Internet Partner Services in Kansas

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Kansas
Department of Health
and Environment
Division of Public Health
AD ASTRA PER ASPERA

Agenda

- Starting Internet Partner Services (IPS)
- IPS Standards
- Tips for performing IPS

How did KDHE start IPS?

- Defined the issue

- Championed approval
  - Bureau leadership met with our state health officer to obtain approval for IPS

- Created policies and expectations to protect sensitive information
  - IT monitors the download of apps to DIS phones
  - All staff receive training on cyber security best practices
  - DIS are trained on policies for IPS

58.6%

of men who have sex with men diagnosed with early syphilis reported use of an internet-based app to meet sex partners*

Internet Partner Services (IPS)

Policies

- KDHE IT
- Social Media Platform

Procedures

- Establishing profiles
- Identifying clients
- Maintaining confidentiality

KDHE IT Policies

- Use secure internet connections
- Create strong passwords

Social Media Platform Policies

When conducting IPS through a website, it is important to be aware that you are a member of the community and are subject to the rules and regulations of the website. It is imperative to be aware of such rules and regulations pertaining to IPS prior to joining the site.

Establishing Profiles

WORK LOGINS

Use work emails or work phone numbers to create work specific social media accounts.

Never use a personal account.

PROFILE PICTURES

When possible, use the KDHE BDCP official logo for profile pictures.

Consult with your supervisor if you cannot.

PROFILE NAME AND DETAILS

When possible, the handle should reflect "DIS ###"; alternatively, use the employee's real name

Profile details such as age and gender can cater to the intended audience when necessary

NETWORKING

Do not follow, friend, like, etc. any page, person, event, etc.

PRIVACY SETTINGS

Set all privacy features to the strictest settings that will still allow for direct messaging with anyone.

Identifying Clients

OP PROVIDED

- Most desired
- High level of confidence
- Active page

DIS CONFIRMED

- 2nd best option
- Confirmed via visible DOB that matches with known client details

DIS SUSPECTED

- Still acceptable if there is a moderate level of suspicion
- Profile matches unique physical description
- Several validating factors (right name, social affiliates, geographic location, type of employment, etc.)

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Maintaining Confidentiality

SENDING A MESSAGE

- Only used standardized IPS message
- Dear _____, There is an urgent health matter which requires your immediate attention. Please call (DIS Name) at (DIS Ph#) as soon as possible. Thank you.

REPLYING

- Standardized Reply message
- Due to medical privacy, I am unable to discuss specific health information online. Please contact me at (DIS ph#) as soon as possible to discuss this medical matter further.
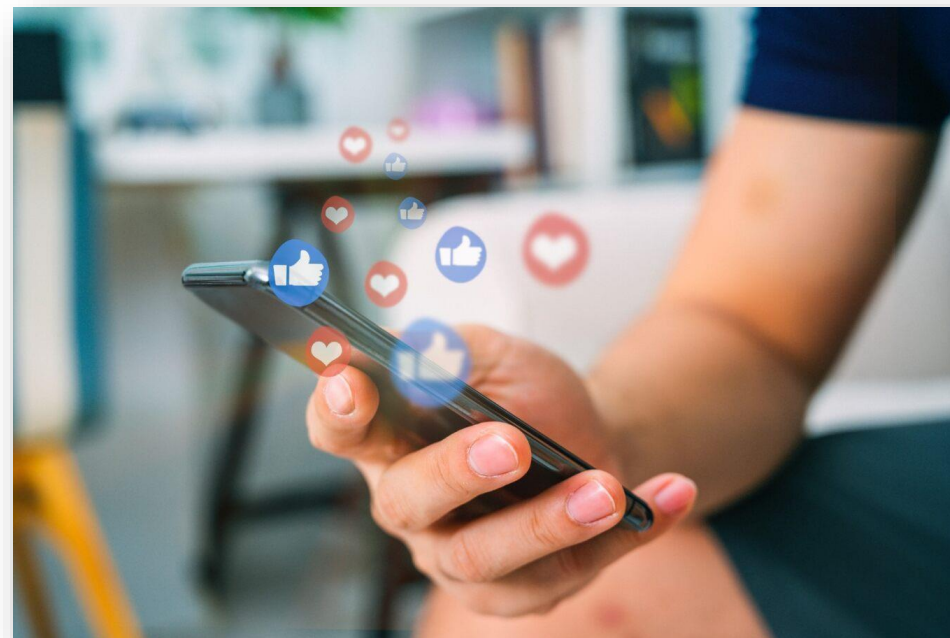
FURTHER COMMUNICATION

