

From the Desk of the College Head

June 2022

Dear **PEPPS Polokwane** families

It is the end of the term: a busy and exciting term.

- We had lots of extra-curricular fixtures.
- We had civvies days.
- We wrote exams.

Grade 12 pupils wrote the first of three exams and I am sure that they are looking forward to the holiday. UNFORTUNATELY, it is more like a working holiday for them. They have Winter School and it is important to attend this as it will be intense revision sessions.

 Please read:

Social media 'skills'



Something that I would like to emphasise at this stage of the year is the way our pupils use social media. I found some interesting tips about how to use social media responsibly. Please read this. Also, remember that you as parents should check your children's phones regularly. You must be aware of what they are doing on social media.

What counts as irresponsible?

Use your common sense. If it's hurtful, defamatory, libellous or inappropriate in the physical world, it is online too. Irresponsible behaviour can include:

- making derogatory comments about individuals or organisations, even as a joke
- sharing confidential information about others
- sharing sexually explicit, racist, homophobic or inflammatory material
- flaming or trolling – deliberately provoking arguments or disruptive behaviour
- making allegations about others

There are two golden rules to follow.

1. If you wouldn't say it to someone's face in a public place, don't say it online.
2. Don't rely on privacy settings – anyone who can see your content can download it, copy it, take a screenshot and then share it publicly.

What is a digital footprint?

Your digital footprint is the data trail left by your interactions in the digital world. It's a public record of:

- what you said
- what was said about you
- what you liked, retweeted or shared
- where you are or have been.



This information is often used for marketing purposes and employer checks. It also makes it very easy for others to gather information on you in order to impersonate you or commit fraud.

Less public, but something you need to remember is that there is also a record of

- what you've clicked on
- what you've searched for
- your IP address.

Managing your digital identity

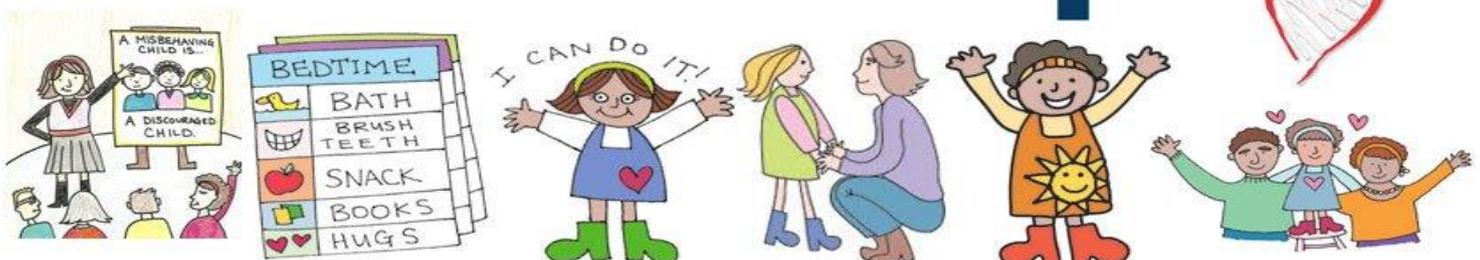
With a few simple steps, you can decide how others see you in the digital world – and protect your personal information. Here's how.

On Facebook

- Use settings that determine who sees your posts
- Set your timeline so only friends can see it
- Avoid making individual posts visible to 'friends of friends' and 'public'
- **Don't share any personal details**
- Remember, everyone may see which pages you 'like', so take care, and if in doubt, 'unlike'
- Functionality and privacy settings often change, so check them regularly

<https://help.chi.ac.uk/how-use-social-media-responsibly>

Positive Discipline



At PEPPS, we discipline with dignity. How can parents do the same?

