

## Common Misconceptions about Technology and your Middle Schooler

**Myth:** Every middle-schooler has a Facebook account.

***Fact:** Most Pyle students do not have a Facebook account. In fact, Facebook states that no child under 13 years old should be on their site. If your child is on Facebook and is under 13, they lied about their age. Facebook does not allow middle schools to be named on the account-holders homepage, so many Pyle students misrepresent themselves as Whitman students.*

***In Fact:** Mr. Zarchin, the Pyle Administration, and Counseling Office believe Facebook and other social networking sites are inappropriate for middle-schoolers; they are not developmentally ready to handle the responsibility that this type of communication device requires. Students can be traumatized by rude or hurtful comments or when private information is posted and, at this age, lack the emotional wherewithal to overcome these ordeals.*

**Myth:** Every middle-schooler has a cell phone.

***Fact:** Many Pyle students do not have a cell phone or have a cell phone with limited capabilities. School phones are available for student use throughout the school day; therefore, it is not necessary for students to have access to a cell phone on school grounds. School rules dictate that cell phones and any other electronic devices must be turned off and remain out of sight during the school day. Any device not in compliance will be confiscated by the administration.*

***In Fact:** Use of personal communication devices poses a disruption to the teachers during class and is a distraction for the students. Moreover, Mr. Zarchin, the Pyle Administration, and Counseling Office believe there is no need for a student to have access to a cell phone with unlimited texting, photographic/video capabilities, or internet access. Many middle-schoolers become overwhelmed by the communication technology available to them and struggle to avoid negative and potentially dangerous interactions. Most students seem relieved when boundaries are put in place. Parents who deem it necessary to provide their child with a cell phone should please consider limiting the phone capabilities and calling plan options.*

**Myth:** Every middle-schooler has a computer in their room – it's necessary for homework.

***Fact:** The majority of Pyle students do not have a personal computer in their room, and it is not necessary to provide them with a private computer in order for them to do their homework. The FTC in their book Net Cetera recommends "keeping the computer in an area where the child has access to you or another adult. That way, they can be 'independent,' but not alone."*

***In Fact:** Mr. Zarchin, the Pyle Administration, and Counseling Office believe that middle-schoolers often do not make intellectual decisions; their decisions are frequently emotional and impulsive. To protect your student, restrict access and remove temptations offered by constant internet access. Consider placing the computer with internet access in a common area and limiting the hours of accessibility.*