

# MCSWN



## Social Networking Special

**We are all connected because we are mothers. Here is how we can connect online and communicate on a whole new level.**

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**W**E ARE CONNECTED as mothers through our mutual life experience of raising children. The Mothers Center brought us together for friendship, support, communications and, most of all, connections.

But the way to make that connection has changed as the digital revolution has overtaken us.

We all know how to connect when we bump into each other at the supermarket or the doctors office. We all know how to say hello and ask about how the children are doing and make a promise of a play date that may or may not materialize. We can make a phone call and connect through the technology of Ma Bell.

### Adding Technology to the Mix

But the computer adds a whole new layer of connection and communication potential that is at once easy and overwhelming. For

those of us who are computer savvy, the opportunities are endless. For those of us less so, the thought can be overwhelming and a source of stress that is totally unnecessary until the damn machine crashes!!

### Explaining the Techy Stuff

At the December Friday morning meeting with Lisa Kaplan-Miller, Valerie Young, Kate Fineske and Lorri Slepian, the use of social networking was discussed, and some had great things to say. Some kind of glazed over as things go too technical. So this special edition newsletter is our best attempt to explain the techy stuff and to help you put it all into perspective along with some step-by-step and recommendations for step-by-step online to help you get up and running.

Let's start with the internet and the website. A web site is a "store" online for places like Target. It can also be a place to put the information that might normally be in a



# Social Networking Special

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brochure. The NAMC has a website. So does the MCSWN. We as members can connect to the website for information about events and hours. It is one way. You can receive information, but you cannot put information on it.

## Blogs

The logical next step is a blog. Blogs were created to be a step more interactive than a website. A person writes about their experiences, and the reader (you and I) have the opportunity to

leave comments.

After the blog, an even more interactive way of communicating is social networking. It is literally an answering machine on the computer. Facebook allows us to be friends. I can post an update about where I went and what a good time I had and you post that it looks like fun and when are they open? It is interactive and a way to share information. the Yahoo group is an older more limited version of Facebook. Lisa Kaplan-Miller can post an update about an article she read and I can for-

ward it to you. We are friends and can communicate as such. Everything you post on the Yahoo group can be posted on the Facebook page. If MCSWN wants to set up an event, (the brunch), they can send you an invitation.

## Business Sites

Linked In is a business site and really only used as such so we did not review it. We have included a little about Google+ and Twitter in case you are interested in rounding out your knowledge of the Social Networking world.

## Sites You Need To Know

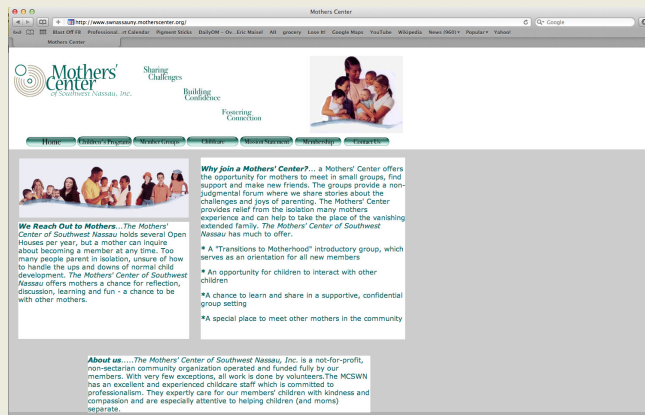
Here are the sites you need to know, what they are, why they are important, and how they can help communicate most efficiently.

### NAMC Website



The website address of the National Association of Mothers Centers is <http://www.motherscenter.org>. It contains information about history, events and links to the way the National Association connects through social networking. You can follow the blog by subscribing with your e-mail or RSS feed, you can get Twitter and Facebook updates, if you participate in those networks. You can also just visit the page at your convenience. The trick is choose which communication tool works best for you. I laugh when I say this, but i am old school and have subscribed by e-mail. There is no right way to communicate when it comes to social networking, each person has to find the way that works best for them.

### MCSWN Website

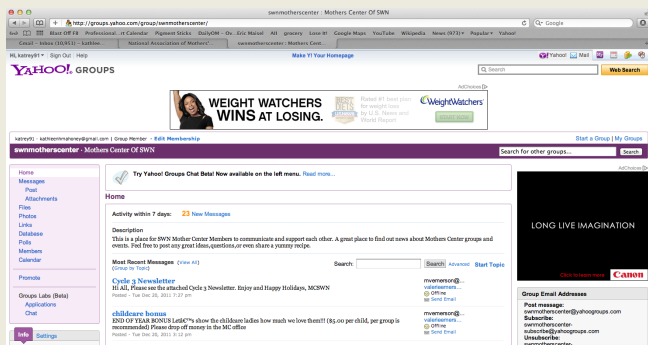


Our Southwest Nassau website contains information about joining the group, what kinds of classes and discussion groups are offered, and reasons to be part of a very important group. It is updated by Christy Mansfield regularly (Thank you Christy) and contains the latest information about each Cycle. The Children's Program tab offers information on the Nursery School including the 2 year old, 3 year old, and 4 year old separation classes. We have the best rates in the area as well as great reputation. The Mothers Group tab includes a download of the pdf newsletter, as well as descriptions of the group classes and registration forms. It also has the annual registration renewal form. Good thing. I am always misplacing it.