A few Healthy Discipline Strategies That Work

The AAP recommends positive discipline strategies that effectively teach children to manage their behaviour and keep them from harm while promoting healthy development. These include:

1. **Show and tell.** Teach children right from wrong with calm words and actions. Model behaviours you would like to see in your children.
2. **Set limits.** Have clear and consistent rules your children can follow. Be sure to explain these rules in age-appropriate terms that they can understand.
3. **Give consequences.** Calmly and firmly explain the consequences if they don't behave. Be prepared to follow through right away. Don't give in after a few minutes, but remember, never take away something your child truly needs, such as a meal.
4. **Hear them out.** Listening is important. Let your child finish the story before helping solve the problem. Watch for times when misbehaviour has a pattern, like if your child is feeling jealous. Talk with your child about this rather than just giving consequences.
5. **Give them your attention.** The most powerful tool for effective discipline is attention—to reinforce good behaviours and discourage others. Remember, all children want their parents' attention.
6. **Catch them being good.** Children need to know when they do something bad—and when they do something good. Notice good behaviour and point it out, praising success and good tries. Be specific (for example, "Wow, you did a good job with that project!").
7. **Know when not to respond.** As long as your child isn't doing something dangerous and gets plenty of attention for good behaviour, ignoring bad behaviour can be an effective way of stopping it. Ignoring bad behaviour can also teach children the natural consequences of their actions. Always remember that we criticise in private and we praise in public.
8. **Be prepared for trouble.** Plan ahead for situations when your children might have trouble behaving. Prepare them for upcoming activities and how you want them to behave.
9. **Redirect bad behaviour.** Sometimes children misbehave because they are bored or don't know any better. Find something else for your children to do.
10. **Call a timeout.** A [timeout](#) can be especially useful when a specific rule is broken. This discipline tool works best by warning children that they will get a timeout if they don't stop, reminding them what they did wrong in as few words—and with as little emotion—as possible and removing them from the situation for a pre-set length of time (1 minute per year of age is a good rule of thumb). With children who are at least 3 years old, you can try letting the children lead their own timeout instead of setting a timer. You can just say, "Go to timeout and come back when you feel ready and in control." This strategy, which can help the children learn and practise self-management skills, also works well for older children and teens.

Spanking and Harsh Words are Harmful and Don't Work. Here's Why:

The AAP policy statement, "[Effective Discipline to Raise Healthy Children](#)," highlights why it's important to focus on teaching good behaviour rather than punishing bad behaviour. Research shows that spanking, slapping and other forms of physical punishment don't work well to correct a child's behaviour. The same holds true for yelling at or shaming a child. Beyond being ineffective, harsh physical and verbal punishments can also damage a child's long-term physical and mental health.

- **Spanking's unhealthy cycle.** The AAP advises that parents and caregivers should not spank or hit children. Instead of teaching responsibility and self-control, spanking often increases aggression and anger in children. A [study](#) of children born in 20 large U.S. cities found that families who used physical punishment got caught in a negative cycle: the more children were spanked, the more they later misbehaved, which prompted more spankings in response. Spanking effects may also be felt beyond the parent-child relationship because it teaches that causing someone pain is OK if you're frustrated—even with those you love. Children who are spanked may be more likely to hit others when they don't get what they want.
- **Lasting marks.** Physical punishment increases the risk of injury, especially in children under 18 months of age and may leave other measurable marks on the brain and body. Children who are spanked show higher levels of hormones tied to [toxic stress](#). Physical punishment may also affect brain development. One study found that young adults who were spanked repeatedly had less gray matter, the part of the brain involved with self-control, and performed lower on IQ tests as young adults than the control group.
- **Verbal abuse: How words hurt.** Yelling at children and using words to cause emotional pain or shame also has been found to be ineffective and harmful. Harsh verbal discipline, even by parents who are otherwise warm and loving, can lead to more misbehaviour and mental health problems in children. [Research](#) shows that harsh verbal discipline, which becomes more common as children get older, may lead to more behavioural problems and symptoms of depression in teens.

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/communication-discipline/Pages/Disciplining-Your-Child.aspx>

Just an idea: how about a device-free dinner time or cell phone-free half an hour where we share our thoughts with each another.



Please stay **safe, warm and healthy** during this holiday!

See you all back on Wednesday, 13 July 2022!

Kind regards



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