



## **Are you making your students aware of the possible pitfalls of being on social networking & media sites?**

With many people now active upon one of the various social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, My Space or Bebo, it is becoming increasingly easy to access many people online whether known to an individual or not.

Some social media and networking sites have 'opt out' functions that are often directly connected to any persons privacy settings meaning that if specific pages and settings aren't looked at and 'opted out of' any person may have access to the private details, including location of where a person is signed in at any particular time.

HCS would advise that Schools, as a part of Work Experience preparation, discuss social networking and media to ensure students are made aware of the possible pitfalls. Students should specifically be made aware that handing out social website or other sites' ID's to individuals from a Work Experience placement could be both inappropriate and dangerous, especially where the student doesn't know the person they are providing this ID to.

Students must also be made aware of inappropriate use of such sites. This may include, but not be limited to, contacting adults or children from Work Experience or who they met through their Work Experience placement. Contacting third parties where a name or other user ID has been passed to them while out on Work Experience or post information about an employer, the work, the school or teachers social networking pages. It is advised that this should be deemed as inappropriate behaviour whether the specifics of postings were intended to be either helpful or informative or not.

It is also advised that schools discuss mobile phone use/smart phone use while on Work Experience. For safety reasons it is recommended that no student should be passing their phone pin or phone number out to any person when on Work Experience.

It should also be discussed that students are likely to be asked to turn their phones off when on placement unless it is required when travelling in employer vehicles for emergency purposes. Students will also be expected to have phones off when undertaking placements within schools, nursery schools and care homes (as example) as these placements will have strict confidentiality guidelines in place. This will be enforced to ensure phone cameras and video recording facilities are not used when on Work Experience especially where the above noted examples are concerned.

HCS has taken steps to highlight these concerns to Schools, Employers, Parents & Students. Aside from this notification we have added generic statements to all of our Job Descriptions/Risk Assessments which each stakeholder should be seeing a copy of prior to the work placement commencing.

All HCS offices and staff have been made aware of this information and will continue to highlight its importance to schools and employers.

We have also added detail on the subject to various School Co-ordinator training sessions across all three of our county operations.

If you have specific questions regarding this information please don't hesitate to contact your dedicated HCS Work Experience Co-ordinator.