Family Home Evening Lesson Outline

Protecting Yourself on Social Media

“If most of the information you get comes from social or other media, your ability to hear the whisperings of the Spirit will be diminished.”

-Russel M. Neilson

Purpose:

To educate your family about the dangers social media can have, and how to protect yourselves from those dangers.

For the Parent:

It is hard to protect our children from everything the world throws at us. With the advancement in technology, it is easier for the adversary to influence our lives and even our kids’ lives. We need to be able to safeguard our kids from increasing threats.

We need to teach our children how to protect themself on the internet. We need to teach them to be preemptively safe in their internet journey.

Start by looking at your family’s internet use. How aware is your family of the danger that lures on the internet? Discuss what responsibility comes with using the internet and what the risk. Make goals as individuals in your family to safeguard the internet.

Preparation:

1. Get a device ready to show the family how to adjust privacy and password settings on the most popular social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat are an example).
2. Write on a board or a sign some discussion questions such as “What are some of the dangers of sharing personal information online? And “How can we protect ourselves from online scams and cyberbullying?”

Suggested Music:

Choose the Right (Hymn#239)  
Love One Another (Hymn#308)

Lesson:

**How do we use it safely?**

Social media varies greatly on how it affects our lives based on how we use it. Social media can be a strong influence in a positive way or a negative way. There are many things that we must consider when we choose what and who we follow on social media. President Dallin H. Oaks shared a great quote about caution on the information we receive in the talk ‘Truth and the Plan’. He said the following:

“We live in a time of greatly expanded and disseminated information. But not all this information is true. We need to be cautious as we seek truth and choose sources for that search. We should not consider secular prominence or authority as qualified sources of truth. We should be cautious about relying on information or advice offered by entertainment stars, prominent athletes, or anonymous internet sources.”

As we follow people and pages on social media, we need to ensure that the information that they share is going to be encouraging and uplifting topics. If our feed helps us to grow closer to Christ, we have done well. If our feed makes you feel insecure, unsafe, or gives us bad ideas, something needs to change. Whether social media helps us or hurts us is in our power. Be selective of what you follow to make it a positive and insightful experience.

**What precautions do we all take when using social media?**

Social media is a tool that can help spread the gospel, but it also poses many risks. When using social media, we should be careful of the things we post, and the people who can view it. We should make sure that our profiles, and especially those of our children, are private, so that no one, except those we trust, can view our information.

Do not accept friend requests from strangers, or friends of friends. The more people who can view the content we post, the more at risk we can be. Another thing to remember is not to give out any kind of password or private information, especially over the internet.

Many apps and social medias have location services, make sure that these are off to add another level of privacy. Do not meet people you have interacted with over social media, there is no way to confirm their identity, and never any reason to meet them.

**Account security**

It is important to secure your account with strong passwords and safety features that will help keep hackers from gaining access to your account. Social media accounts require you to input a lot of personal information, which can be dangerous in the hands of the wrong person. Many accounts also come with safety features such as two-factor authentication; this can help protect your account from others who would try to access it.

“With guidelines firmly in place and with the Holy Ghost as our guide, we can use digital media to expand our search for things that are “virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy”” -Using Technology Safely”, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Adapting for Younger Groups and Older Groups

**How do we adapt to being safe on social media for all age groups?**

Possible answers – Safeguards, talk to parents/peers, teach one another, know your purpose, and understand the dangers.

Not everyone has social media, talk about technology in general. Develop the discipline to use your mobile device only when it is appropriate to do so. Take control of how you use these tools. Do not let them control you. (Safeguards)

Help them to understand that is a tool to use and we shouldn’t abuse it.

**How can we use it as a tool?**

Possible Answers- family history, games with family, reaching out to others (ministering), schoolwork, and using it for work.

Sister Joy D Jones taught, ““Whatever the needs are for our individual families, let’s teach each family member to use technology wisely and positively from the start—to develop a moral mindset.”

(Using Technology Safely)

We are to teach young and old responsibility. We can slowly give them privileges with social media and technology by using content filters and monitors to keep all involved safe.

**Testimony**

As always, your testimony can provide great power to all age groups. If you need to think of some things to say look here.

I bear my testimony that as I have been safe on my technology, I found blessings such as a focus on my purpose, outstanding relationships, and more intimate conversations. I know technology is good for all young and old. I know Christ will give you the strength to use it in a purposeful manner. I end in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Citations:

Neilson, Russel M. “Make Time for the Lord.” *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*, 3 Oct. 2021, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2021/10/59nelson?lang=eng.

Safeguard 3. (2015, January 1). Retrieved January 27, 2023, from https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/safeguards-for-using-technology/safeguards/safeguard-3.html?lang=eng

*Using technology safely*. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (2018, January 1). Retrieved January 27, 2023, from https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/abuse-prevention-and-protection/using-technology-safely?lang=eng