- Once you have spoken to the client over the phone or in person and have verified their identity, you can have additional communications over social media *if necessary to coordinate care*
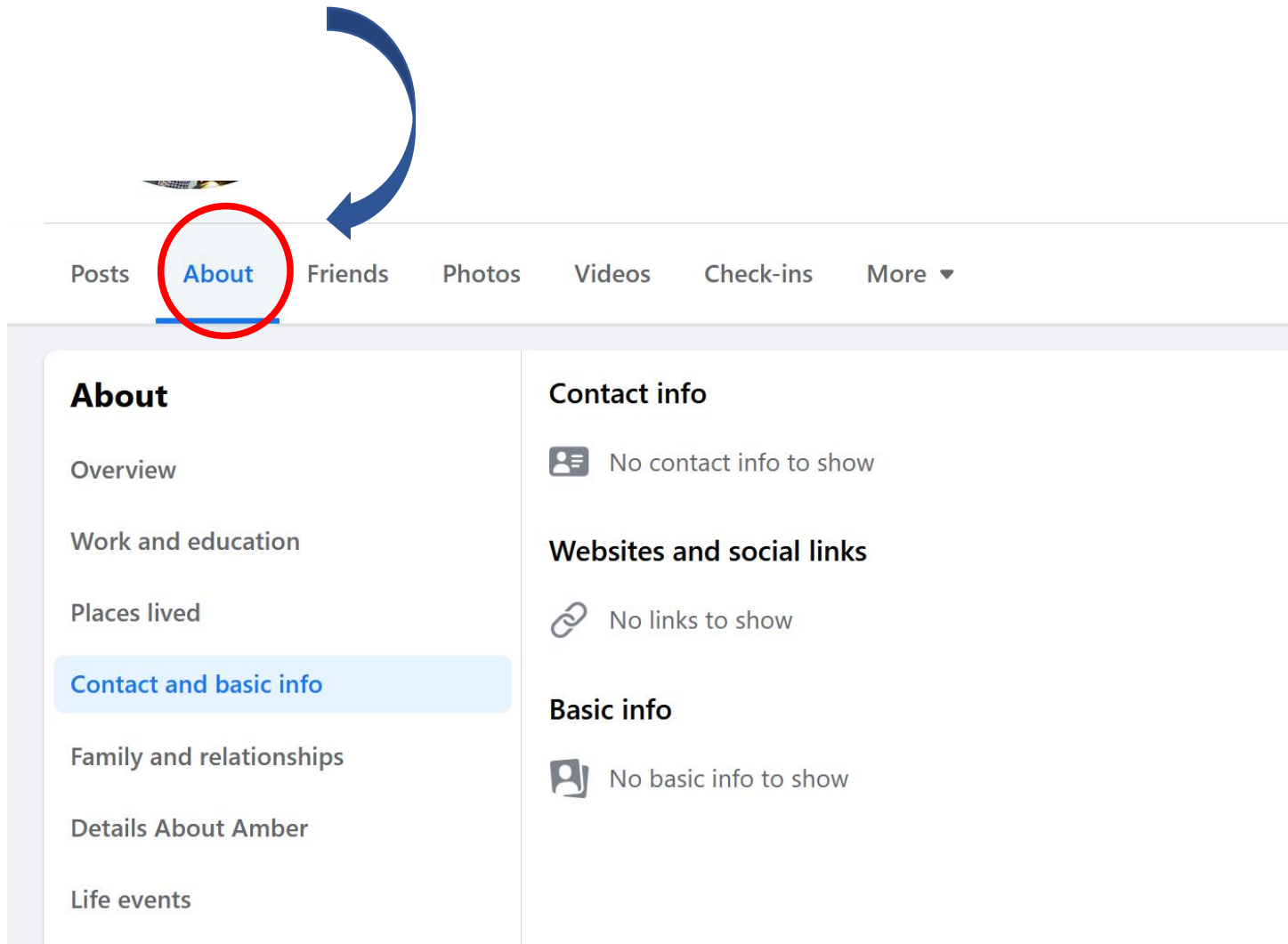- **Do not ever use disease specific terminology in social media messages**

