



**Three tips for communicating safely within youth groups.**

Communication by email, texts, and social media is pervasive and often private. For youth pastors, this reality means it's critical to maintain safe and legal communication boundaries with students. The light of transparency really extinguishes a lot of opportunity. Here are three tips to help maintain that transparency:

1. Do not use the private chat functions on social media websites, such as Facebook and Twitter. Instead, use only the publicly viewable areas of those sites for exchanges.
2. Do not text youths one on one. If a youth sends a text message, copy others on the response so that there is a record in case the youth later decides to edit or delete the message.
3. Send email messages as a group—not individually—and copy others on any one-on-one responses to maintain a record of what was said.