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November 20, 2024

CYSE 201S

Journal

 Recognizing Hidden Dangers

After reading the thought-provoking article by Andriy Slynchuk, I was struck by the various ways we engage in actions online that are not only unethical but also illegal. Until now, I had not fully considered the implications of these activities on others and society as a whole. I’ve come to realize that there are five serious issues regarding online behavior that I had previously overlooked: collecting information about children, engaging in bullying and trolling, sharing passwords, addresses, or photos of others, faking one’s identity online, and utilizing other people’s internet networks without permission.

The collection of information about children is particularly alarming. Many people may not understand that gathering such data can have harmful consequences. There is little justification for obtaining personal information about minors, and doing so raises significant ethical concerns. It often suggests malicious intent, such as predatory behavior. Children are inherently vulnerable and deserve protection from those who may exploit or harm them. As a society, we need to collectively advocate for the safety and privacy of children, ensuring they can grow up without the threat of predation or exposure to inappropriate attention.

Bullying and trolling, especially in the digital realm, can lead to devastating mental health outcomes. The pervasive nature of cyberbullying means that individuals who are targeted cannot simply escape it by leaving a physical environment, such as school or work. Instead, the harassment often follows them home, invading their personal space and contributing to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and despair. The impact of such relentless bullying can be tragic, leading some individuals to contemplate or even commit suicide. It’s crucial that we foster a culture of empathy, where individuals are encouraged to support one another rather than tear each other down.

Another serious violation is the sharing of sensitive information, such as passwords, addresses, or personal photographs of others. This behavior is a blatant disregard for individual privacy and can have severe repercussions. When private details are shared without consent, it can lead to unwanted trespassing, identity theft, or even blackmail. Many individuals would not want their personal lives exposed to others, and respecting these boundaries is fundamental to maintaining healthy relationships and trust in our interpersonal interactions.

Faking one’s identity online poses significant ethical dilemmas as well. Individuals may create false personas for various reasons—misleading others in social or professional situations can lead to dangerous and complicated scenarios. For example, if someone misrepresents themselves online and subsequently meets someone in person, the deception could lead to conflict or harm. This behavior can facilitate criminal activities such as fraud or kidnapping, as it often relies on deceit, manipulation, and the exploitation of trust. Being honest about one’s identity is essential to building genuine connections and ensuring personal safety.

Finally, using someone else’s internet network without their consent is a violation of their rights. Accessing another person's network often involves utilizing their password, which undermines their security and privacy. Such actions can result in unauthorized access to sensitive information or activities that may be harmful to the person whose network is being misused. This behavior not only disrespects the individual but also creates potential legal and ethical complications for both parties.