## Sites You Need To Know

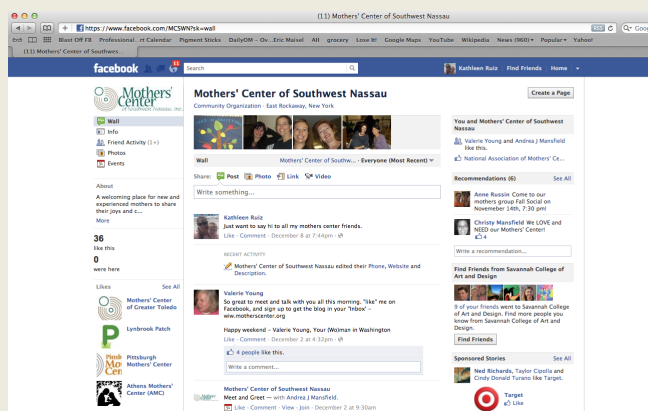
Here are the sites you need to know, what they are, why they are important, and how they can help communicate most efficiently.

### Mothers Center Yahoo Group



Our Mothers Center of Southwest Nassau group likes to communicate through Yahoo Groups. You need to have a yahoo ID and password to be part of the group. A daily digest is sent out announcing classes, offering events and keeping those of us who are a little out of the loop a little more in the loop. It is a great way to communicate. Val posts the newsletters as we try to go green. (Thanks for all your hard work, Val).

### Mothers Center Facebook Page



The Facebook page also is a place to go to keep up with pizza and play dates and to find out what to do with those little maniacs on a boring rainy Saturday afternoon in November. Thank you Monica Hinken for being our Facebook Master.

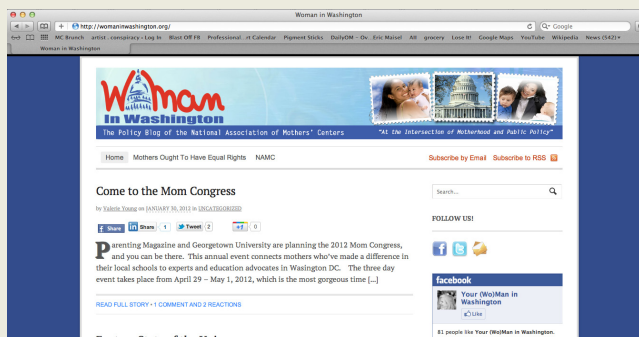
### Leadership Council on Big Tent

The Leadership Council on Big Tent is another

great way to keep up with the NAMC and participate in discussion and network.



### Woman in Washington



Our woman in Washington is Valerie Young. She has a law background and works very hard lobbying for equal rights for stay at home moms. Please keep up with everything Valerie has to say and everything she does.

### Mothers Central



Kate Fineske writes the Mothers Central blog for the National Association with great stories of juggling.



# Kate Fineske - The Voice of a Mother

**D**o you ever wonder why it always seems like everyone always needs something from you all at the SAME time?

For example, lets take the time period after school:

When your oldest child might need your help with a math question,

At the same time that another child wants to play the Wii but can't find the remote, AND

Your toddler is screaming because he just needs to watch TV (and you've said "No!" for the 50-billionth time).

And of course any minute:

The piano teacher is going to arrive (for your child who's homework isn't done yet because you haven't had a second to helped them with their math question), AND

2 kids' lunches are sitting only half-packed on the counter for school tomorrow,

Oh, and dinner? DARN! Dinner! Dinner still needs to be started!

Then, right as you think you've finally figured out your child's homework question:

Your 2-year-old has a major poopy-diaper blowout,

Just about the same time as there's a knock at the door (the piano teacher has arrived), AND

The phone begins to ring (most likely your husband wanting to know what you're having for dinner... You know? The same dinner you haven't started yet?)

You get what I mean, right? Does this sound familiar?

These are the times in parenting that just make you want to scream.

These are the days when you just wish you could clone yourself so that you could: quickly solve everyone's problems, find all the missing Wii remotes, magically stop the whining and crying, pack everyone's lunches, get dinner started, change a diaper, answer the front door AND also answer the phone...

All. At. The same. Time.

And typically, it's not until later (such as right before you are about to fall in bed, after you've read everyone their books, tucked in the last child, and gotten some great big hugs and kisses) that you realize:

How fortunate you are ...

And maybe think to yourself, "These just

might be the Golden Years of parenting?"

## That Sentimental Moment in Motherhood

And for a moment (possibly just a short moment?) you stop... and (depending on your mind frame and sometimes what time of the month it is) you might just get a little misty-eyed.

