

Social Standards

Standards are a little different than rules. They're ways of living and expectations of ongoing behavior that a group of people agree to and expect of each other. Standards are not easier to follow than rules. In fact, they may be harder to follow because standards take practice. The great thing about standards is that when a group of people agrees to follow the same ones, they can help each other meet them. Think of standards as a way to live, not just a way to behave.

Below are The Social Institute's seven social standards. Under each are ways to live up to that standard. You could say that the seven standards each have specific "rules" that, when followed, help you meet them.

Think of standards as a way to live, not just a way to behave.

Protect your privacy like you're famous

- Keep your location, email address, and phone number private. Do you know where Emma Watson lives? How about LeBron's Skype handle? No? There's a reason.
- Change your passwords every three months. That's quarterly or, for those of you who don't like counting, once a season.
- Never share your passwords with friends, even your BFF. And yeah, the code you set to unlock your phone is a password. Unlock it first before handing it over.
- Consider a family password sharing solution like the one offered by LastPass, because it's tough to keep track of everyone's super-secret codes.
- Avoid sharing photos or videos with your location or identity info evident, such as a street sign, mailbox, front door, car's license plate, and — especially — your driver's license.

Play to your core

- Share the things you won't mind being made public, even if they're sent privately. Remember: A screenshot lasts forever.
- Turn the camera around to show what's happening in front of you once in a while, especially if you feel pressure to share only a perfect version of yourself. No one is perfect, ever. Steph Curry (maybe you've heard of him?) says that the best person you can be is the best version of yourself.
- Capture what that you love the most, not what will get the most likes and comments. Do it for yourself, not for others.

Cyberback others

- Encourage and celebrate the positive moves your friends make online and off every day.
- Back up other people with encouragement and support if you see them being bullied. When you do this online, we call it cyberbacking.
- Depending on the situation, (1) stop, (2) block whoever sent it, (3) screenshot the offense, and (4) talk to an adult about what to do next if you are being cyberbullied. It rhymes, so it's easy to remember: Stop, block, screenshot, and talk. No excuses.
- Stop, block, screenshot, and talk.

Strike a balance

- Prioritize your homework, chores, and other important things before using your device for fun.
- Manage digital distractions, and look people in the eye when they talk to you. Heads up!
- Value real-life moments without needing the real-time recognition by online followers.

Build a strong team

- Surround yourself with positive role models who support you and encourage you to play to your core.
- Stay away from anonymous platforms and websites that easily connect you with strangers, like some dating sites.
- Unfollow anyone who makes you doubt yourself, and block those who send you inappropriate or rude content.
- Let what's new come to you. Click [HERE](#) to subscribe to our newsletter and get updates on the latest social media apps, trends, and more. Right in your inbox.

Use your mic for good

- Imagine you're at a press conference with a microphone pointed at you and hundreds, no thousands of press and fans waiting for you to say something. Social media is that microphone. Your friends and followers — and potentially the world — are your audience. Use your mic to do great things.
- Know when to turn your mic on, turn it up, and drop it.
- Listen to what others from different backgrounds and cultures are saying, engaging with them in ways that broaden mutual understanding and learning.

Huddle often

- Talk with each other regularly about your experiences online and the best moves to make so that together you can live up to high standards. This is a team effort!
- Coach down to younger people, helping them learn how to use social media positively, both through your example (#rolemodel) but also through instruction.
- Coach up to parents, teachers, and others less familiar with the apps you use and games you play, helping them understand social media and how (and why!) it's important to you.