

SAINT BARNABAS

March 5, 2025

Dear St. Barnabas Parents and Guardians,

We recently learned of an internet scam affecting school-age children in our area. The Chicago Police Department has contacted the school and encouraged us to bring it to the attention of our families so that all households are aware.

Scammers mimic fake accounts on Instagram and pose as people known to the child. After connecting with the child, they ask for login credentials. If the login is gained, they ask for photos or obtain photos and threaten the child through blackmail attempts. This scam is advanced and mimics people the child already knows (and trusts). In this scenario, the child may be more likely to share a password, believing it to be a known friend or family member.

We stress to you the importance of internet safety. Please stay in close contact with your child regarding what they are doing online and maintain an open dialogue so they can come to you with questions and concerns. Tomorrow, Thursday, March 6, during morning advisory, we will speak to 5th through 8th-grade students about this matter.

During the week of March 17, Officer Kelley Leyden from Chicago Police, District 22, will come to school and talk to the students on internet safety. We hope this will serve as a valuable resource in helping to educate our students about online safety. Officer Kelley Leyden has been here before and is an incredible asset to our community. In an age-appropriate, informative manner, she engages the students in best practices.

Our top priority at St. Barnabas is student safety. We will continue to stay connected to the Chicago Police Department for further information, and we ask each of you to talk to your child about these internet scams and threats and monitor their online activity.

Thank you for your partnership,

St. Barnabas School