

## **Teen Safety: Respecting Relationships and Creating Healthy Communication in a Digital Environment**

Before the Internet, texting, and social media sites became popular, relationships were built by communicating in person rather than online. We expressed ourselves by being physically close to a person and using our body language, eye gestures, tone of voice and words to show someone we care. People are no longer present in each other's company and communication that is both physical and social has been lost to the age of technology and digital communication. Given the role of physical non-verbal cues in conveying thoughts and maintaining relationships, talking about the effects of the lack of physical presence in communication is important. Considering the importance of both relationships and peer approval for teens, a map of the online domains teens are expected to navigate is worth examining. Technology has changed the way teenagers communicate and interact with parents, peers and dating partners as they become more reliant on technology to communicate with one another. Learning how to communicate in relationships and respect their teenage body and mind in today's digital technological environment is the focus of this research. Personal accounts from teens whose lives, attitudes and actions have been affected by social media, texting, sexting, slut shaming, bullying, and abusive dating relationships enhance the discourse on teen safety in our digital world. .

*Key Words: Digital Communication, Social Media, Teen Safety*