Private Connections
Unique Privacy Provisions for a Neurodiverse Community

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Introduction
Connection: An in-development application from Western Washington University aims to accomplish the following:

• Function as a better platform for those self-identifying as Neurodiverse to forge relationships online
• Create an inclusive space that encourages Neurodiverse and Neurotypical membership and participation
• Facilitate both romantic relationships and friendships using the same networking platform [1]

Research Questions
1. What are (if any) particular privacy concerns of future Neurodiverse users of Connection?
2. Which existing social media and dating site privacy protocols/vulnerabilities would encourage or preclude users from using Connection?

Methodology
We performed separate literature reviews on each research question to address the above using the queries shown in figures 1 and 2:

Figures 1 and 2: Search strings used for research questions 1 and 2

Autism and Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities
dating AND (priva* OR secu*) AND (internet OR online)
IEEE Xplore and ACM Library
(Autis* OR asperger*) AND (priva* OR secu*)

Findings
A significant sample of Neurodiverse community members choose not to disclose their status. This population often identifies as female [2, 3]

A. Connection must protect the identities of these users to remain a viable platform.

But, Neurodiverse adolescents and young adults face online instances of cyber-bullying and harassment at greater rates [4], So,

B. Connection must also avoid problems with anonymous online spaces which facilitate this type of negative online behavior.

How can Connections accomplish both goals on the same platform?

Implementations

• Recruit and encourage a large body of Neurotypical users to participate
• ‘Group’-based visibility (ex. Google+, LinkedIn) enhance user privacy [5]
• Maintain a strict 1-user per account policy with registration verification for accountability
• Disable Location Based Services and Facebook connectivity which can create unwanted user-disclosures [6, 7]

References

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