



# Digital Media Safety

---

One-Pagers to Safely Navigate  
The Digital World



# Digital Media Safety

## A Caregiver Resource

The digital world impacts everyone, including young Marylanders. Here are some ways to help young people to navigate the digital world safely.

### SUPPORTIVE CONVERSATIONS



#### Discuss

Engage your child directly for their perspectives about privacy, safety, and wellbeing online. Open discussion can be more effective than being rigid about limits. Questions to consider asking include:

- What platforms are you using the most? What do you like about them?
- How do you keep yourself safe online? What are some ways I can help?

#### Reassure

Make sure that your child knows that if they ever feel unsafe or make a mistake online, they can come to you for support. Be calm, open, and non-judgmental.

#### Monitor

If you become aware that your child is looking up information or posting messages online related to harming themselves or others, ask your child directly about your concerns. Take the risk of harm seriously. Connect to help as soon as possible.

### BULLYING ONLINE



If your child is being harassed, threatened, embarrassed, or targeted on a digital platform, report the aggressor on the platform. This can include aggressive or mean comments or messages, or content of a sexual nature posted without a person's consent. Bullying can have serious impacts on the mental health of a child. If your child is in need of help, please contact a professional immediately. Bullying can be punishable by law. Tips can be submitted to your school system, to local law enforcement, and to the Maryland Center for School Safety:

[schoolsafety.maryland.gov/Pages/Tipline.aspx](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov/Pages/Tipline.aspx).

### ANTI-CYBERBULLYING LEGISLATION

**Maryland Code, Criminal Law § 3-805 (Grace's Law)** criminalizes online harassment targeting minors. Maliciously bullying and/or harassing a minor through the use of electronic communication that results in physical injury or serious emotional distress is punishable by law, with penalties of up to three years in prison or a \$10,000 fine. If the harassment aims to push a minor toward suicide, the penalty increases to ten years in prison.

### RESOURCES



**The ABC Online Safety Checklist** has age-specific advice and resources, including a checklist, to help keep your child safe on the internet. They also offer guides on how to talk to your children about the internet.

[internetmatters.org](https://internetmatters.org)

**The Maryland Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Schools (MAPS)** is a reference guide with tools for effective suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. See the Caregivers section.

[bit.ly/MAPS\\_Caregivers](https://bit.ly/MAPS_Caregivers)

For more about digital safety for your child, visit the **Family Digital Wellness Guide**:

[digitalwellnesslab.org/family-digital-wellness-guide](https://digitalwellnesslab.org/family-digital-wellness-guide)

### WANT HELP?

**CALL, TEXT, or CHAT**



**988** | SUICIDE & CRISIS  
**LIFELINE**

CONFIDENTIAL AND AVAILABLE 24/7

# Digital Media Safety

## A Youth Resource

The digital world impacts all of our lives. Here are some tips for navigating the digital world safely. Remember, you are not alone! If you need help, find a trusted adult and ask.

### SCAMS & PREDATORY BEHAVIOR



If you see content that might be a scam/trick, or you see a person behaving inappropriately online, report them to the platform you are using and to a trusted adult. Scammers might pretend to be someone trustworthy or pressure you to share private details. Their goal is usually to hurt you or others, so it's important to stay cautious and double-check anything that seems suspicious. You may feel guilty or afraid, but with help, you can fix the issue and keep yourself and your personal information safe!

### BULLYING ONLINE



#### Did you know that bullying is against the law?

Cyberbullying is serious. If someone is being harassed, threatened, embarrassed, or targeted on a digital platform, report them on the platform and tell an adult you trust. This can include aggressive or mean comments or messages, or content of a sexual nature posted without a person's consent.

Bullying can cause serious problems to mental health, and can even increase the risk of suicide. You might see warning signs that someone you know is at risk of suicide before anyone else does. If you see someone posting content about feeling hopeless, saying goodbye, or otherwise indicating that they might need help, reach out to them and let an adult know immediately. When talking to an adult you trust, you can say "I need to talk to you about something serious. I'm worried about my friend," or "My friend said something that scared me," or "I need help. I am being bullied and I don't know what to do." It's okay to share your feelings. There are people who can help. **Reporting something this serious is the right thing to do; it may save a life.** You can also submit a tip to your school, and to the Maryland Center for School Safety:

[schoolsafety.maryland.gov/Pages/Tipline.aspx](https://schoolsafety.maryland.gov/Pages/Tipline.aspx)

### STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY WITH SCREEN TIME

While it can be a great way to connect and build community, balance is key, unlimited use may harm you. Screen time may expose you to harmful content or lower self-esteem. Create boundaries, take breaks, spend more time offline with friends or hobbies, and limit notifications to avoid being overwhelmed. For more information, navigate to "Social Media and Youth Mental Health"

[health.maryland.gov/bha/Pages/Social-Media-and-Youth-Mental-Health.aspx](https://health.maryland.gov/bha/Pages/Social-Media-and-Youth-Mental-Health.aspx)

### RESOURCES



**The ABC Online Safety Checklist** has age-specific advice and resources, including a checklist, to help keep you safe on the internet.

[internetmatters.org](https://internetmatters.org)

**The Maryland Action Plan to Prevent Suicide in Schools (MAPS)** is a reference guide with tools for effective suicide prevention. See the Peers section.

[bit.ly/MAPS\\_Peers](https://bit.ly/MAPS_Peers)

**For more tips about safety online, check out this quick guide.** It offers tips on posting sensitive information, what to share and not to share, etc.

[it.nc.gov/resources/online-safety-privacy/tips-guidance/online-safety-tips-teens](https://it.nc.gov/resources/online-safety-privacy/tips-guidance/online-safety-tips-teens)

### WANT HELP?

**CALL, TEXT, or CHAT**



**988** | SUICIDE & CRISIS  
LIFELINE

CONFIDENTIAL AND AVAILABLE 24/7