Commonly Used Social Media Sites

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Snap Chat
- TikTok

- X (formerly Twitter)
- Other mobile dating apps

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Investigative Tips

- Ask the Original Patient (OP) to provide the partner's page.

- Locate the page on your work phone so you can screenshot it easily.

- Take a photo of the OP's phone showing the partner's page if you cannot find the profile yourself quickly.

- Help legitimize your IPS message by sharing an image of your business card.
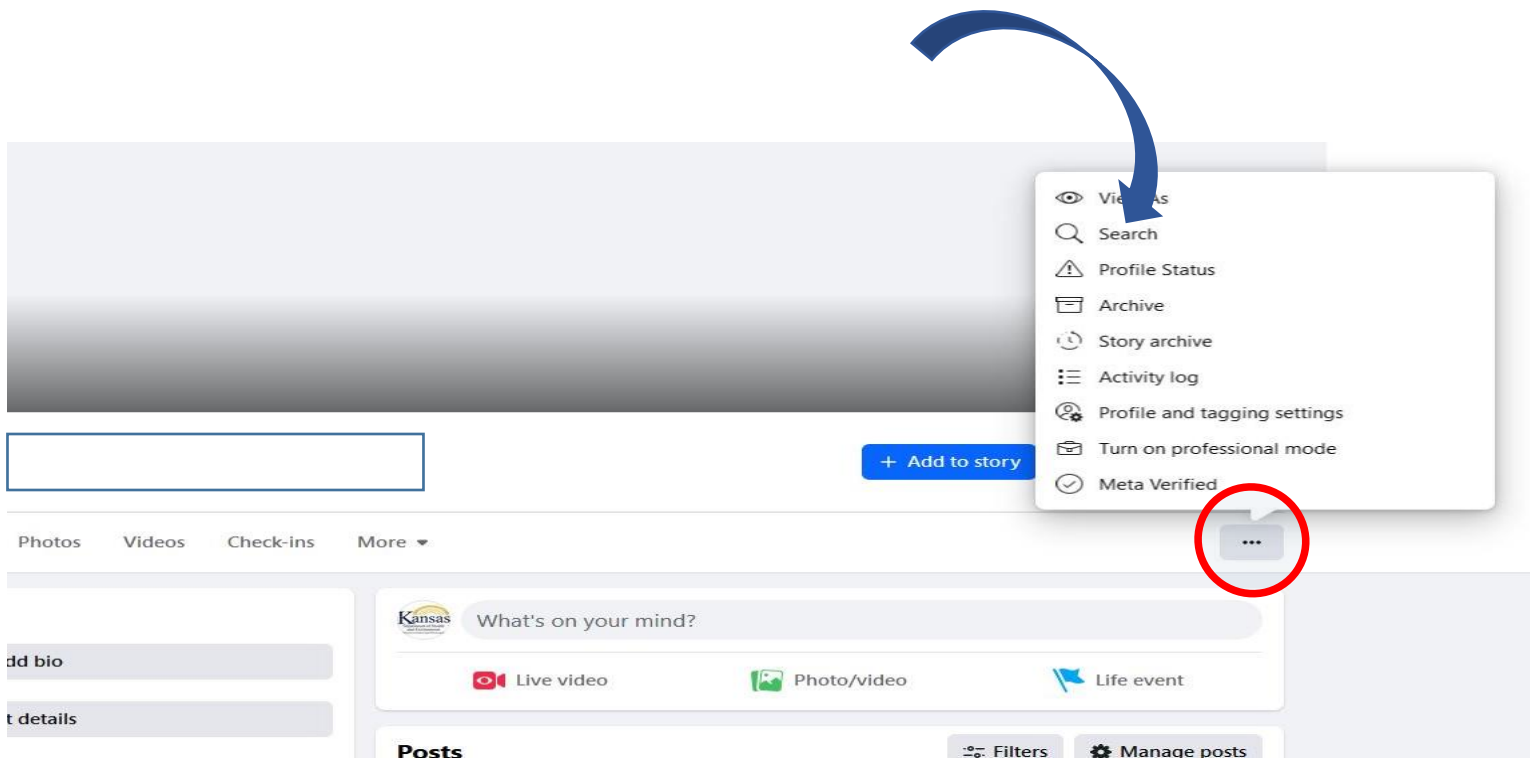
Facebook Tips

