

Teens and Permanency

One big difference between most current parent's teenage years and what youth face today is a digitized footprint. Mistakes aren't as easy to erase as they used to be because so much of our lives are shared online. These mistakes may be permanent.

Most teens utilize some form of social media tool that enables them to effectively document their lives. However, everyone knows life is full of mistakes. While social media has many positive attributes, teens and their parents are often not fully aware of the potential dangers of sharing information online. Dangers can include maintaining a positive online reputation or protecting your child's identity from being stolen.

Parents now have the responsibility of providing guidance and education to their teenagers on how to properly manage their digital footprint and explain the serious potential harmful implications a poorly managed footprint could have on their permanency and future in terms of college admissions, employment, overall reputation, and safety.

Potential Harmful Digital Footprint Impacts - Teens

College Admissions & the Military: College admissions officers can and do read your teen's online profile. If your son or daughter is applying to college and is competing against another applicant for acceptance, the difference between your child gaining admission and receiving a rejection letter could be an immature or damaging post on social media. This extends to moral aptitude requirements in the military if your child is planning on enlisting.

Scholarships: Scholarships often ask applicants to share their social media profiles as part of the process in applying online. Any immature posts, cyberbullying, or generally distasteful material found on your child's profile could prevent or prohibit them from gaining a scholarship.

Sports: Is your son or daughter planning on playing sports in college? Recruiters and coaches surely will want to know about your teen's conduct on social media.

Employers & Internships: Employers will Google your kids. Even if the job is just a position they are applying for to make extra money while going to college. Additionally, college internships are now becoming a prerequisite for gaining employment after college. Internships are competitive enough. The difference between your son or daughter and another applicant could be his or her digital footprint.

Identity Theft: Your teen's identity is at risk. Any photo that is publicly shared could be a target for identity thieves. Posting personal information is a serious liability. Identity theft is increasing, and it is a serious problem with very damaging consequences.



Adapted from: <https://www.fosi.org/good-digital-parenting/harmful-digital-footprint-impacts-teens/>