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## RETHINK CYBER SAFETY RULES & THE “TECH TALK”

### It's not about the technology – it's about how it is used.

There can often be hysteria around the latest app or how young people use devices. Connected devices are not unlike cars. Many cars can travel at speeds way above the speed limit, so teaching responsible use and good behaviors is key to safety. For example, smart devices have cameras that be used to spark and promote creativity, and apps may have functions that allow video chat or live streaming. They can also be used to send inappropriate images or create security vulnerabilities. Teaching the family how to use the technology appropriately and manage privacy and security settings will help everyone learn how to better protect themselves online.

### Establish a safe environment for technology conversations.

Although teens might not always come to you for online advice, it's important to be prepared to help them when they do. Work to create an environment of trust in which your kids can comfortably talk to you about their experiences and issues without fear of punishment or blame, even if they have broken an established rule. Additionally, consider asking your teen to talk about their friends' experiences and problems online; they may be more comfortable discussing someone else's experience than their own.

### Help teens help their friends.

Strong peer-to-peer relationships are fundamental parts of adolescent development, and as the survey indicates, many teens (40%) are likely to turn to their friends for help with problems online. Therefore, you can expect your child may be consulted by a friend for help. Talk to your teens about developing the tools and knowledge they need to protect themselves as well as advise their friends with online safety concerns, including how to block users on sites and how to report problems or abuse to sites and apps they use. Help your teen understand their capacity for responding to issues and challenges they face, and encourage them to seek help from someone they trust if a problem they or their friends have seems beyond their ability. Establish some parameters about when they should seek adult help, such as if a friend may commit harm to themselves or others or the law has been broken. While teens are unlikely to intervene directly in an online incident a friend is experiencing, role-play and strategize how they would handle problems. Being safe and secure online is about trying to prevent negative incidents, but also building resilience.

### Talk to teens about your shared concerns.

Despite their differences, parents and teens actually share many concerns about technology. The survey found that when it comes to learning more about online safety, parents and teens share common interests in learning more on topics like preventing identity theft, keeping devices secure and knowing how to identify fraudulent emails, social media posts or text messages. Use these shared concerns as opportunities to learn together, and establish family practices to protect each other and your most important personal information, such as photos, financial data and key online accounts.

### Talk to teens about their concerns.

The survey also found that teens have concerns about basic internet safety and security issues. Among other concerns, teens report that they are “very concerned” about someone accessing their account without permission (47%), sharing information about them they wanted to keep private (43%), and having a photo or video shared that they wanted to keep private (38%). Asking your own children whether they share these concerns and helping them address these issues by teaching them about account privacy and security, will give them skills they can use across the online world.

Study background: As part of widespread efforts to promote online safety education and awareness for youth, NCSA conducted market research to better understand the potential disconnect between parents and kids regarding their exposure to negative and harmful content online. Using the Zogby panel, Keeping Up With Generation App: NCSA Parent/Teen Online Safety Survey, surveyed a sample of 804 online teens ages 13 to 17 and a separate sample of 810 online parents of teens ages 13 to 17 between June 7 and 10, 2016. Based on a confidence interval of 95 percent, the margin of error for both surveys is +/- 3.5 percentage points. For more information: [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).

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