PRIVACY AND SAFETY TIPS

Protecting your families while using AI

GOLDEN RULE

Never input private, identifying, or confidential information about families or students into AI tools.

SAFE WAYS TO USE AI

INSTEAD OF THIS

"Help me write an email to Sarah Johnson about her daughter Emma's behavior in co-op class. Emma has been disruptive and Sarah hasn't responded to my previous emails."

DO THIS

"Help me write a professional but caring email to a parent about their child's disruptive behavior in class. This is my third attempt to reach them. I want to be firm but compassionate."

INSTEAD OF THIS

"Create a schedule for our Tuesday co-op at 123 Main Street, Springfield, with the following families: [lists 20 families with kids' names and ages]"

DO THIS

"Create a schedule for a weekly co-op with 20 families, ages 5-14, meeting for 3 hours. We need to include: opening, three class rotations, lunch, and closing."

INSTEAD OF THIS

"Draft a newsletter about our field trip to the science museum next Tuesday at 10am. RSVPs go to [email]. Families attending include: [lists names]"

DO THIS

"Draft a newsletter about an upcoming field trip to a science museum. Include: date/time placeholders, RSVP instructions, what to bring, and schedule for the day."

PRIVACY BEST PRACTICES

DO ...

Anonymize everything - Remove names and identifying details
Use placeholders - "Student 1," "Family A," "Parent," "Teacher"
Generalize specifics - "Tuesday morning" instead of exact times, "local museum" instead of names
Review before sharing - Check AI output for any accidental inclusion of private info
Keep it public-appropriate - Only input what you'd be comfortable sharing publicly
Use paid versions when possible - They typically have better privacy protections
Read privacy policies - Understand how each tool uses your data

DON'T ...

Upload membership lists - Even for "organizing" purposes
Copy/paste emails - Strip out signatures, names, contact info first
Input meeting recordings - Contains too much private conversation
Share screenshots - They often contain identifying information
Use AI for sensitive decisions - Discipline, membership, conflicts require human wisdom
Trust AI with passwords - Or any login credentials
Assume privacy - Free AI tools may use your inputs for training

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

PHOTOS AND IMAGES

- Never upload photos of students to AI tools
- Don't ask AI to identify people in photos
- Be cautious even with group photos from events
- If generating images with AI, ensure they don't resemble actual students

COMMUNICATIONS

- Strip identifying information from emails before asking AI to improve them
- Don't upload entire email threads with signatures
- Use AI for templates, not personalized messages with names

RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS

- Don't upload attendance sheets with names
- Remove identifying information from any documents you want AI to summarize
- Create generic versions for AI to review

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Never input credit card numbers, bank accounts, or payment information
- Don't use AI to process registration fees or payments
- Anonymize any financial discussions

RED FLAGS: STOP AND RECONSIDER

When in doubt, dont. Find another way or ask your leadersthip team.

- You're about to input someone's name
- You're about to input someone's name
- The information is something you wouldn't post publicly
- You're unsure if you have permission to share this
- The content involves a minor
- It's financial or medical information
- You feel even slightly uncomfortable

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

If you accidentally input private information:

1. **Don't panic.** It happens.
2. **Stop using that conversation thread.** Start a fresh one.
3. **Consider notifying affected families.** Transparency builds trust.
4. **Review your practices.** How can you prevent this next time?
5. ***Update your team.*** Help others learn from the mistake.

BOTTOM LINE

AI can save you time and help you serve your group better—but protecting your families' privacy is always more important than convenience. When you use AI thoughtfully and safely, you model digital wisdom for your entire community.