

# Ethical Use of Social Technology: The Decision-making Process

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## Information

Truth

Falsehood

Youth should analyze and evaluate information they receive from others or create themselves through social technology. They must distinguish between truth and lies.

### Questions:

- Is it true or false?
- Is it fact or opinion?
- Is it accurate or inaccurate?
- Is it legal or illegal?
- Is it exaggerated, distorted, or biased?
- Is it fabricated or invented?
- Is it omitting, teasing, or sarcastic?
- Is it misleading, misdirecting, or misrepresenting (i.e., propaganda)?
- Is it fraudulent (i.e., lying for personal gain)?
- Is it a misconception or misinformation?

### Examples:

- A rumor that a classmate is pregnant.
- A photograph modified to look like a peer is shoplifting.
- An exaggerated story about a personal sexual exploit.
- An illegally downloaded song

## Choices

Use

Misuse

Youth must make choices about their use of information in social networking situations. They should consider their reasons for sharing information, as well as issues of privacy for themselves and others.

### Questions:

- Will sharing the information be helpful or harmful?
- Is it intended to cause damage or disruption?
- Is the underlying reason for sharing this information revenge, self-promotion, personal profit, or monetary gain?
- Could this information be misinterpreted or misunderstood?
- Could this information negatively impact the reputation or feelings of others?
- Is use of the information malicious or intended to defame?
- Is it intended to trick or deceive?
- Could this information be threatening, intimidating, or harassing?
- Could this information be used in a negative way?
- Was this information obtained by invading someone's privacy?
- Was this information intended to be confidential?
- Is this information intended for self, friends, or everyone?
- How likely is it that the information will be shared beyond the intended audience?
- Has permission been given to share this information?

### Examples:

- A friend has been posting poems about suicide on his Facebook account. Only his friends can see these postings. I'm concerned. Should I tell the counselor knowing my friend might get mad?
- I could just share the photo with my friends for fun, but if others saw the image it might hurt my reputation. Should I post the photo to my friends?
- I don't think Pete's parents know he's gay, so I'm concerned about sharing the video on YouTube when everyone can see it. I don't want to "out" him without permission. Should I edit him out of the video and post it?
- Beth didn't say anything about keeping her new job a secret, so it should be okay to tell everyone or should I ask first?

## Action

Right

Wrong

Youth should take action based on moral reasoning. They must determine the value they place on honesty and privacy.

### Questions:

- What's the issue and what's at stake?
- What are the elements of the dilemma?
- What are the potential actions?
- Who will be affected by my actions? How?
- What are the potential consequences of my action?
- Who would be impacted by my decision?
- Is the decision influenced by peer pressure or outside factors?
- Is this situation unique to social technology? What if technology wasn't involved?
- Why is this problem hard to solve?
- What is right and what does "right" mean?
- What is the decision?
- What are the reasons or arguments for making this decision?

### Examples:

- When I received the photo on my iPhone, I thought it was hilarious. However it's embarrassing for my friend and I'm not going to forward it to my friends.
- My friend's health is more important than our friendship. I'm going to get her some help.
- I think the proposed ATV trail will be harmful to the environment. Although my conservative friends might be mad, I'm posting the cause on my profile because I think it's important.