



Pearl River School District

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Marco F. Pochintesta
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parents,

We have been looking for a resource that can help parents navigate the challenges of parenting in the digital age. Many of our students have a cellphone, tablet or even gaming systems with Internet access and social media. While advances in technology have many great rewards, there is also the potential for harm. We recently held a Parent University workshop for parents and students that was very well attended on the topic of having students be less connected to their cell phones and social media. In addition to cyber bullying, there are concerns about safety, mental health and wellness. It seems that every day another social media app becomes popular. In some cases, these apps allow strangers to contact children, or make it easy to anonymously bully other children.

SmartSocial.com is an online digital safety curriculum for parents. Over 30 courses, on topics such as TikTok for Parents, 10 Safety Features Every Parent Needs to Set up Their Student's iPhone, and Smartphone and Social Media Agreement are available. The digital footprint, and the social media presence that young people create can have a lasting impact and parental guidance, as well as guidance from school are needed. For older students preparing for college and career, SmartSocial.com can help parents support their children put their best foot forward with social media and a digital portfolio.

SmartSocial.com offers mental health courses aimed at reducing anxiety, bullying and depression. Some of these courses are recommended for parents to watch with their children. In an effort to do more to support parents, the district has purchased a number of parent subscriptions to SmartSocial.com that we are sharing with parents on a first come, first served basis.

While we have rules and consequences in place for unauthorized use of digital devices, we believe that prevention and education through a strong home/school partnership is the key to keeping kids safe online.

Information on how parents can sign up for SmartSocial.com will be coming soon. Subscriptions will expire at the end of the school year. At that time, we will examine the effectiveness of this initiative. I hope that you find this resource helpful.

Sincerely,