

## MySpace and Social Networking



MySpace and Face Book are the most well known social networking sites available to young people. Young people need a few guide lines when it comes to internet usage. Internet and technology addiction in young people is increasing.

Education is the key to help young people understand how to use technology safely and efficiently, to their benefit rather than to their detriment!

### Idea for a MySpace lesson

- Book the comport labs and ask your Tec. Support to unblock MySpace from your schools blocked list (no doubt many of your students can get around the schools internet filter by using proxy sites! But get them to unblock it anyway.)
- Ask your entire class to go onto their MySpace profile or share with a partner. If they don't have one, they can create one during the lesson, based on the guidelines.
- If you have smart board, you may like to demonstrate for the entire class.
- Explain the guidelines to the class and get each student to assess their own and their partner's MySpace profiles based on the guide lines.

### MySpace guidelines for young people

1. **Respect** – yourself and your friends.
2. **Privacy** – in most cases profiles should be private.
3. **Photos** – just remember that every photo you put up can be downloaded and saved. Use low resolution in your images. Ask yourself – how will I feel in a few years time if people saw this photo?
4. **Content** – you don't have to write for your Grandma to read, but be mindful that anything you put online can be captured (i.e. with a screen shot) and saved to use months or even years later! Don't misuse other people's content. It's simply not nice to take a picture of one of your friends and add a "funny" caption to it. This can easily be misinterpreted and hurtful.
5. **Time Limit** – in most cases, it is best to set a time limit on how much time you spend on My Space. Maybe do your homework before you go online?
6. **Friend access** – it is great to have lots of online friends, but be careful who you add as a friend. Not everyone online is who they appear to be! It is best to add people who you have physically met and know.
7. **Screen name** – try to use a screen name or a nick name. Limit information that can be directly traced back to you.
8. **Security** – try to use a secure password and secret question. People who know you well might be able to easily guess your password, or unlock your password through your secret question. Try to use numbers and letters in a random order.
9. **Be positive** – try to leave uplifting and positive messages for your friends. MySpace is not the place to fight or resolve conflict. Everyone likes to receive positive messages that make them feel good.
10. **Have fun!** – As that is what it is all about!