Parent Guidelines for Social Media and Cell Phone Use

1. Follow/Friend your child on ANY social media sites they use.
   - Check these sites on a regular basis.
   - Be careful about what you comment on- parent comments are not always welcome
   - Be aware that kids may have two profiles- one for family, and then their “real” page

2. Go over on a regular basis what information should NOT be shared online/over text.
   - Never give out full name, phone number, address, or e-mail address
   - Pictures, posts and statuses can last forever online- even if “deleted”
   - Rule of thumb- if you wouldn’t want grandma, future bosses or a college recruiter to see it, or you
     wouldn’t say it to someone’s face, don’t post or text it

3. Know your child’s passwords on all devices and all social media accounts (don’t forget that iPods,
   tablets, and gaming consoles can all be used to access the internet).
   - Help your child choose “safer” passwords
   - Teach them not to give their passwords out to anyone, even friends

4. Monitor your child’s mobile phone use and text messages on a regular basis.
   - Do surprise text/social media checks- don’t give them warning
   - You pay the phone bill, not your child
   - You are liable if something illegal occurs over phone, text, or on social media apps on a cell
     phone- i.e. inappropriate pictures, harassment, etc.

5. Check the privacy, security and GPS settings on your child’s phone and social media accounts.
   - Posting pictures or “checking in” can be an invitation for a criminal to enter your home, and or a
     way for someone online to find out where your child lives or hangs out

6. Talk to your child about who they friend on social media.
   - “Online friends” are just as influential as real friends
   - Emphasize quality, not quantity- not everyone is a friend
   - Un-friending someone is ok to do- let your child know the person does not even know you did it

7. Talk about what a negative or inappropriate comment, picture, or post is.
   - Show your child how to delete these items
   - Discuss reporting inappropriate posts and teach them how to do it on each social media site they
     are on

8. Explain to them that not everyone uses social media for fun.
   - Anything that makes them feel uneasy, uncomfortable, that is inappropriate, or threatening to
     them or others MUST be reported
   - Social media can be the first place to catch signs of bullying, suicidal thoughts, violent acts, sexual
     predators, etc.
   - Explain to them that they should NEVER agree to meet with someone they met online