You may think to yourself things like:

How lucky you are that your kids still want to hang out with you.

OR

How much you'll someday miss your kids' squeals of excitement

when you sit down to read a book with them.

OR MAYBE

How wonderful it is that you still get tight hugs and sloppy kisses when you ask for them.

You think this because you've realized, in that small moment, that someday, someday sooner than later, this all may end.

One day you might just wake up and realize that your oldest is off at college, and you have one about to graduate high school, and your "baby" is almost about to drive.

One day you may not be the person anymore with all the answers, the person who can solve all their problems.

One day maybe your children won't run in from the bus after school excited just to tell you about their day because instead they have their own car, and friends, and boyfriend or girlfriend who they think are way more important to them than you.

The nostalgia of how you used to be as a teenager and as a young adult starts to consume you.

## Golden-Schmolden...

And then it ends. (Sometimes it takes longer for reality to hit, but eventually, usually, the sentimental mood does change.)

Maybe it ends because it is almost time for bed, and

because suddenly you breathe a sigh of relief at the realization that you are almost a diaper-free household, and because you realize tomorrow is another day.

And DARN!

Then you remember that you forgot to take the chicken out of the freezer for tomorrow's dinner... and the dryer buzzer starts loudly beeping – signaling the 20-billionth load of laundry is finally done, ready to be folded and put away.

Yep... Tomorrow is another day – another busy day.

And tonight you are Just. So. Tired.

As quickly as they are remembered, these thoughts of the "Golden Days" of parenting are again forgotten – while your mind wonders on to tomorrow's busy schedule and your body begins to show definite signs of needing a good night's sleep.

And a few minutes or hours later (depending on how many loads of laundry you still have to do in order for your child to have a clean soccer jersey to wear for tomorrow's game) you think:

"It's only Wednesday! Oh. My. Goodness. Will the weekend ever be here? Friday can't get here soon enough!"

And in the back of your head a tiny voice whispers...

Be careful what you wish for.



**Are we looking at Three Generations of Mothers Center Members? Maybe!**

Pictured above: Lori Zlotoff (Founder of the Forest Hills Mothers' Circle) with her mother Karen Horowitz (Co-Founder of the Sunrise Mothers' Center) happily holding Lori's daughter – her granddaughter, and Lorri Slepian (a NAMC founder)

# Improving Motherhood One Click at a Time

One of the great things about living in Washington DC is being able to watch how government operates and understand why things are the way are. Politics can seem very far away and remote, and if you don't keep up, getting a handle on what's happening here may look hopeless. In my blog, *Your (Wo)Man In Washington*, I try to give women with children their own window on politics as it affects them, because if they don't know they can't influence it.

No one is busier than a mother. She is certainly working wherever she is and whatever she does. As the demands on us multiply, we put ourselves farther and farther down on the "to do" list. That's lethal in politics, because if you are on the sidelines, nobody pays attention to what is important to you. Taking care of everybody else first, and collapsing with exhaustion at the end of every day, as we all do, is not a successful strategy for changing the outright discrimination we face.

Social media has given a lot of us access to the information we need to really be a part of the democratic process. Most women would be shocked to learn how much that affects them goes on without their knowledge. Now, it is so much easier to get information about the laws that are proposed, whom they would affect and how. Your phone or laptop can put you firmly "in the know", all by signing up for a couple of weekly enewsletters, or following a reliable source on Facebook or Twitter. You can email your members of Congress, or your state legislators, with just a few keystrokes and tell them what policies you support. This is the single most effective thing you can do – they absolutely read messages from their constituents, and their staff will take your phone messages and deliver them to your Member.

Mothers can get really lonely and sometimes feel very isolated. This is such an irony because most women do have children and we share so many experiences in common. Chatting online shows us how con-



nected we truly are, and can literally expand our world and amplify our voices. It's a way of organizing on our own time, which gives us the flexibility we need. I hope that women learn new things, or find affirmation of their own experiences online. That will make them more confident in speaking out to each other, their families, and on a wider scale,

posting comments or writing letters to the editor on matters they care about.

Right now it's very important to know what is going on, because the nation's economic stress requires decision-making that will directly affect women. If Social Security or Medicare benefits are cut, that will mostly affect women, who are the majority of recipients. Increasing taxes on high earners, or those with investment income, is a way to close the budget gap that will hit men more, because they control most of the wealth. Whether or not health care insurers can exclude victims of domestic violence from coverage, or make being female a "pre-existing condition" and either exclude coverage or charge higher premiums for it, depends on whether the Health Care Reform Act is repealed by Congress or not.

