ONLINE PRESENCE PART 1: CURRENT PERCEPTION

A young person's online presence can be a professional strength or a disaster that may be difficult to overcome. This session examines how the group members are currently being perceived on social media sites and online.

CATEGORY
- Life Skills
- Self-Promotion
- Online Presence
- Personal Profile

OBJECTIVES
By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
- Identify the value and the perils associated with their social media presence.
- Identity the impact that social media can have on the impressions held by current or potential employers or colleges.

SUPPLIES
- Encourage Explorers to bring a mobile device or tablet to conduct Internet searches.

ADVISOR NOTE: Remind participants to offer helpful feedback in a constructive manner that will support the activity's purpose of preparing Explorers as they pursue college and careers. Get permission in advance from all participants whose online presences will be researched, and confirm that any participants who are 13 years old or younger have permission from a parent or guardian. If some Explorers are not comfortable participating, an alternative approach for this activity is to select in advance one or two volunteers who will serve as the subjects of the Internet searches.

Text in italics should be read aloud to participants. As you engage your post in activities each week, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character, Leadership,** and **Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and life.

ACTIVITY
Ask the Explorers: *What are some things that can be determined about your lives based on a simple Internet search?*

If possible, group Explorers together in groups of two or three.
- Have Explorers use a Web browser to search for the other participants in their group, including searching social media sites.
- Each group should make notes on what they find for each individual.
- Bring everyone back together. Have Explorers share their constructive perceptions of each other based on the Internet search. Be sure to maintain a respectful tone.

ADVISOR NOTE

Some sample questions are below to help the participants get the most out of the session and make them think. The questions are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to your post or specific focus area. If you choose an alternative version of the activity, you will need to adapt the questions below to fit.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Focusing Questions

- *In what ways is social media beneficial or harmful? What are some things you learned during your Internet searches?*
- *Did your partners learn things about you that you do not want them (or a stranger) to know about you?*
- *Is the current perception your partner or group members described about you the way you want to be known to the world?*
- *Are your privacy settings set properly?*
- *Are there photos or references that you need to request to be removed, or are there tags you need to remove from posts?*

Analysis Questions

- *What are a few things you can do right now to change or improve your current presence and perception?*
- *How do you think having a positive online presence can help you in the future with a career choice or with your chances of being selected for a position over other candidates?*
- *How do you think having a negative or questionable online presence can hurt you in the future with a career or college choice?*

Generalization Questions

- *Why is it important to understand the impact of social media on your personal profile?*
- *What are ways to use social media to promote the best version of yourself?*