

September 12, 2017

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND SAINT MARGARET SCHOOL**

A good number of our students have direct access to cell phones. In fact these days more and more lower grade students have access to a cell phone. I will not deny the convenience for parents these days to be able to contact their children. To have them call you when they need to be picked up from a function, play date etc. However that is where I feel the necessity for a cell phone pretty much ends for Saint Margaret School students. I know that 8th graders have an occasional group chat to talk about home work and school questions. And when used properly this can be very helpful.

When we were middle school students, there were no cell phones. If we had a disagreement with a fellow student it pretty much ended when you got off the bus or walked home. Not the case today. It just continues on into the evening with social media.

Last year was an exceptional year for social media issues in our middle school. As much as these issues happened outside of school, the repercussions of such issues carried over into our school and were displayed by arguments, bullying and hard feelings. Negative pictures were taken in school (against the school rules) and posted for other students to see. Text with very poor language, and photos manipulated to mock our teachers. I was embarrassed and ashamed of the things I saw that came from some of our middle school students. Again these issues happened outside of school but extended into the next days becoming a very disruptive problem here that we had to take valuable school time to deal with it. All this foolishness disrupts the education process.

**It is our goal here at Saint Margaret School to make EVERY student comfortable in their surroundings.**

The inappropriate use of social media will not be tolerated here and we need YOUR help to keep our students social media stress free. **YOU** are their parents not their friends and **YOU** need to treat social media as such by the weekly or daily, taking of their phones, to review their text messages, emails, instagram photos and posts etc to check for appropriate use. This goes for their computers as well. Make your spot checks unexpected. Put limits of their phone use. They should not be up until midnight texting their friends.

The experts claim that “A tween’s underdeveloped frontal cortex can’t manage the distraction nor the temptations that come with social media use.” As we do teach the responsible use of technology here at Saint Margaret School, know that we are not able to teach the maturity that social media requires.

**Please help us help you students!**

Keith Burkett