Review the "about me"

- Work places.
- Places lived.
- Contact info such as phone numbers or other social media accounts.
- Basic info such as date of birth.
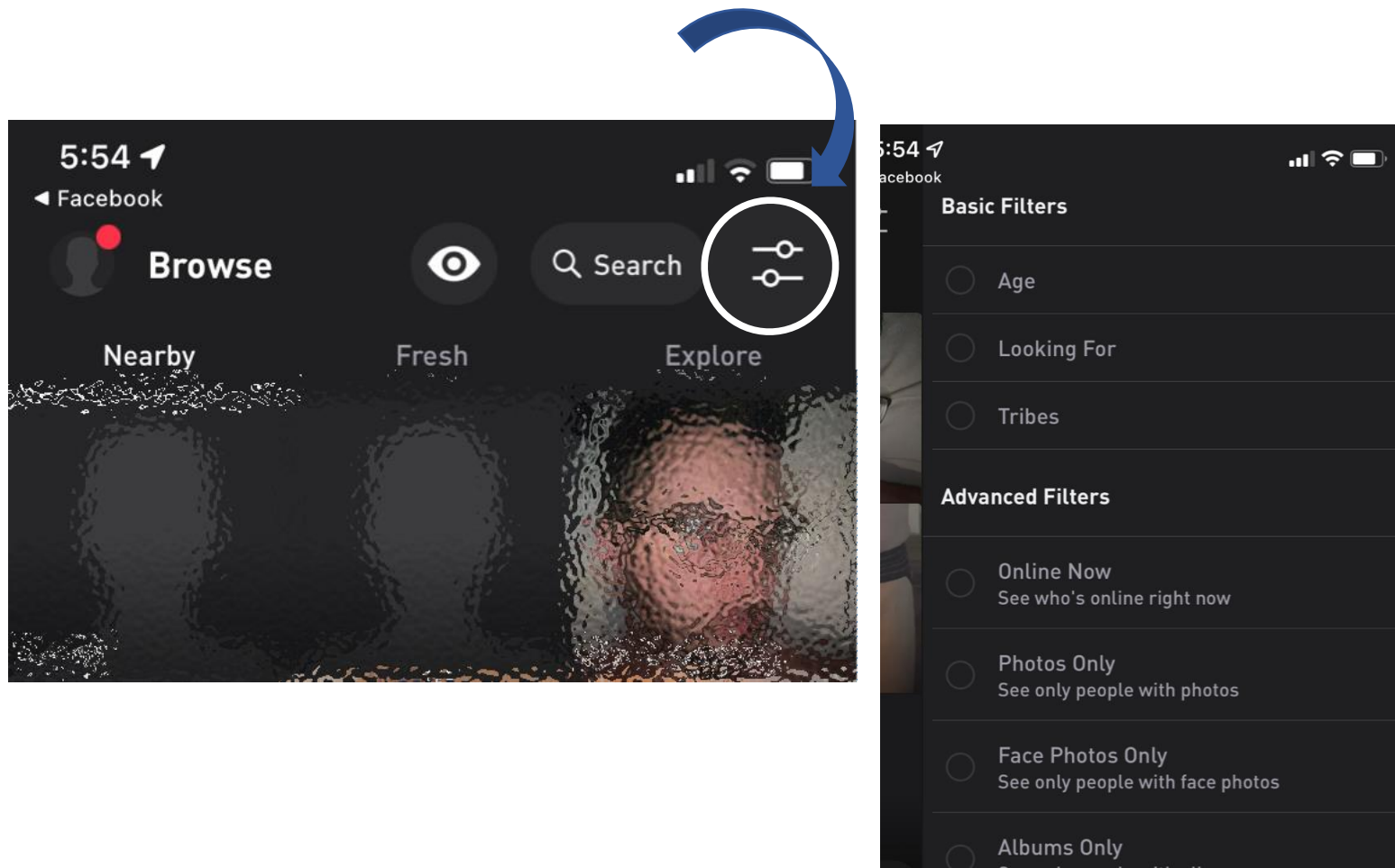- Family and relationships may identify mom dad or sibling.

