

THE REALITY OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES...THINK, THINK, THINK!

People forget that everything they say online is a public postcard...Michael Wise

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ SN sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter allow people to keep in touch with others and exchange artwork, videos, music, messages, comments, etc.
- ❖ SN sites allow for the posting of profiles with very personal information and pictures
- ❖ When practiced safely, these sites can be very powerful tools to find people, communicate with old friends, gather information, and market businesses
- ❖ They can also be quite dangerous in that the information posted can be exploited to search for potential victims of all kinds of harmful actions
- ❖ A fake profile used by a 48 year-old woman acting as a 16 year-old boy to bully a 13 year old girl resulted in her hanging herself at home
- ❖ Exploiters often pose as people or friends of people that the user knows and can then lure them into inappropriate behaviors
- ❖ Once posted, text, images, and chats become public and can be retrieved by searching "caches" even though the original may have been deleted
- ❖ Surveys show that 22% of teens check their sites more than 10 times a day, 39% have posted something they regretted, 25% have created false profiles, 24% have hacked into another's account, 20% have posted nude pictures/videos of themselves or others
- ❖ Users, especially teens, trust far too easily and assume that they know someone when they look at their profile even though they do not authenticate it and it could be fake
- ❖ Users also often easily trust friends of a friend although they may have never met them
- ❖ Postings can often be misinterpreted such as naked pictures of your baby can be misinterpreted as child pornography
- ❖ Identity thieves can quickly take advantage of posted personal information
- ❖ Potential employers often scrutinize personal information, pictures, messages, and interests in addition to the resume of a prospective hire
- ❖ Employees have also been fired for badmouthing their companies on SN sites
- ❖ Lawyers, private investigators, and debt collectors often search SN sites for information to collect evidence for their cases
- ❖ Thieves can take advantage of information posted such as vacations or work hours
- ❖ IRS agents have also been known to use SN sites to find tax evaders

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Never post personal information such as phone numbers, address, name of employer
- ❖ Never give out your password and change it often
- ❖ Friend only those people you know in person and authenticate their profile
- ❖ Think, Think, Think before posting photos and videos and make sure they do not contain revealing information in the background
- ❖ Never post sexual texts, photos, videos, or messages
- ❖ Never respond to bullying, harassing, or threatening comments and report them
- ❖ Set privacy settings to add friends or view profile only if you approve it
- ❖ Remember always that what you post online is not private and can travel around the world in a nanosecond
- ❖ Seek professional help if you have been victimized on any Social Networking Sites

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at **DrKimmel@aol.com**.

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