QUICK START GUIDE

FCALife.com

WELCOME STAFF

We're excited to embark on a new social networking tool for the FCA family. This Quick Start Guide will help you better understand how to use FCALife and introduce you to some best practices for being online.

What is FCALife.com?

FCA has partnered with tangle.com to provide all FCA coaches and volunteers a unique and more fruitful social networking experience. If you're not familiar with tangle, it is the largest Christian social network with millions of users. We're excited to have the tangle platform power FCALife.com to help you share, live and grow as a follower of Jesus Christ. Our desire is that in the months to follow we would be able to give you more features that help you continue your journey.

tangle

Why Should I Join FCALife.com if I Have a Facebook or MySpace Account?

FCALife.com is a companion to what you're doing online. It isn't designed to replace other popular social networks, but we believe it will allow you to do things you might not be able to do on other websites. If you're desiring to share, live and grow as a Christian, you can connect with other Christians, engage in online Bible studies using the Online Bible and be part of the FCA family who share a common bond.

How Do I Use FCALife.com?

This website is not designed to add more to your "to-do" list. You can use it as little or as much as you'd like. It is designed to give those within your local ministry the opportunity to connect with others under the banner of FCA .In a survey of over 2,000 FCA athletes, coaches and volunteers, 87 percent indicated they would use a social network specifically for FCA in addition to their involvement with Facebook.

Here are some things you should probably do with your FCALife account after signing up:

- After creating your account, fill out your profile!
- Update your profile photo.
- Find your favorite tangle.com videos and add them to your playlist.
- Invite other staff to join.
- Browse the Online Bible and start a discussion on a verse or topic.

Once you've got your profile squared away:

- Browse the Groups at FCALife.com and see if you'd like to join them. You'll be able to connect with others within the ministry through these groups for everything from Fields of Faith to Campus 101. More will be added, so check often.
- Search for other friends, staff, athletes, coaches and volunteers on tangle and request them as a friend.
- Encourage members of your Huddles to join and create their own Huddle Group page.
- Create a group page for your office or ministry and invite those within your ministry to join so you can easily communicate with them using tangle's messaging feature.

DID YOU KNOW?

In order to provide a safe online experience, all the content submitted on FCALife.com is viewed by a large team of content editors at tangle.com.
You will have to wait no longer than a day for your comments, prayer requests, videos, photos, etc. to be reviewed before you see them live on the site.

THERE'S MORE!

Additional guidelines & Best practices for social networks

While we have made every effort to ensure your online experience is safe, it's up to you to ultimately safeguard your online activities. Here are several things you can do while you're on FCALife.com, Facebook or any other social network:

Long-term Counseling

FCA representatives should not enter into individual counseling relationships with participants. Generally, you should not physically meet or engage with a youth via "texting", "instant message", social networks or any other form of communication more than three times to discuss the same issue. Adult leaders and FCA staff are generally not prepared or supported for long-term counseling or formal therapy. Instead, refer youth suspected of a serious need for counseling to professionals in the community.

Informal Contact (Independent of FCA Activities)

Informal contact refers to phone calls, letters, face-to-face contact, email, texting, instant messages, social networks or other communication between an FCA representative and a youth that is not connected to "official" FCA activities. FCA recognizes that informal contact between FCA representatives and youth frequently occurs and can be very beneficial for Christian and social reasons. For example, staff may hire teens as baby-sitters for their own children, or staff may see kids during social events with the child's family. This interaction is usually legitimate and beneficial. However, staff should be cautious of in-depth, reoccurring communication with youth.

Be Aware of "Fantasy Relationships"

Refrain from spending an inordinate amount of time with any one participant that could lead the participant to misread your interest in him or her or become too strongly tied to you. This includes relationships with other adults and volunteers. Be aware of how you express your concern for the student, adult or volunteer. When you express love, be sure students know you mean Christian love.

Appearance of Misconduct

Staff must avoid even the appearance of misconduct online. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations. Do not allow your activity online to be misconstrued in any way by the comments, photos, blogs, or posts you publish online.

Choose "Friends" Wisely

Christ has called us to be "salt and light" to the world. At the same time, you'll want to prayerfully consider whom you associate with online. By accepting someone as a "Friend" and associating with them, you allow everyone you are Friends with online to see their activity. Social networks are a great way to minister to people, but carefully, prayerfully weighing the risks is highly recommended.

Posting Photos

While posting photos is easy, sound judgment should be used. The context of a photo cannot always be communicated. So the appearance of misconduct or questionable character is just a few clicks away. Don't post photos that could even remotely be misconstrued. Remember, if you choose to be Friends with someone, they can see the photos you post. You are representing the body of Christ and the ministry of FCA in every photo you publish.

Posting Links, Blogs, Videos, etc.

Social networks make it even easier to publish all sorts of content in addition to just photos. However, the same general principles apply. Don't post any content that could even remotely be misconstrued as misconduct or questionable character. Remember that everyone you are Friends with can see all the content you publish. Your freedom of speech is not unlimited. Social network sites are not a place where you can say and publish whatever you want without possible repercussions.

Inappropriate Communication

Personal, one-to-one messages need to be handled with the utmost care. As a general best practice, you should be hesitant to engage in in-depth, reoccurring communication with student-athletes, other coaches or volunteers that could foster "fantasy relationships", inappropriate relationships or the appearance of misconduct.

Marriages

Staff who are married are strongly encouraged to communicate with their spouse about their online activity, including social networking. Complete transparency is absolutely imperative. It is up to each husband and wife to establish boundaries with the use of social networks and online media (websites, email, message boards, etc). These boundaries could include:

- Keeping one another informed of "friend requests" including requests from one another's past. Over-communicating could be helpful.
- Telling one another about communication that has occurred online.
- Limiting or not allowing one-on-one, in-depth communication with people of the opposite sex.

Time Management

With the vast amount of information at your fingertips through various social networks and the Internet, it's easy to get "consumed" and spend hours without even knowing it. You should establish boundaries with the amount of time spent on these sites.

Content Filters & Accountability Software

For all the "good" that is available via the Internet, there is equally, if not more, "bad" that is available as well. You should consider employing several tactics to protect yourselves online, ranging from free to fee-based.

- Install content-filtering software on your computer.

  - Free: K9 Web Protection – This software installs on your computer and filters a growing number of websites including over 300,00 questionable sites. It automatically updates content filters based on 80 million uses each day, tracks content viewing, restricts access to certain content and gives complete control to parents. http://www1.k9webprotection.com/

  - Paid: Safe Eyes – This software installs on your computer and does everything K9 Web Protection provides, but extends the protection into instant messaging, cyber bullying, social network user profiles and games. It protects across more avenues of social media and is a more advanced software. http://www.internetsafety.com/safe-eyes-parental-control-software.php

- Install accountability software on your computer. Stay accountable to another person about your Internet usage.

  - Free: X3 Watch – Installed on your computer, you enter the email address of two accountability partners and the software will email them any questionable content viewed on the computer. If the software is shutdown, the accountability partners are notified as well. http://x3watch.com/

  - Paid: X3 WatchPro – The same software as the free version, but allows for weekly reports, three accountability partners and additional options. http://x3watch.com/

Questions About Guidlines?

Please contact the FCA HR Department should you have questions about online conduct.
HR can be reached at hr@fca.org or (800)289-0909.