



## Navigating Friendship and Social Media



Peacock loves to see his friend Sketch, a girl who comes to the zoo and inks drawings of him. But life was lonely when she wasn't around, so he ventures out from the zoo. As a free bird, his adventures attract all the attention he'd always dreamed of: adoring fans, tons of photos, and news headlines. But when his tail feathers fall out, his fame evaporates, and Peacock finally comes to appreciate Sketch, who's stayed by his side from the beginning.

*Peacock and Sketch* by Allan Peterkin, MD is a lighthearted exploration of the fleeting nature of social media stardom and the importance of real-world friendships.

This excerpt from the Reader's Note provides tips about how to navigate social media with kids.

"It's an inventive introduction to the increasingly prevalent world of social media and fleeting fame, playfully positing that, while fun can be had in those arenas, real satisfaction comes through real-life friends and deeper interactions. The snazzy illustrations are a delight, and Peacock's dramatic poses are particularly entertaining. A splashy, sweet story about the pitfalls of fame and the value of true friendship." *Booklist*

Experts talk about the "Three Cs" in social media which are a good framework for parents to use when they talk to their children about the benefits and risks of social media:

**CONTENT:** Is what's posted age-appropriate? Truthful? Helpful? What information should never be shared? How does your child feel after accessing specific images and messages? Invite them to discuss anything that makes them uncomfortable.

**CONTACT:** Is it safe to connect with people you don't really know? What might the risks be? Can your child see beyond glossy images or clever posts and think about a real person with feelings on the other end? Kids need to be reminded that all those anonymous followers are not real friends.

CONDUCT: This involves courtesy, ethical behavior, and empathy. Words can hurt if they lead to judgement, humiliation, and bullying. Parents can give their own examples of deciding to wait and reflect instead of replying impulsively or angrily to a message that bothered them.

Parents reading *Peacock and Sketch* can explore with their children how online connections can be fun and teach you lots of things about the world and human nature. But they can use the story to emphasize that a real friend loves the real you, even when you don't look or feel great, and shows up in person when things get tough. Fame can't replace friendship.

[Start reading \*Peacock and Sketch\* here.](#)

### **This Article's Author**

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