

Teens and Tech: Location Sharing - Uses and Misuses

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Please note that the contents of this document should not be regarded as legal advice. The information contained within is relevant as of August 2025.

Location sharing is a common feature in many apps and devices, allowing us to share our whereabouts in real-time with friends, family, or partners. While the use of these features can be beneficial, we should understand how to use location sharing responsibly, to maintain both our safety and autonomy.

Uses

of location sharing

Safety

Sharing your location with trusted friends or family when going to unfamiliar places or on first dates.

Convenience

Coordinating meet-ups or tracking arrivals during travel.

Emergency Situations

Enabling someone to find you quickly if you're in danger or require help.

Misuses

of location sharing

Surveillance

Using location sharing to track someone's movements without their consent or to control them.

Privacy Violations

Pressuring someone to share their location or demanding access as a sign of trust.

Manipulation

Using location data to guilt, accuse, or monitor behaviors excessively.

Here are a few practical tips for safety and autonomy when location sharing:

Have an Open Communication

Discuss why location sharing is being suggested and how it would benefit both parties. You can set limits to location sharing that reflect what you are comfortable with and meet your needs (e.g. during emergencies or while travelling).

Set Clear Boundaries

Agree on when location sharing is helpful and set clear boundaries. Saying no to requests or demands is always okay.

Trust Should Be the Foundation

Remember that location sharing should enhance safety and convenience, not act as a demonstration of or replacement for trust in a relationship.

Review Permissions Regularly

Review app and individual access to your location, revoking unnecessary permissions. Use temporary sharing for specific situations.

Acknowledgement

This handout has been created by Wesnet under licence from the National Network to End Domestic Violence.