We are the only western, industrialized country where women give birth, or adopt, without a guarantee of paid maternity leave. That is the direct result of having so few

women in public office. As state budgets shrink, state workers are laid off, and most of them are women. If unemployment benefits are not extended, more families go hungry. Since more women than men rely on public programs, like food support, child care subsidies, or job training, balancing the budget by cutting public programs makes women poorer. A single mother with two minimum wage jobs and dicey childcare has neither money nor influence. A mother who manages to cobble together a crazy quilt of care solutions, with no work flexibility and no benefits, is in a really precarious position. A woman who stays home to cut the stress may end up paying a steep price later on, even though she has created productive, fully functional human beings that contribute mightily to their community and the economy. These are not inevitable consequences, or necessary sacrifices – they are the result of outdated policies that can be changed.

I hope mothers will use social media to strengthen their connections to each other, gain the confidence to run for office, and realize the tremendous power in their maternal experience. We are at the center of everything. If it were not for us, there would be no families, no economy, no nation. Mothering is pro-active and reaches far into the future. No one has a greater impact on what happens next. Mothering starts with the mother. She helps her child when she helps herself. And we need to do more of that.

*Valerie A. Young 1/30/2012*

# Facebook and Facebook Pages

Does it feel like everyone you know is on Facebook? Do you want to join, but aren't sure how to start? Read *How to Use Facebook* and you will be posting on your friends' walls in no time at all.

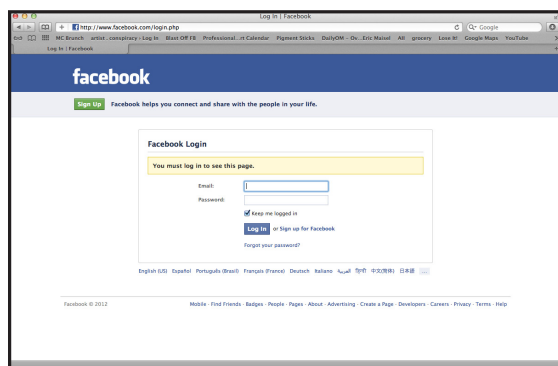
Facebook is the largest online social networking site and currently has over 400 million users. Facebook allows people to interact, share photos, and find people. In addition to using Facebook for social purposes, many people use it professionally for business networking.

More and more businesses with an online presence will link users to a Facebook page.

There are also Pages on Facebook. Pages are targeted more toward a specific entity rather than an individual's social networking with friends and family. More and more businesses are making use of Pages to target their users to a Facebook entity that represents their enterprise.

## Create Your Account

Amanda from Mahalo.com offers instruction for creating a Facebook account. Starting at Facebook.com, enter first and last name and then the email address. You'll fill in other info like sex and birth date and then click sign up. Once this step is done,



the account is complete.

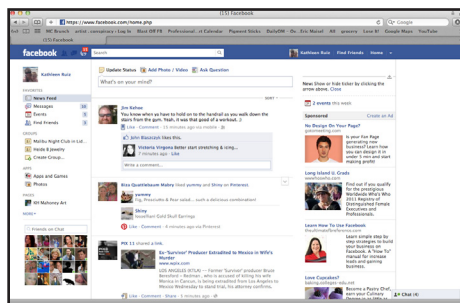
Your password must include both letters and numbers. Select your gender - Male or Female. Select your birthday.

After you have entered this data, click on the Signup button. Go to your email that you used to join Facebook. Open the Registration Confirmation email from Facebook. Click on the verification link. Now you can access Facebook and find your friends online.

If you have just joined Facebook, the Info tab is displayed after you added friends.

If you logged out of Facebook before setting up a profile, then click on View and Edit Profile the next time you log on to Facebook.

If you only want to show the month and



day of your birthday and not the year, select Show only month and year in my profile from the box underneath the birthday field.

To enter Personal, Contact and Education information, click on the appropriate section and enter the information.

If you do not want specific information displayed on your profile, leave the field blank.

When you have completed a section, click on the Save Changes button before moving to another section.

To upload a profile picture, click Upload Profile Picture and browse to the picture you would like to display.

To write a brief bio that will be shown on your profile page, Write Something about yourself and type in your information.

When you have completed your profile, click on the Done Editing button and the information is saved.

## Exploring the Toolbar and Tabs

The Toolbar at the top of your screen lets you navigate through

Facebook.

Use the Facebook button to return to your Facebook homepage. Your Facebook page displays information about your Facebook friends. A series of tabs are displayed at the top of the screen that allow you to easily navigate through your Facebook page. There are five default tabs for your Facebook homepage.

**News Feed** - This tab displays stories about your friends, such as when they add friends, post updates or

write a friends wall. The amount of information displayed about a friend depends on their privacy settings. You can customize the amount of news that you receive about a particular friend in your News Feed.

**Status Updates** - This tab displays status updates posted by your friends. It does not include other stories about your friends, such as when they join a group or add a new friend.

**Photos** - This tab displays your friend's photo albums. The photo albums displayed in this tab depends on the privacy setting selected for the photo album.

**Posted Items** - This tab displays all posted by friends.

**Live Feed** - This tab displays all news stories about your friends, such as status updates, friends they have added, and groups they have joined.

