

@Sophie Takes a #Selfie

Rules and Etiquette for Taking Good Care Before You Share

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Timeless wisdom combined with the insight and expertise of a Mom & Social Media Pro, this book is for girls ages seven to seventy-seven.

For Bryant, Sophia and Sydney

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Introduction

And The Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2013 is ... *selfie!*

My name is Jennifer Cannon and I have been working professionally as a freelance writer specializing in Social Media Marketing and Management since launching JenCann Productions in 2008. After learning my way around social cyberspace, I quickly gained a reputation as a promoter of others and natural connector. I've worked with an AC Billboard Chart topping musician, a New York Times Bestselling author, and some very successful Mompreneurs.

With the evolution of all things digital and the ability to share anything and everything instantly, we're all walking a fine line between keeping it classy and uh-oh! Whether you like it or not, it's a selfie world and we're all here (and hey, they're fun!). Selfies are *everywhere!* Facebook, Instagram, ask.fm, SnapChat, spring.me, tumblr, Vimeo, Vine, Kik, WhatsApp, Whisper ... Which one is your favorite? Even as you read this, the social landscape is changing. It's enough to make anyone's head spin.

Now, despite the fact that sites like Facebook require you to be at least thirteen years of age to create an account, over 5 million users are under the age of ten according to *Social Media Today*. Most kids simply won't wait until the ripe old age of thirteen to create an account on one of the afore-mentioned sites (with or without a parent's permission). So, whether you fall into this category, or are "socially legal", let's talk about how you can put your best foot forward and think about the kind of digital footprint you want to leave behind. *Think* is the operative word here.

I write this with my own young daughters in mind as I encourage them to be the kind of girls today that the self-assured, successful women of tomorrow can look back on with confidence and pride. I hope that reading this book will spark ongoing, open discussions in households and schools around the world. I believe it is our responsibility as parents to know what our kids under the age of eighteen are doing online. This isn't a throw-her-in-the-pool-and-see-if-she'll-swim situation. You wouldn't hand her a stick of dynamite on the way out the door in the morning and say "Have a great day sweetie! Careful you don't hurt yourself with that stick of dynamite!" A kid with a smart phone is basically walking around with most of humanity in her back pocket.

My hope is to inspire more thoughtfulness in the way young people—all people—communicate with one another. As fun and exciting as it is to be evermore connected, there is a down-side

which is ultimately desensitizing and *disconnecting* us on a real and human level.

Please use this book as a tool to establish guidelines that work for your family, and keep your virtual closet skeleton-free!

Who Is Sophie?

Sophie is my daughter.

Sophie is your daughter, your sister, a friend ... maybe she's your niece or granddaughter.

Sophie is your teammate, your classmate, your student ... she might be your neighbor. She might be you.

Sophie is not perfect. She is going to make mistakes, but together we can try to guide her in a healthy direction.

Sophie symbolizes girls of all ages, races and places.

Sophie is everyone.

The #SweetSixteen aka #Rules



My Fair Sophie

Keep It Classy

Oh, snap! Before you start slinging swear words around to make a potentially un-ladylike point, go Google up a thesaurus and check out the plethora of other words (approximately a quarter of a million according to the Oxford Dictionaries) that are waiting patiently in the wings for their big break. All of this “LMFAO” and “OMFG”-ing is worn out. The poor letter ‘F’ is getting thrown around in acronyms all over the place. Why? Do you think it doesn’t look as bad because it isn’t spelled out? Well it does. And not only does it look bad, it shows a complete lack of originality.

In the heat of the moment when you’re thinking about how great it’s going to feel to tell that special someone to “STFU” or maybe spice up your timeline with a few expletives to make yourself appear “cool”, you must understand that you cannot ever *really* take that back. Even if you change your mind and hit the delete button, it is often too late because your comment has already been seen and potentially shared, liked and/or forwarded by others. Remember, it only takes a second to capture a screenshot of *anything* online.

While we’re on the subject, *please* don’t swear out loud either, my loves. The absurdity of hearing a young lady channeling her inner gangsta truck driver in public is cringeworthy every time. Don’t believe me? Take a moment to have a private swear-off with yourself as a Voice Memo on your phone, then listen back and have a laugh ... For extra credit, go and watch the timeless brilliance of “*My Fair Lady*” starring the lady of all ladies, and my personal hero, Audrey Hepburn. Can we get #MFL trending?



Sophie -
your bag is
so ugly
...jk :)

Be Kind

Please refrain from using, “like”ing or sharing Hate Speak.

Knowing what to do if you see hateful or humiliating comments can be complicated. If the comments appear in your personal timeline and are directed toward you, I would advise you to delete them and block the offender immediately. Depending on the seriousness of what is being said, you may want to take a screen shot and discuss the best course of action with your parent or other trusted adult. Do not use the words “gay” and/or “retarded” along with any other racial or mean-spirited talk. The phrase “you should just go kill yourself” has become disturbingly popular and is used in various contexts.

Young people are killing themselves in record numbers over words they see printed on a screen or sent to them in text messages by cyberbullies who, thanks to technology, are almost impossible to ignore now. In a press release dated June 19, 2013 from the *CDC*, suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 24. Their findings show “higher suicide-related behaviors among youth involved in bullying”.

Before the internet, if there was someone you were afraid of or bothered by in school, you could often find a way to avoid that person or persons. Today it is virtually impossible to escape cruel or humiliating messages that never go away. Once your words have been seen, they cannot be unseen. If you feel uncomfortable speaking up publicly there is *always* a way to speak up privately or anonymously! Go to your parent, or other trusted adult, or your guidance counselor at school. Make it clear that you want to remain anonymous, but please do speak up. Someone’s life might depend on it. Know that if you choose to participate in online bullying, you should be prepared to face the potential consequences.

what I
want to
say...

what I
ought to
say...



Take 5

Take sixty-five if you have to! Minutes that is, to calm down when you're angry. This is likely one of the most difficult rules to follow, but if you can be the master of your angry thumbs and fingers you will save yourself a lot of trouble and embarrassment. Here are a few things you can do *before* you react:

Talk to your mom, dad or other trusted adult

Talk to your dog or cat, hamster or lizard, bird, etc. (they're the best listeners)

Scream into a pillow

Sit quietly and take ten slow, deep breaths

Take a walk, like outside, without your phone (when is the last time you did that?)

Write in your journal (ironically, very private)

Call a cool headed friend (i.e., not the friend who enjoys stirring up drama)

After you have done at least one or all of these things, you will have given yourself time to do something very valuable. *Think*. Think about this. Choosing not to engage or react to a person who is directing ugliness toward you (or anyone) online says more than any of the most eloquent words or trashy acronyms you could string together. Think. Would you say this to this person's face? Would you say this to your grandmother? The moment you react without thinking to another person's insult, mean joke, etc. you immediately give them power. So, simmer down and trust me on this one.