people think sharing a nude or sexy photo with a girlfriend or boyfriend – or someone they hope will be their girlfriend or boyfriend – shows they love or trust them. Be extra careful in this situation and think – an image can outlast a relationship.

**Remember that if somebody asks you to share something you are not comfortable with you have the right to say no. Nobody who loves or respects you will pressure or threaten you.**

**Gone in seconds, but maybe not gone forever:** Some apps or social networking sites promise to auto-delete images or videos after a few seconds of viewing. But there's ways around this – the viewer could take a screenshot – so you still have to make smart decisions about sharing.

## Facebook TIPS:

1. Passwords are not social. Don't share your password with anyone. For additional security tips go to: facebook.com/help/securitytips

2. Check your privacy settings at facebook.com/privacy to see who can view your posts.

3. Check the audience selector tool each time you post on Facebook in order to make sure you are sharing it with your desired audience.

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## OTHER PEOPLE'S STUFF

Most of the time when people send things to you, they're okay with you sharing them with other people. If you don't know for sure, think twice before doing this. Even better, ask the person who sent it if they mind if you share. The same is true if you're sharing photos or videos that have other people in them: ask before you tag, re-post or pass them on.

If someone shares something with you with somebody else in it, ask yourself:

- Did the person who sent this to me mean for it to be shared?
- Did they have permission from the person who's in it?
- How would I feel if somebody shared something like this with me in it?

If what you received makes that person look bad, would embarrass them, or could hurt them if it got around, *don't* pass it on. The person who sent it to you may have meant it as a joke, but jokes can be a lot less funny when something is seen by the wrong person.

A lot of people – boys especially – get pressured by their friends to share nude photos of their girlfriends or boyfriends. It can be hard to stand up to this pressure, but you have to think about how much giving in could hurt you and your girlfriend/boyfriend.

## FIXING THINGS IF THEY GO WRONG

### Everyone makes bad choices sometimes. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't do everything you can to fix things.

If you shared something you shouldn't have, the first step is to ask the people you sent it to not to pass it on.

If someone else posted something you sent them, start by asking them to take it down. It's actually pretty effective most of the time. Remember not to do anything while you're mad: give yourself time to cool down and, if you can, talk to the person offline.

If they refuse to take it down, don't try to get back at them by sharing private things they sent you, harassing them or getting your friends to gang up on them. For one thing, this almost always makes things worse. For another, the more you get back at them, the more it might look like it's just as much your fault as theirs.

If you're tagged in a photo that you don't like, remember that a lot of photo-sharing and social networking sites may let you take your name off any pictures you've been tagged in. On Facebook, you can also select to review posts you are tagged in before they post to your timeline under your privacy settings: facebook.com/privacy.

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If you're on Facebook and don't feel comfortable confronting someone yourself, or don't quite know what to say, Facebook has a Social Reporting tool with some messages you can use and ways to get a parent, teacher or trusted friend to help you out.

For more serious things, for instance if it's a partly or fully nude picture or video, if it's defamatory (it's not true and hurts your reputation) or if it's being used to harass or bully you, you can ask the site or service that was used to share it to take it down. In those cases you can report it to the police too.

If you are in a situation where a person is threatening to share a nude photo of you unless you provide more nude photos – you should involve a trusted adult and contact the police right away. This is unacceptable behaviour and in many countries it is illegal.

### How to use the Social Reporting Tool

To learn more about social reporting or reporting abusive content on Facebook, go to facebook.com/report.

**Remember that you are not alone** – you can always talk to your parents, a teacher or counsellor, another adult you trust, or a help-line to get advice and support.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CHECK OUT THE LINKS BELOW:

**MediaSmarts**
mediasmarts.org

**Facebook Family Safety Center**
facebook.com/safety

**Bullying Prevention Tips**
facebook.com/safety/bullying

**Facebook Help Center**
facebook.com/help

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