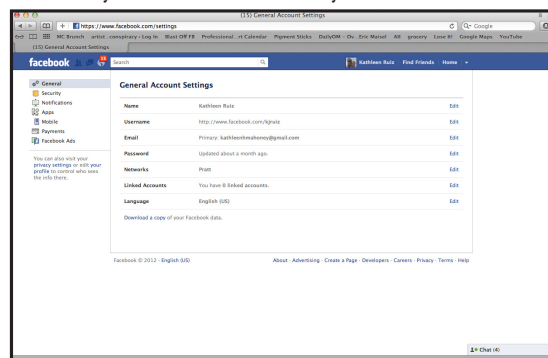
To add application tabs to your Facebook page: Select the arrow at the far right of the tabs. From the drop down list, select the application feeds you want displayed on your tabs. The tabs are added to your Facebook homepage.

## Profile Button

Use the Profile button view and edit your Profile. Your profile is the place where you share information with your friends, such as photos, information and messages. You can use this to determine who sees your profile. You can set your profile to Public so that everyone on Facebook can see your profile. You can also restrict your profile to only friends that you have approved. There are also restrictions you can set that only affect specific information in your profile.

There are four default tabs for your Profile page.

**Wall** - This tab displays messages that your friends leave for you. You can use Wall

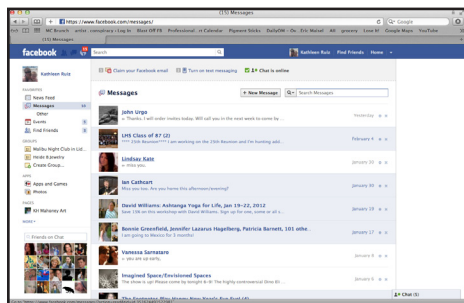




to Wall to write a message back to your friend.

**Info** - This tab displays your profile information. To edit information, click Edit Information. **Photos** - This tab displays pictures that you posted. **Videos** - This tab displays videos that you posted. You can add additional tabs to your Profile page. Select the plus sign button at the far right of the tabs. From the drop down list, select the applications you want displayed on your tabs. The tabs are added to your Profile page.

Use the Friends button to view your friends, find friends, add new friends and invite people you know to join Facebook. Friends are people who can see your status updates, access your profile and receive news feeds about you. Many people approve friend requests for those that they know in real life. If someone wants to add you to their friends list, you must approve them before they can access your profile. If you add someone as a friend, they must also approve you before you can see their profile information.



## Inbox Button

Use this button to read messages from your friends and send messages to your friends. Messages are a way to communicate with friends individually without posting a public message on their wall.

From the Inbox menu, select Compose New Message.

Enter the name of the person you want to send a message to, the subject and the message.

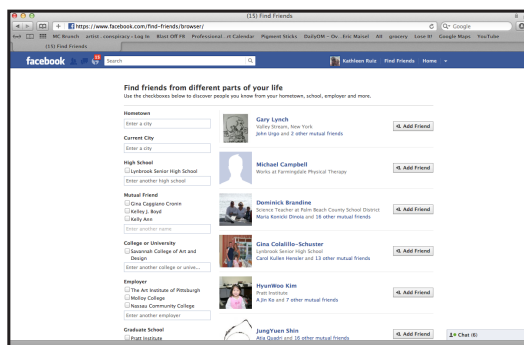
Click the Send button.

To read messages sent to you, select View Message Inbox from the Inbox menu.

## Finding Friends on Facebook

Amanda shows how to find friends on Facebook using an email account. This feature allows you to connect your email to your Facebook account by entering your email and password. By doing this, Facebook

looks to see if people in your contacts have accounts. If you do not want Facebook to have your email password you can opt out of this feature.



After you join Facebook, this screen is displayed. You can add friends now or you can access this screen later by clicking Find Friends in the right side of the screen.

## To Find Friends Using Your Email Address Book

To use your address book to find friends: Enter your email and password. Click on the Find Friends button.

Note that for web based email applications, you are directed to your email provider to enter your password directly on their site. Many email providers require that you sign an agreement allowing Facebook to access your email account.

Click the checkbox next to each friend you want to add or click Select All Friends. If you do not want to add any of the friends displayed, click the Skip button.

To add the friends you have selected, click on the Add as Friends button.

An email is sent to the friend for them to approve your request to be added as a friend.

To Find Friends who you instant message, click on the Find Friends You Instant Message link. Select the button for AIM or Windows Live Messenger. Enter your screen name and AIM password. Click on the Find Friends button.

Depending on your instant messaging provider, you may be directed to your IM provider's website to enter your password directly on their site. Many email providers require that you sign an agreement allowing Facebook to access your IM account.

A list of people who you instant message with and are registered on Facebook is displayed. Click the checkbox next to each friend that you want to add.

To add all people that are displayed, click

on the Select All Friends checkbox.

If you do not want to add any of the friends displayed, click on the Skip button.

