

Stay safe : while online dating

By **Kate Boyce**
entertainment editor

Living in the digital age changes teenage relationships. There are risks to having an online presence. Junior Addy Mahurin shared what advice she would give to someone who is meeting other people through social media.

“Be careful about who you talk to and especially about what you post because nothing ever truly gets deleted,” Mahurin said.

Mahurin uses Snapchat and has criteria when adding people and talking to people.

“I only add people back if we have several mutual friends, and I’ll normally look them up on other platforms to see who they are,” she said.

Even though Mahurin uses social media carefully, she added that she has been in situations where people have made her uncomfortable.

Junior Hailey Lusk has advice about people joining Snapchat.

“Good luck. You’re going to get attached. Always stay safe and make sure you aren’t putting yourself into a dangerous situation,” Lusk said.

Even though Lusk tries to stay safe online, people still can make her uncomfortable.

“One time, someone wouldn’t leave me alone, and it made me uncomfortable,” Lusk said.

Before adding anyone back, she ensures the person follows a certain criteria to ensure they are safe to talk to.

“I look to see if they have a public profile, and I look to see if we have mutual friends,” Lusk said.

Social media affects teens every day, and counselors often help students work through tough situations that arise. Mr. Ben Sutton, guidance counselor, has first-hand experience.

“As a high school counselor, I have seen quite a few toxic relationships and how they can affect people. I would educate yourself and be aware of what online dating entails. Make sure you set up a prevention system for anything toxic that could take place,” Mr. Sutton said.

Mr. Sutton has one piece of advice for high school students experiencing online relationships, especially toxic ones.

“You need to learn to value yourself because those kinds of relationships (toxic ones) prey on insecurity. If you have confidence, you’re less likely to have a toxic relationship,” he said.



“You should still be you while in a relationship. Acting the same way and doing the same things as before you began your relationship. Your boyfriend/ girlfriend should add to who you are, not replace who you are.”
Mr. Tad Frahm, art teacher



“If your relationship ever gives you anxiety, makes you afraid, or causes you to feel inadequate, it is not healthy. Find someone who makes you feel safe and appreciated for who you are.”
Mrs. Cathy Grider, English teacher

Healthy vs. Unhealthy relationships : watch for red flags

By **Gillian Semmler**
feature editor

In a world where connections are more important than ever, maintaining healthy relationships is crucial for emotional well-being. Healthy relationships can involve friendships as well as romantic ones.

Junior Hayden Burdine defined what he sees as a healthy relationship.

“Staying loyal and not being super protective and controlling. An example of that is looking through your significant other’s phone often. Relationships need trust, and if you are not going to do that, there is no point of being in a relationship,” Burdine said.

Communication is key within relationships.

“I think that a healthy relationship is made through frequent communication. Along with that, the three most important aspects of a healthy relationship are commu-

nication, loyalty, and empathy,” senior Ben Richie said.

Catching red flags early is important, too.

“Some red flags in a relationship are lying and cheating. A piece of advice I would give to someone younger than me is ‘don’t be afraid to leave a relationship if it’s unhealthy,’” Richie said.

Kind gestures can make people feel loved and appreciated in a healthy relationship.

“A piece of advice I would give a younger person is to talk. It is good to talk to people even over the phone when you’re away from each other and check up on them; talk and also do nice things for them because they will see your generosity. It shows a good character in you to do something like that for them,” freshman Gage Hall said.

Being aware of red flags can help when determining if a relationship is healthy or not.

“A sign that the relationship is starting to become

unhealthy is when the other person becomes distant from you or the relationship. That could mean not talking, hanging out, or finding ways to avoid the relationship,” Richie said.

Communication is always important.

“Trust, loyalty, and communication are three of the most important characteristics of a healthy relationship. Without these, relationships can become unhealthy or end poorly,” Burdine said.

Although everyone can get into arguments and learn to work through them, toxic relationships often involve far more arguments that never seem to get resolved.

“Constant arguing, avoiding the other person and taking anger out on each other. If you’re constantly arguing with the other person, then it’s going to feel more like an enemy than a boyfriend or girlfriend,” freshman Maddy Cravens said.

The National Domestic Violence
HOTLINE

1.800.799.SAFE (7233) • 1.800.787.3224 (TTY)

Is my relationship healthy?

Do I feel comfortable around this person?

Do I trust this person?

Am I happy with this person?

Can I be honest with this person?

Does my partner support me?

Do I feel good about myself when I’m with them?

Do they try things I like?

Do they bring the best out of me?

Do they respect my boundaries?