

Facebook: Engage Locally, Find Local Allies, Engage Local Media

What Is Facebook?

Facebook is a social media platform where individuals can share information with their family members, friends, and acquaintances. By setting up an account, you can “friend” people you know, follow news accounts, follow certain organizations, companies, political figures, celebrities, and other entities that matter to you—like your kid’s school or PTA or a particular store that you like. While you can “friend” anyone, Facebook is usually used to share more personal details of one’s life—family photos, stories, updates and memories. You can also share information and news that you find interesting or useful.

How To Get Started on Facebook...

- Go to www.facebook.com.
- Hit the green button that says, “Create a new account”.
- Fill in the information on the Sign Up page.
- That’s it!

Rules for Posting: The content has to meet Facebook’s [community standards rules](#).

What is a Facebook Group?

- Facebook has a feature where you can start a group to promote a particular issue or cause. This is an excellent tool to use for local engagement and community activism.
- Don’t like the curriculum your public school is using? Start a “Parents Take Back the Curriculum” group.
- Concerned about Critical Race Theory taught in your public school? Start a “Parents Against CRT” group.
- Concerned about the content of your school’s sex education courses? Start a “Sex Education Parent Information Coalition” group.
- Is your school board or Superintendent not listening to the concerns of parents? Start a “Parents Stand Up for Change” group.

How to start a Facebook Group:

- **Explain Your Group's Goals:** A three or four sentence paragraph in the "About" section is more than enough.
 - Example #1: "The (insert town name or school district name here) Special Education Parent Support (ASEPS) group was established to provide support, training, resources and inspiration to families of children with special needs. This group also advocates on behalf of special needs families with the (insert school district) leadership, school board, and special education teachers and case workers."
 - Example #2: "This group was established in (enter date) to allow (insert city or school district, etc.) parents and caregivers to vent their frustrations with city officials, who are ignoring their concerns. The lack of truthfulness and transparency has become a pattern across a number of policy decisions and proposals. Decisions are routinely made without valid data, justification of need, and support from the very residents who will be most impacted."
- **Introduce Yourself and Tell Your Story:** It doesn't have to be too detailed but a personal story is always a great way to get people talking.
- **Establish "Rules" for the Group:** These rules are simply a way to keep the conversations civil and the language clean. It also helps you control who remains in the group. If someone continues to break the rules (for instance, by insulting other members or using bad language), you can remind them of the rules or kick them out of the group.
- **Require Entry Questions:** Before joining the group, they must be approved by an admin once the questions are answered. This is to help filter and ensure the quality of the group is maintained and that members are there to contribute to meaningful dialogue.

So you've started a Facebook Group. Now what?

- **Regularly Post to the Group Board:** Encourage conversation by adding, "what are your thoughts?" at the end of the post to encourage conversation and debate. Ask people to share their own experiences and stories.
- **Encourage Story Telling among Group Members:** Highlight a particular member of the group each month. Conduct polls by asking people to comment on a post.
- **Share Information from Groups You Trust:** There's no need to reinvent the wheel. The women at the Independent Women's Forum produces timely and helpful policy papers, fact check documents, talking points, infographics, media content, and videos that can be shared with group members.
- **Find Moderators:** Choose a few trusted members of the group to share in the moderation duties. It is critical to keep an eye on the comments that are made to ensure your group stays true to its mission statement and that rules are followed.
- **Conduct a Poll:** IWN regularly conducts polls, asking group members the content in which they're most interested. See an example [here](#). You can allow users to elect one choice or multiple choices. It's up to you!

- **Beware of Trolls:** They may join and try to encourage comments that you may not want on your group's page. You can control who becomes a member of the group by having those who ask to become members answer a number of questions prior to accepting them into the group. This allows you to monitor who is gaining access and stop any familiar names you don't want as members.
- **Post a Disclaimer:** You may want to add a legal disclaimer that states that posts and in this group are a reflection of the thoughts and opinion of the individual who has made the post and do not reflect those of (insert your group's name here).