To add the friends you have selected, click on the Add as Friends button.

An email is sent to the friend for them to approve your request to be added as a friend. As soon as they respond, you will be friends on Facebook.

## Find Friends Using the People You May Know Tool

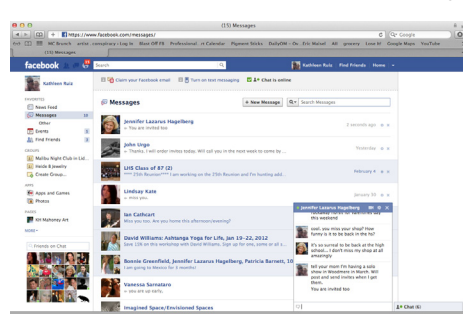
Facebook displays people who may know based on mutual friends, high school, college, networks, and employment similarities.

Facebook lists potential friends on your Facebook page and on the Find People You Know on Facebook screen.

If you do not want the person displayed in the People You May Know section, click on the X to the right of their name.

To add the person displayed as a friend, click Add as Friend.

If you want to add a personal message



with your friend request, click Add a Personal Message.

To add as a friend, click on the Add Friend button.

An email is sent to the friend for them to approve your request to be added as a friend.

## Using Facebook Chat

John shows how to use Facebook chat. On the left of the screen after logging in, you can see all the friends who are on line. A green dot says a friend is in line and may be available to chat. Clicking on the name allows a chat to be started. The chat bubble indicates the other person is responding. The window for chat can be minimized if needed.

## Search for Friends

You can also search Facebook for people that you know who are registered on

Facebook. Facebook lets you search by the person's name, search people who attended your school or people who work at a place of employment.

To search everyone registered on Facebook, enter the name of the person who you want to search for in the Search field and click on the Search Facebook icon.

To search for a classmate or co-worker, click Friend Finder. The Find People You Know on Facebook screen is displayed. In the Search for People section, a list of your schools and employers is listed. Click the school or employer that you want to browse.

A list of people matching your search criteria is displayed.

To add the person displayed as a friend, click Add as Friend.

If you want to add a personal message with your friend request, click Add a Personal Message.

To add as a friend, click on the Add Friend button.

An email is sent to the friend for them to approve your request to be added as a friend.

### Accept Friends

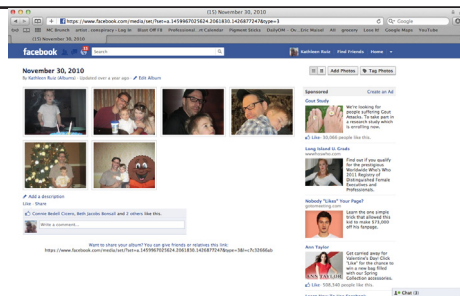
If someone adds you as a friend, you must accept approve them as a friend before they can access your profile. If you have selected to be notified by email on your Settings tab, you will be sent an email. There will also be a message at the top right of your home page that says You have [X] Friend Request.

Click on You have [X] Friend Requests.

To add the person, click on the Add Friend button.

The person is now a friend and can access your profile. You will begin to receive news and stories about your new friend

If you do not want to add the person as a friend, click on the Ignore button. The person is not notified that you ignored them.



### Add Photos

Many people use Facebook to share photos with their friends. You can specify specific privacy options for each photo album. Once you add photo albums, a Photos tab is added to your profile.

Click on the Profile button and then select the Photo tab. You can also access photos from the Photo icon in the Applications section or toolbar.

Albums and photos that you have uploaded or friends have tagged you in are displayed.

Click the Create a Photo Album button.

Enter the album name, comments and privacy settings. Click the Create Album button. Select the photos you want to include in the album. Click the Upload button. The album is created and the photos are uploaded. To adjust privacy settings for your photos, click Album Privacy.

Each of your albums are displayed.

Select who you want to be able to view each album and click the Save Settings button.

### Add Notes

You can write notes on your profile similar to a blog for your friends to read. You can also import an existing blog into Facebook Notes. Once you write notes, you will have a Notes tab on your profile.<sup>10</sup>

To access Notes, click the Notes icon in the Application section or toolbar.

Click My Notes.

To enter a new note, click Write New Note. Enter the title of the note, body and people you want to tag in the note.

Tag people who are mentioned in the note. Select who you want to be able to see the note in the Note privacy section.

To save a draft of the note without publishing it, click the Save Draft button.

To see what the note will look like

before you publish it, click the Preview button.

To publish the note, click the Publish button.

### Set Profile Privacy

To set who can see your profile information, click Privacy.

To change the privacy level for a specific type of profile information, select My Networks and friends, Friends of Friends or Only Friends.

To specify certain networks or certain people to not see specific information, select the Customize option next to section in your profile that you want to restrict.<sup>12</sup>

To customize the privacy for individual photo album, click Edit Photo Album Photo Settings. Select who can see each specific album and click the Save Settings button.

