



Baldwin County Public Schools

Mr. Eddie Tyler, Superintendent

Central Office Satellite
1091 B Avenue
Loxley, AL 36551

Tel 251.972.8550
Fax 251.972.6868
E-mail: pdavis@bcbe.org

Dear Parents:

Today's teenagers are spending more and more time online, usually on a social media platform like Facebook or Twitter. And often times, their online life is not just confined to their computer at home. Most teens now have smart phones where they are on social media networks all throughout the day. They are constantly texting, tweeting, and posting pictures via Snapchat and Instagram. The impact of this hyper-connected social media life on teenagers can be both positive and negative.

Statistics show that one of the negative impacts social media has had on teens is allowing them to become more comfortable online doing things that they should be more sensitive to doing. Sexting is a perfect example of how comfortable teens are online. Because teens feel "safe" behind their computer screen or their phone screen, they will readily post nude or semi-nude pictures, or they will engage in sexual conversation through Facebook messaging, chat, or texting.

In an effort to better explain to students the dangers and pitfalls of social media, the Baldwin County Public School System has partnered with the Women's Care Medical Center in Robertsdale, Alabama to provide a two-day curriculum for all eighth grade students. Topics included for discussion during these two days will be social media sites (i.e., Facebook, Instagram Snapchat), online gaming (i.e., *Call of Duty*, *World of Warcraft*), video networking (i.e., FaceTime, Skype), online dating, sexual predators, sexting, and pornography.

Please be assured that pornography websites **will not** be shared with the students, nor will they be exposed to any pornographic images. Instead, the facilitators for this curriculum will stress to students the reasons why exposure to obscene content online is dangerous and should be avoided. Facilitators will also stress to students that posting inappropriate photos online can not only damage their reputation, but it can also cause problems later in life when a potential employer or college admissions officer does a background check.

Copies of the materials related to the program are in the counselor's office for you to preview prior to the presentation, or you may contact your child's school counselor if you have any questions.

SHOULD YOU DESIRE THAT YOUR CHILD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROGRAM, please feel free to contact the school so that alternate arrangements can be made for your child on both days of this presentation.

The program, which is entitled Socially Unacceptable, will be presented at your child's school on

_____.

Sincerely,

Patrice Davis

Patrice Davis
Intervention Supervisor