December 16, 2021

ST. JOHN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

From the Counselor's Office: Helping Our Children Stay Safe Online

Dear St. John Families,

I wanted to send you a gentle reminder to keep a watchful eye on your child's internet use this holiday season. As we head into the Christmas holidays, it's common for children's media consumption to increase with the additional downtime. On top of this, children are often gifted new technology such as cell phones, tablets, and smartwatches this time of year.

Although all of this technology and time spent online can serve as an incredible tool for our children to connect with others, as you are undoubtedly aware there are a number of harmful, inappropriate, and dangerous things happening online as well.

With that in mind, I strongly urge all families to regularly monitor their children's social media and internet usage. Set limits around screen time and have regular conversations with your children about what they are doing and seeing as they engage with the virtual world. I have also included some excellent resources below that are helpful in protecting your child online.

Wishing your family a peaceful and safe winter break,

Ms. Shaw

Internet Safety Resources for Families

- Use this Online Safety Checklist to teach your children how to stay safe online. A good rule to teach is if anything looks scary, strange, or makes you feel uncomfortable, trust your gut, stop, and tell an adult right away.
- A go-to for all things internet safety is Common Sense Media. They have an abundance of helpful resources for parents, including the following Family Media Agreements: a general agreement, one designed for K-5th grade students, one designed for 6-8th grade students, and a more customizable Device Contract.