Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

EFNEP Social Media Committee

Virginia Family Nutrition Program Social Media Policies

This document gives guidance to the publication of and commentary on social media by employees of Virginia Family Nutrition Program.

For the purposes of this document, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including but not limited to blogs, wiki's, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

This document is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the Internet (including, but not limited to: University Policy 7000 "Acceptable Use and Administration of Computer and Communication Systems" and State Policy 1.75 "Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media").

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Virginia FNP employees must otherwise follow. (including, but not limited to: State Policy 1.60 "Standards of Conduct.")

Using Social Media

Virginia FNP employees wishing to set up and administer social media profiles must do so in collaboration with the FNP Social Media Manager.

Follow or "like" other Virginia Tech, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Family Nutrition Program identities. Cross-promote other Virginia Tech, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia FNP identities when applicable.

Protect your own privacy

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the Virginia FNP website.

Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. Social media is never private. Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

While not mandatory, it is strongly suggested you do not "friend" any participants on your personal profile, even if you know them personally. If a participant "friends" you, you may use your best judgment whether or not to accept. It is recommended that you direct participants to the Virginia FNP page, rather than your personal account.

Questions on privacy settings may be directed to FNP Social Media Manager.

Respect copyright laws

It is critical that you respect U.S. copyright, trademark, fair use, and disclosure laws. When in doubt, give credit to the original author.

You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source.

It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it. Cite sources when possible and use the "share" function to relay information exactly as it was posted by someone else.

If you question whether you should post something, then you probably shouldn't.

Respect your audience, Virginia FNP, and your coworkers

Keep in mind that you could always be perceived as a spokesperson for Virginia Tech and the Family Nutrition Program even if you are not officially.

Recognize the culture and etiquette unique to social networking. The public in general, and Virginia FNP's employees and participants, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with the Virginia FNP website.

Respect how you present yourself in social media. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion.

Any information shared on Virginia FNP pages should reflect only the approved curricula and resources.

Absolutely do not post personal information or opinions on department pages. Per University Policy 12000, endorsements of political personages, businesses, or products should be avoided on university pages.

Protect Virginia FNP participants

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details of current projects, financial information, research, and identities of any Virginia FNP participant.

Refrain from sharing confidential information online. Virginia FNP participants should never be cited or obviously referenced without their explicit approval. Never identify a participant by name and never discuss confidential details of any participant.

It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for a participant so long as the information provided does not violate anyone's confidentiality or make it possible for someone to identify the participant.

Use photos if you have gotten a signed photo release form. Do not "tag" individuals, but allow individuals to tag themselves, if desired.

Staying Positive

Leverage the positive spirit of social media and always follow Virginia Tech's Principles of Community. Use good judgment when responding to comments. Provide updated or correct information when necessary, but do not be argumentative.

Delete derogatory, inflammatory, or malicious comments.

If you notice arguments or negative comments on the Virginia FNP Facebook page, please notify the FNP Social Media Manager immediately via email with the subject line "URGENT: Social Media Attention Needed."

Don't forget your day job.

Make sure that social media does not interfere with your job or other commitments. The only allowable use of social media while "on the clock" is to *quickly* monitor and update the Virginia FNP page.

Browsing your personal account is not acceptable while at work.

Repeat infractions of this policy will result in social media privileges being revoked.

Social Media Tips

The following tips are not mandatory, but will contribute to successful use of social media.

Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. Write in simple language. Remember our audience is not only participants, but also community partners, university faculty, and other professionals.

Avoid writing lengthy posts or posts with jargon.

Engagement on the Facebook page is encouraged; if someone posts an accomplishment, respond with positive feedback.

Enforcement

Policy violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.

I, _____, have read and agree to abide by the Virginia FNP Social Media Policies.

Signed _____   Date _____

Area Coordinator _____   Date _____

Local Facebook Page Guidelines

Do

DO work with the FNP Social Media Manager to set up your page.

DO friend other Virginia Tech, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Family Nutrition Program identities, as well as community partners, and national nutrition organizations (USDA, etc.).

DO keep your page *professional.* You are representing the Family Nutrition Program at all times while using local pages.

DO respect copyright laws. Always give credit for others' work or "Share" from the original source.

DO provide information from approved sources only. (Same rules as for curriculum)

Don't

DON'T publish confidential information about clients.

DON'T let comments on your page get out of control. Encourage respect and delete inappropriate comments as necessary. The FNP Social Media Manager will be monitoring, but do not hesitate to ask for help.

DON'T publish photos without proper *signed* photo release forms. Do not "tag" people in photos.

DON'T forget social media is never 100% private. Never post something you would not say publicly.

DON'T forget your day job! Use of personal accounts at work is not acceptable and subject to disciplinary action.