To see what information a specific person is able to see on your profile, enter their name in the See how a friend sees your profile field. Your profile is now displayed with the information that the person will see when they access your profile.

Click Exit to return to your profile.

When you have are finished modifying the privacy settings, Click on the Save Changes button.

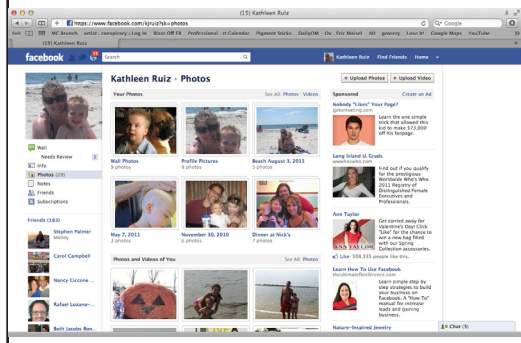
### Update Your Facebook Status

Updating your Facebook status lets your friends know what you are up to. On the home page, just above the news feed showing what your friends information, you can add a blurb to share what you have been doing.

Borrowed without permission from <http://www.mahalo.com/how-to-use-facebook/>

### The MC Facebook Page

The Mothers Center Facebook page includes photographs from events and announcements about classes running or having low enrollment. It is a great way to connect with the other mothers for advice and sharing. It also has announcements about closings at the nursery school and additional information. Join us an stay connected.





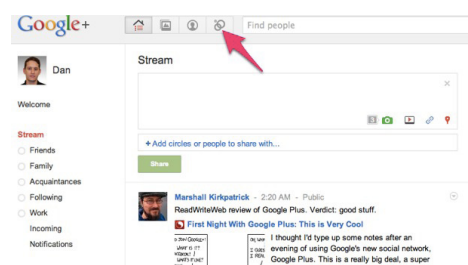
# Google +

## Create Your Circles

Imagine the ability to break down Facebook into its various constituent parts and keep them separate from each other as opposed to one giant feed. That is what Google has done with Plus. There is one main stream where all your friends updates show up then the option to see updates from only certain groups like "Work," "Friends" or "Family." This is the essence of Circles.

From the initial interface, you will see four buttons - Home, Photos, Profile and Circles.

The first thing you are going to want to do is set up your circles. Click on the tab and it will bring you to a interface where all of your contacts in Gmail (not just Gmail addresses, but all of your contacts) are listed in a panel on top of the screen. Below is a panel that has your various circles. To add a



contact to a circle, drag from the top of the list to the appropriate group. Contacts can be added to multiple circles.

Facebook was initially a two-way follow paradigm - I friend you, you friend me and we see each other's updates. This has been changed with the ability to "like" groups, brands and pages without them following you back. Twitter has always been a one-way follow - I follow you and you do not necessarily have to follow me back.

This line has been blurred in circles. If a



person is in your contacts, they can be added to a circle and will get a notification that has happened (but not what circle they have actually been added to).

## The Stream and "Bumping"

Once you have set up your circles, go back to the Home screen to see the results. Below the profile picture you will see the

choices of stream. You can view your entire stream at once (à la Facebook) or by particular circle.

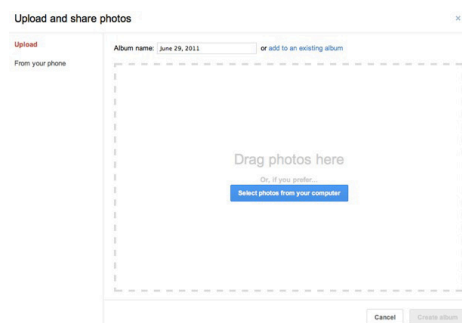
There are two other options below your circles - Incoming and Notifications. Clicking incoming will bring you to messages that have been sent by people outside of your circles. Notifications will show you when people in your circles have commented on something you have posted, or something you have commented on.

One of the killer features of Gmail, or any Google product, is Chat. It has made its way into Plus and sits in the left-hand, bottom-right portion of the screen. Users with a lot of Circle and Chat contacts will like the ability to enable chat for particular groups. Want to surface friends and family but not acquaintances? Plus will let you do that.

Posting a status update in Plus is not like sending a Tweet or updating Facebook. The core functions of an update are present - photos, links, video and location - but when you hit "share" it doesn't automatically post your message to everybody in your circles. You have the option to decide which circles your update is posted to, from individual groups to all circles, to extended circles, or just a single person.

## Photos

Photos in Plus are relatively self-explanatory. Users can update photos from their



computers or from their phones, see photos that people in their circles have uploaded. With the Android app, there is a way to upload any photo that you take with your phone straight to Plus, an interesting if slightly disconcerting feature.

When you add a photo, it will prompt you to create an album. Once that album is created it will ask which of your circles you

would like to share it with. This is a prime differentiator from Facebook where all of your photos are visible to all of your friends by default (you can change who can view certain photos in Facebook preferences). You can also pick an individual to share photos with instead of an entire circle.