Facebook Tips

- Use the "search" feature to look for key phrases in posts that may give helpful details
    - Birthday
    - Mom
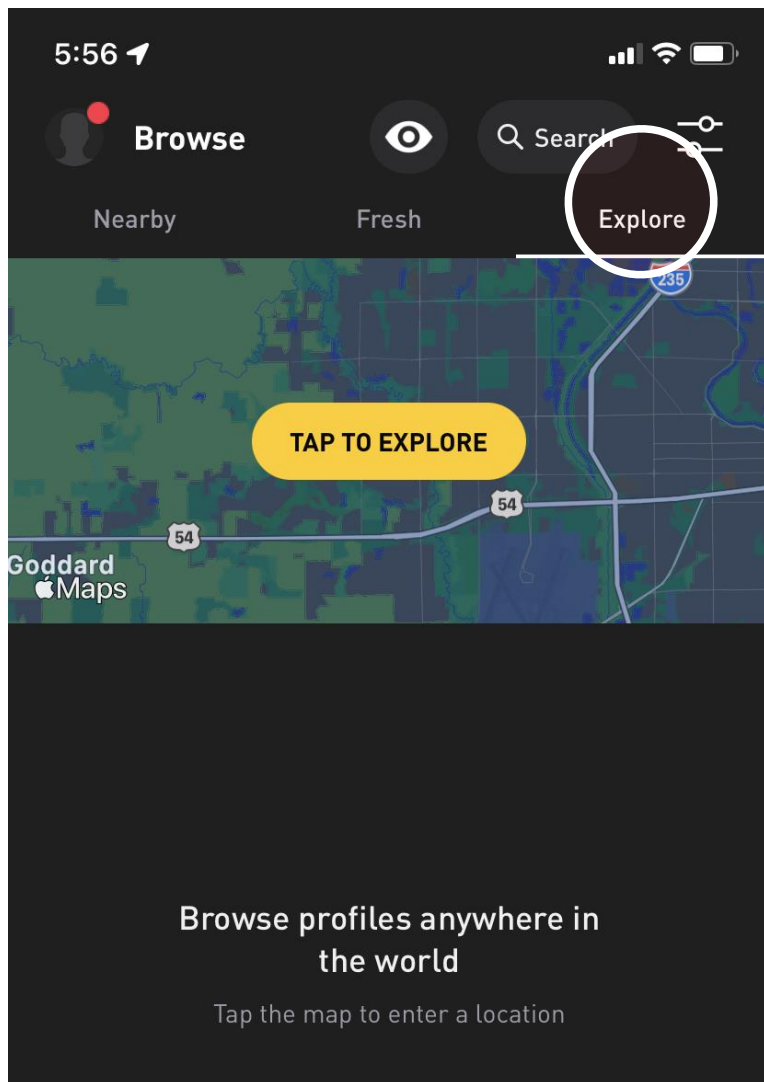   - Phone (or "316")
    - Work (or job)

Grindr Tips

- Get photos of BOTH the profile picture AND the profile details
- This will help you with filtering later or finding the profile if the username changes
- Favorite the profile using the "star" so you can message them later

Grindr Tips

- Use filters to focus results based on certain age ranges

- Include a tribe filter if it's known to you and you're struggling to get the results you want

Grindr Tips

- Take advantage of geography with 'explore' mode.

- Position yourself where the OP uses the app to better locate matches, they would have been finding themselves.

Thank you and Questions

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