WHO: Parents and caregivers with child(ren) who have access to social media.

WHAT: Context and tips for adults talking with kids about online behavior, specifically how to help kids protect their reputation and look out for online abuse.

WHY: As a parent, you understand how the access and technology we provide is impacting the lives of young people. Whether you’re looking to spark a candid dialogue with your own child about social media and online bullying or want to help others in your community understand how to do so, this guide is a great place to start.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU POST.

Kids today are truly the first digital native generation. They begin to shape their online reputation earlier than ever because of the tools they have at their fingertips. It’s important for kids to understand that everything they communicate via text message or share on social media leaves a footprint that can be impossible to erase. Some basic rules of thumb to discuss with your kids:

- **The road sign test:** Before writing or posting anything, ask yourself, would you be okay if it were displayed for everyone driving by to see?
- **Keep private behavior private:** Cameras don’t belong in some situations. If you or someone you trust brings a phone and camera into a private and personal moment that you don’t want shared, stop right away and end that moment. What may feel private won’t be if that private moment is captured in photo or video and is intentionally or accidentally shared. Also, keep your social media passwords to yourself.
- **The golden rule:** Treat people online the way you would like to be treated online. If you’re mean or help a single someone out online, think how you would feel if someone did that to you.

THE STRUGGLE IS REAL.

Growing up in our world of constant connectivity has created an evolved set of anxieties and pressures that follow kids around in their pockets at every moment. Jokes, friendships, drama and disagreements don’t end when the bell rings. Recognize that your child could be taking on a great deal of stress from maintaining a constant social media presence, dealing with FOMO (the fear of missing out) and potentially even facing online negativity from friends or strangers.

- **Social lives are played out online:** Kids don’t often identify conversations or digital exchanges as “cyberbullying” until a situation gets out of hand. Hurtful comments can quickly escalate into abuse, specially when others join in.
- **It’s a slippery slope:** Online bullying often happens between acquaintances from school or even between friends that don’t realize when they’ve taken a joke too far. That’s what makes it easy for kids to slip into this kind of behavior without recognizing that they’re being a bully themselves.
- **What can you do:** If you suspect that your child is getting harassed online, help them understand that if they feel threatened or scared that they must get you or another trusted adult involved. It’s also important to instill in your kids that they should never participate in singling out or victimizing someone online.
TALK IT OUT.

Instead of having one big talk with your kids, look for opportunities for bite-sized conversations that integrate talk about online behavior. Position the conversation so your kids are teaching you about social media and sharing their favorite aspects so you can see for yourself.

Try taking 10-15 minutes a week to have your kid show you how they’re using their mobile device and have an open discussion about issues that arise on social platforms. Initiating an informal, ongoing dialogue will help your child understand that what they do on their phones isn’t something they need to hide from you.

Here are a few example questions to help kick off the conversation:

What is your favorite app right now?
- Show me how you use it, what you share there and who you follow
- Download the app on your own device and try to use it. Can you follow your kids, or if it’s a game, can you play with them?

Which apps do you share photos, video or original posts on?
- Show me how it works.
- Who follows your posts?

Who is your favorite blogger, gamer, and YouTuber?
- Where do you follow them?
  - Explore their blog, profile or videos together.
  - Do you comment or like their content?
  - Is your profile or username visible when you comment or like their content?
  - Have you ever seen people leave negative or cruel comments on their feeds? How does that make you feel?

Have you ever witnessed people being mean online?
- Is it usually people you know, or people you don’t know leaving mean comments?
- Does it tend to be on your friends’ posts, or on posts from influencers or famous people?
- Walk through the “How to spot a hater” article from later-haters.com

What should you do if you see someone you know bullying others online, or if someone you know is being victimized?
- Take a look at the “You found a hater, now what?” article from later-haters.com

Is it sometimes hard to tell if someone is being funny or mean on social media? How do you know when you or someone else has crossed that line?
- Read through the “I never meant to troll” article from later-haters.com and ask if they’ve heard about any similar situations at school.

What resources does your school do if someone is experiencing cyberbullying?
- Go through additional resources that are listed on later-haters.com
AT&T is empowering teens to rise above online negativity through the #LaterHaters campaign. Encourage your kid to follow us on Instagram and check out the program website! #LATERHATERS
YOU FOUND A HATER, NOW WHAT?

Smell that 👹? It’s a hater. Now that you know how to spot them, learn how to deal. The #LaterHaters community’s got your back every step of the way.

DON’T FEED HATERS!
It’s true, haters get stronger when you fight back with hateful comments. Don’t stoop to their level!

EMOJIS ARE KRYPTONITE
Flood comments with the kindest emojis to drown the haters. 😊😊😊❤️

GATHER YOUR CREW
Get friends to post good vibes on your timeline to help you tune out negative noise.

KNOW THE FEATURES
It can be overwhelming when your grams are blowing up with 🐍🐍🐍 ... Instagram lets you hide comments that have keywords or phrases!

WE’VE GOT YOUR BACK
When convos get twisted online, either leave it there, or snag a screenshot and send to an adult you trust. Your #LaterHaters crew is here for you.
Chances are you’ve noticed a hater lurking online. Anyone is fair game, so watch your backs (and phones), and remember there’s an entire community standing up to negativity online saying #LaterHaters.

FACEBOOK
Haters roam in broad daylight throwing shade. Nothing is safe. Your after school hustle, your social life, and even what you ate for lunch are all up for hating.

INSTAGRAM
Haters get real creative, finding a photo of you lookin’ a hot mess and then making a meme. No, you’re not being sensitive; they’re a hater.

TEXTS
Accidentally got sent a text talking trash about you when it was clearly meant for someone else. Dang, that’s a hater in your texts.

SNAPS
Heard people think your selfie game is lame? Smells like a hater. Blow that ish off and snap away!

Haters aren’t just behind a screen. They can live anywhere — even your own group of friends. What starts out as a joke is no longer funny if the lol’s are at someone else’s expense. If the situation gets too big, find an adult you trust to step in. They’re on your side no matter what and know exactly how to say #LaterHaters.
THINGS GOT KIND OF OUT OF CONTROL.

It started when Haley brought a really ugly backpack to school. I showed my girl Kat and said, “Oh that’s ratchet.”

Kat was like, “I’m not surprised, she doesn’t even live here. She uses her grandma’s address.” I didn’t really think it was weird, but Kat did and she’s the coolest girl in class, so I was like, “Ew. She doesn’t even belong here?”

We started a group Gchat, then a text chain, and a Facebook group called “Haley’s Broke Life” where we posted secret photos.

Haley found out, and we got called into Principal Warren’s office. She said what we did was against school policy. We were suspended for two weeks.

While I was suspended I wrote a letter to Haley, apologizing. I actually always really liked her; it all just snowballed. Haley accepted my apology, and we’ve even started hanging out. I’m really lucky how it all turned out. I’ll be watching what I say from now on; even if I’m just joking.