

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Facebook is a **social utility** that **connects you** with the people around you.

Facebook is also a **social utility** that **connects you** with **employers, predators, and the police.**

Other online sites such as Myspace, Xanga, Hi5, and LiveJournal pose the same dangers. You can't entirely control who sees your profile, but you can control what they see. Consider the following when posting pictures, writing on walls, sending bumper stickers, and adding quotes and information:



You may have deleted potentially incriminating information, but people can save and print your profile and pictures. Also, Facebook does not use secure encryption, and many servers and ISPs back up information, keeping it indefinitely.



Predators use Facebook to find phone numbers, addresses, and specific whereabouts. You may want to let your friends know how to reach you, but such information makes you an easy target for harassment and stalking.



Employers and the police are using Facebook more regularly to research and investigate potential employees and suspects. University administrators, coaches, athletic directors, professors, and family members can also access Facebook. If it's something you wouldn't want these individuals to see or you wouldn't walk around announcing, DON'T post it online.



First impressions count for a lot; sometimes, Facebook is the first impression someone has of you. Your friends may understand your jokes, comments, bumper sticker references, or photos, but other people do not—especially employers, professors, and police officers.



Anyone who has access to the internet and has an email address has access to your online information. Use privacy settings, but remember that these don't prevent friends of friends accessing your information.



Ultimately, YOU are responsible for YOU and your own actions. As an individual and a citizen in cyberspace, be polite, responsible, courteous, and honest.

Developed with information from Oregon State and University of San Diego "Face the Facts" brochures.