Teens & Social Media in School & Public Libraries: A Toolkit for Librarians & Library Workers

updated February 2011

Created by:

For more than 50 years, YALSA has been the world leader in recommending reading listening and viewing for teens.

**50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
1.800.545.2433 x4390
yalsa@ala.org**

Table of Contents

How Social Media Facilitates Learning in Schools & Libraries

What is social media? It is a term commonly used to refer to a variety of web-based tools used to connect, collaborate, and create web content and experiences. Websites that allow visitors to send email, post comments, build web content or take part in live audio or video chats are all considered to be social media sites.

Social media has many positive uses in schools and libraries. It provides an ideal environment for teens to share what they are learning or to build something together online. The nature of the medium allows teens to receive feedback from librarians, teachers, peers, parents, and others. Social media helps to create a sense of community (as do the physical library and school) and in this way are already aligned with the services and programs at the library and school.

Schools and libraries are working to integrate positive uses of social media into their classrooms, programs, and services. By integrating social media into educational environments, teens have the opportunity to learn how to be safe and smart when participating in online social networks. They also learn valuable life skills, as these social technologies are tools for

---

Literacy & Social Media

Social media gives teens meaningful ways to use and improve reading and writing skills. All social software requires teens to read and write. Reading and writing skills are used when a teen:

* creates a profile on a social media site such as Facebook;
* posts or comments on a blog;
* writes about an idea on Twitter;
* adds or edits content on a wiki;
* searches for social content; or
* consults peers online as a part of research

This is why these technologies are

Developmental Assets & Social Media

When schools and libraries help teens use social networking tools safely and smartly, they also help teens meet their developmental assets as defined by the [Search Institute](#).

When teens:
* Learn how to use blogs, wikis, Facebook and MySpace within an educational context they learn about **boundaries and expectations**.
* Are able to use social media t

∗ In the library, teens learn to use Glogster to create posters that highlight the personalities of their favorite book or movie characters. While creating the Glog, the teens have opportunities to talk about issues related to the copyright of images, music, and video as they add these formats to their posters. See http://cjc88.glogster.com/lee-book-report.

∗ A librarian in Maryland works with her teens to use blogs, YouTube, Twitter, and other social media sites to create an Alternate Reality game as part of the teen summer reading program: www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6708200.html. Teens use technology to find clues and solve the answers to puzzles in this game.

Tips for Talking with Legislators about Social Media

Before You Visit Your Legislator

* Do your homework. Find out what legislation is pending and be aware of what it says and where the person you are going to talk to stands on the issues related to social media in relation to youth.

* Gather personal stories relating to the issue from your teen library patrons and their parents to share with the legislator.

* Visit or contact your legislator as soon as you hear about pending legislation.

* Find out about legislation on the ALA web site at http://capwiz.com/ala/home.

* Find out about federal social media or networking legislation at Open Congress, http://www.opencongress.org

Even though librarians are respected members of the community, the competition for the attention and time of elected officials is great, as is the competition for funding. It is important that librarians reach out to elected officials and educate them about the needs of libraries and library patrons.

* Communicate via phone, e-mail, fax, with a legislator in person, set up an appointment in advance. (By the way, communicating with someone from

* Be polite, respectful, professional, and friendly.

* Introduce yourself, identify your job

Teens & Their Digital Footprint
What is a *digital footprint*

∗ Inform   perhaps via an audio or video podcast   educators, parents, and community members about how social media tools allow for schools and libraries to integrate technology in meaningful ways, with and for teens, at low (or no) cost. Information could include overviews of the technologies, interviews with teens about their use of technology, interviews with experts in technology and teen development who discuss how the technologies support teen growth and

*

Educating Teens about Social Media

You can help teens use social media successfully
and safely by sponsoring programs and services
that focus on these technologies. The following
examples are available to help you get started.
Show these examples to your students and Teen
Advisory Group (TAG) and see which one(s) they
feel are important to offer in your community. Have
your teens help plan and carry out the events.
Remember that social media sites often have
minimum age requirements and be sure to honor
those.

* Offer a class to teach teens how to use the
  programming software, Scratch. As teens
  create with Scratch and upload their work to
  the Scratch website, you can facilitate a
  discussion about Internet safety issues, the
  importance of guarding against identity theft,
  online etiquette, and so on.

Tools for Video and Images

Animoto
http://animoto.com
Upload still images and videos, add
music, and create a book trailer for a
favorite title.

Flickr
http://flickr.com
Create a library Flickr account and post
and tag photos from events.

YouTube
http://youtube.com
Watch speeches from the President,
search Library of Congress primary
source content, and view footage from
the Smithsonian Museum.

8

Tools for Reading & Literacy

Copia
http://thecopia.com
An app for computers and devices for reading and note-taking. Notes can be shared inside books with friends.

Goodreads
http://goodreads.com
Let others know what you are reading and discuss books with friends.

Twitter
http://twitter.com
Host book discussion groups on Twitter for real-time virtual conversation on teen books.

Wordle
http://wordle.com
Create word clouds in order to help demonstrate the meaning of books, speeches, articles, and

Additional Resources about Social Media & Libraries

FOR LIBRARIANS & EDUCATORS:

YALSA Social Media

Pew Internet in American Life Project - Teens
http://pewinternet.org/topics/Teens.aspx
The Pew Internet in American Life Project frequently releases reports on teen use of technology.

Tapscott, Dan. **Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World**. McGraw-Hill, 2008.
Tapscott looks at what the world is like for those that have grown up with technology as a part of their daily lives.

FOR TEENS

Born Digital Videos
www.youtube.com/user/digitalnatives#g/c/43558371DB96CC9A
A set of videos about social media identity, safety, privacy, and more.

Presentation Tools

Glogster
http://edu.glogster.com
Create virtual posters that contain images, videos, text, and audio.

Prezi
http://prezi.com
Interactive presentations that can include animations, images, and text.

Tumblr
http://tumblr.com
Collect images, videos, text, and audio on a Tumblr site in order to create a portfolio of projects.

www.connectsafely.org/Safety-Advice-Articles/facebook-for-parents.html
The Connect Safely guide understanding Facebook and helping the young Facebook users in their lives.

FOR EVERYONE:

Connect Safely Comprehensive Directory of Online Safety Resources
www.connectsafely.org/Directories/internet-safety-resources.html
What it says - a pretty darned comprehensive list.

iSAFE
www.isafe.org
Provides curricular materials and resources about Internet safety, with areas of the site targeted to parents, educators, kids & teens, and law enforcement agencies. There are free online tutorials for young people and adults as well as printable newsletters and other resources.

NetSmartz
www.netsmartz.org
A program of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, provides resources about Internet safety for parents, educators, kids, teens, press and law enforcement agencies.