Online Safety Tips for Education Professionals

59% of teachers, 58% of administrators, 48% of support staff, and 38% of school psychologists in the US reported experiencing a form of harassment between 2020 and 2021. This resource gives teachers steps they can take to improve their online safety to lower their risk today and throughout the school year.

What You Can Do Now

- **Review and update your privacy settings** on all social media sites (Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, and Snap) to those that are the most privacy-protective.
- **Limit sharing your location data**. Check your settings and location permissions on your smart phone.
- **Set a Google alert** for your name to be notified whenever it is mentioned on the web.
- **Set strong and secure passwords for each of your accounts**; third-party password managers can help you keep track.
- **Enable two-factor authentication** as a second layer of protection.
- **Know your rights.** Familiarize yourself with your school's acceptable use policy, relevant state bullying laws, and what to do if a student records you without your permission.

If You Are Being Harassed

- **Assess the risk to your safety** and contact local law enforcement if you are in danger.
- **Document and report the harassment** to both your school and the social media platform on which the harassment is occurring.
- **Has someone set up a social media profile impersonating you?** Report an impersonation account on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter.
- **Request that your personal information be removed**, including via Google's Personal Information Removal Service.
- **Seek mental health support if and when needed**. Teach.com maintains a list of helpful resources as a place to start. If you are in a moment of crisis, please contact the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or dial 911 in case of an emergency.

Additional Resources:

These tips and more from the Future of Privacy Forum are detailed in "Let Teachers Be: Concerns About the Online Harassment of Teachers and Practical Tips For Self-Protection" (October 2022) and "5 Tips for Protecting Your Privacy Online," (January 2022).

The Digital Trust & Safety Partnership, the EFF's Surveillance Self-Defense Project, and the Online Harassment Field Manual all contain guides to protecting yourself online.