Photo uploading is easy within Plus. Just like adding a picture or an attachment to a Gmail document, you can drag-and-drop from your desktop or click the on the upload button and browse your computer for pictures.

## Sparks and Hangouts

Hangouts is a new feature rolled out with Plus. Essentially it is an area where your circles or a select group of friends can video chat all on one screen. To start a Hangout, go to the "Welcome" button in the home tab. It will prompt you to start a hangout and invite individuals or entire circles. Up to 10 people can be in a hangout at once and it



will be seen in that circle or users' stream.

Sparks is the part of Plus where you can find content on the Web that you are interested in. Sparks can be a dashboard for things you are interested in on the Web. When you do a search in Sparks, it will predict what you are searching for with a drop down menu (like old Google search, not quite like Google Instant). You can pin particular topics you search for to the Sparks dashboard for quick access.

You can share articles found in Sparks with a share button on the bottom of every article that surfaces in a search. Like everything else in Plus, it can be shared with a specific person, circle, group of circles or the general public.

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# Twitter

Different social media have different uses, strengths, and advantages. Twitter could be called a 'real time social networking' site, a place for sharing information as it happens and for connecting with others in real time, often making lasting friendships and contacts.

Learning how to use this fun, free, and useful tool can be a bit intimidating for the beginner, but don't be put off – with a little effort and a lot of innate feeling your way through, being able to use Twitter well can make you 'digitally' famous!

## Create Your Account

Go to Twitter.com and sign up for a free account. Do so by entering your name, email address, and desired password in the provided space.

## Tweeting and Getting Followers

*Tweet* - a Twitter single update of 140 characters or less, which include @Mentions to other users, hashtags, external links, or simply regular text.

*TweetUps* - Using Twitter to meet with other Twitter folks.

*Retweet or "RT"* - taking a tweet from one user and posting it yourself, automatically crediting the source, so that all of your followers can see the tweet. The original Retweeting style would take a tweet and re-post it via your own account in the following format: 'RT @username of person who originally tweeted the tweet you're retweeting: (contents of tweet)'. The current system does away with this format, and instead directly re-posts the tweet, crediting the origin underneath. For example, 'retweeted from @username'.

As you type, a countdown is offered to help you keep track of the character count of your tweets.

Use hashtags. Prefacing a word with a '#'

will create a hashtag. A hashtag makes a certain word easily searchable. For more info on hashtags see the wikiHow article on How to use Hashtags with Twitter.

A prime example of the usage of hashtags can be seen with Major League Baseball, which uses team-name hashtags (#Mets, for example) to pull together lists of in-game tweets, which they display on their website.

Gather Followers. Your twitter can be as intimate or as big as you choose. If your goal is to gather lots of followers, though, be sure to keep your posts interesting and relevant. You shouldn't underestimate the power of following others, either—often times if you follow someone they'll follow you back. Finally, give your favorite followers shout outs occasionally. This could be through direct tweets, blogs, or a simple #FF (#FollowFriday) mechanism. This will often be reciprocated, meaning your name gets circulated!

## Finding and Organizing People You Follow

Figure out who to follow. You will probably find that you know quite a few people on Twitter. Using the menu tab on your page click on 'Who to Follow', and there are several ways to find people on Twitter, as follows:

Use the 'Find Friends' link to find people you know through your various Gmail, AOL, MSN, Hotmail and Yahoo! accounts.

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Use the 'View suggestions' link for a wide range of possibilities that may, or may not, connect with your interests. (Twitter is also working on personalizing lists of suggested followers, so keep an eye out for the feature.)

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Use the 'Browse Interests' tab to find people by interest.



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Look for people from organizations that you are in or for those that share a common interest. There are many business, companies, celebrities, and non-profit organizations on Twitter, ranging from Stephen Fry (@stephenfry) to Greenpeace (@greenpeace).

Create lists. If you're following lots of people, it can get hard to sift through all the tweets. For easy reference, you can organize the people you follow into a list. To add someone to a list, go to their profile. Then, click the person icon in the toolbar and select "Add to List." A menu with your lists will pop up; you can choose to create a new list or add the person to an existing one.

## Setting Up Your Profile

Upload a profile picture. This picture will be displayed with your name across the site. It must be a JPG, GIF, or PNG file and must be smaller than 700k. To do so, click on "settings" in the drop down menu below your username. Then click on "Choose File" to select a file from your computer.

Add your name, location, and website. Under your profile picture, you have the change to enter your full name. Adding a full name allows you to keep a professional aspect regardless of your username. You can also a location to let people know where you're tweeting from and link to your homepage or blog if you desire.

Work on your 'bio'. Make it eye-catching and interesting. Do it just right and it will help you build up followers; people thinking of following you do read the bios to see if they have reason to follow you. Bear in mind that a bio can be up to 160 characters long, so you'll have to keep it short and to the point. Don't worry about typing your real name or website URL here—those can both be entered separately (as shown in the previous step).

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