

This month the students participated in a technology training facilitated by Haley Spencer, Prevention Specialist with Hill Country Cares. Students in grades K through 6 were provided information on how to be smart and safe when using the internet. Some of the topics covered included cyberbullying, apps, and internetiquette. We hope to have a similar program for the 7th and 8th graders soon.

While researching this topic, I came across some tools that I would like to share. These tools will help with internet safety and balance.

- Set parental controls to monitoring your child's phone
- Be sure there is a passcode (that you know) required to download or purchase any new apps.
- Go through their browser history DAILY
- Turn off the GPS locator on your child's phone
- Commit to researching commonly used apps. A few popular apps among teens and tweens are: KIK, YIK YAK, ask.fm, Whisper, Snapchat, and Best Secret Folder.
- Don't allow your child to have their phone in their bedroom at night. Establish a time that the phone has to be turned into the "family charging station" and return it in the morning
- Remind your child of how much you love them and desire to protect them from the uncensored world of social media

With the combination of technology training and parental participation, we hope to provide our students with the skills needed to use the internet responsibly in our media saturated world. Keep a watch out for the upcoming documentary, *Screenager: Growing Up In the Digital Age*, it looks to be very informative.

www.teenesteem.org. *Social Media and Safety Alert*. Feb. 2016.
www.screenagemovie.com