

*The Age of Instant Communication: Keeping Your Kids Safe
Facebook and Texting*

Presenters: Trevor Taylor, M.S.; Tess Whelan Hare, B.S.

The Scott Center Psychological Services' presented a seminar on facebook and texting. *The Age of Instant Communication: Keeping Your Kids Safe* was a two hour presentation, complete with a Question and Answer session, where current clinicians at the Scott Center Psychological Services provided information to parents on the risks and rewards of instant communication in today's world. The seminar focused on items that parents need to be aware of regarding their children's activities with social media and texting.

Recently, the dangers of social networking and texting have been sensationalized on the news. *The Age of Instant Communication* will cover many of the dangers at the forefront of the minds of parents, including cyber-bullying, concerns over privacy, inappropriate content, children inadvertently communicating with strangers or sexual predators over social networking sites, and the prospective loss of "real," face to face forms of communication. The potential perils of these ever-popular forms of communication are not new to anyone at this point; however, this seminar will cover what parents can do to keep their children safe, as well as ways to monitor potential abuse of facebook and texting. Lastly, parents will be given information on how to talk to their children about these dangers, while still allowing their kids the right to act like children and communicate in the new "cool" way.

The Age of Instant Communication was presented by Trevor Taylor, M.S. and Tess Whelan B.S., at the Scott Center (Building 545) on Florida Tech's campus. Both presenters have first-hand experience with facebook and text messaging, and gave simple directions and accounts about the benefits and dangers of these forms of communication. Additionally, tools on how to limit the amount of information that is presented over these mediums was discussed.

The seminar was open to anyone who would like to receive information on how to keep children safe regarding usage of these communication tools, while still allowing them to be active in social media and texting without ostracizing oneself as an old-fashioned, out-of-touch parent.