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Social Media Dangers - Snapchat, Tik Tok, & Instagram

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Parents need to be informed. Apps to make monitoring are readily available. Be informed.

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Recommendations & Contact

PARENTS, DID YOU KNOW?

SOCIAL MEDIA DANGERS AND STATISTICS

- 70% of teens say anxiety is a major problem
- 46% of 16 & 17 year olds admit to texting/social media surfing, while driving
- 71% of young kids see bullying in schools
- Snapchat turned into the mainstream sexting app and about ¼ of snapchat users are kids under the age of 18.
- Six out of 10 teens say they've been asked for sexual images or videos
- 32.5% of Tik Tok users in the U.S are 10-19. Even with content filtering turned on, the content that shows up for them is filled with language & sexual content.
- Teens take Instagram seriously — and it's costing some of them their personal data
- Minors on Instagram are switching to business accounts so they can see how many people view their posts, but they are exposing their contact details in the process.



WHAT KIDS DO NOT KNOW ABOUT SNAPCHAT

AND THEY REALLY DO NOT KNOW

KIDS ARE CONVINCED THAT THEIR PHOTOS WILL "DISAPPEAR" FOREVER.

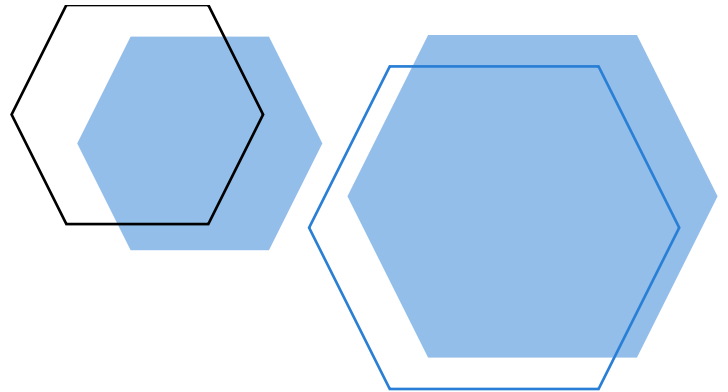
Parents should tell kids it's important to think before you share. This is super important with Snapchat because photos and videos **appear** to disappear after they are viewed—but, we all know that you can take a screen shot of any photo, save it, and even share it later.

THE "SCREENSHOT ALERT" IS NOT FOOLPROOF.

Kids will argue with you that with the "alert" screenshot function, they'll also know if someone has taken a screenshot. However, there's nothing to stop a viewer from taking a picture of the screen using another device. So, the moment that disappears from the screen is now a permanent part of someone else's image library, and that's a problem.

SINCE SNAPS, DISAPPEAR THEY CAN'T BE MONITORED.

For parents of children under 18, it's important to understand the dangers of this feature as it can almost be impossible to see what snaps are being sent or received—which makes it easier for inappropriate content or bullying content to be shared and sent.





TIK TOK

NOT MUCH BETTER

Even with parental controls, the content that kids are getting on their “For You” feed is filled with sexually explicit and vulgar material. Kids who admit to depression online are often met with sarcastic and dismissive reactions. The best way to understand is to open it up and see what your kids are seeing for yourself and determine the best course of action for your child.

INSTAGRAM

MATURE CONTENT AND PREDATORS LURKING

The kinds of content kids will see mostly depends on whom they follow: If they only follow friends and don't search for anything, they may see only pictures of their friends having fun. But kids rarely limit their feeds to people they know, so it's likely they'll see mature content (including sexy stuff, swearing, and substance use), mean or sexual comments, and hashtags about suicide, anorexia, and other concerning topics.

Girls have been especially mentally and physically targeted on Instagram and harassed about how they look at a young age. Online predators use teenage girls and the need for them to be liked and accepted to lure and groom them.

BE SMART ABOUT YOUR KID'S APPS

These apps have been directly linked to cases involving children. Please be smart and monitor your child's smart phone or devices that have access to these apps!

SNAPCHAT  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: People of all ages can send explicit photos and videos that "disappear" after received but can still be saved by screenshot.	INSTAGRAM  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: Children are vulnerable to getting messages from strangers through the direct message (DM) feature.	TIK TOK  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: Accounts are set to "public" so strangers can contact your children.	FACEBOOK  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This app allows predators access to your children through video and private chatting and Instant Messaging.	TINDER  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: People of all ages look to "hook-up" with users and browse profiles based on location.	WHISPER  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: Anonymous accounts are created where users can share secrets and meet new people.	CALCULATOR%  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This ghosting app allows children to store and hide images, photos, videos and files on their phones.
ASK.FM  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This site has been linked to cyberbullying, it has loose regulation and there is a lack of administrative monitoring.	OMEGLE  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This app randomly selects one-on-one meet-ups with strangers in video chat rooms. It is completely anonymous.	LIVE ME  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This live-streaming video sharing app uses geolocation to share videos. This site has limited administrative monitoring.	GRINDR  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This app allows people of all ages to "hook-up" or share photos with strangers based on location.	HOLLA  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This video chatting app randomly matches people worldwide for instant meet-ups.	MEET ME  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This social app encourages meeting up in person. It gives adults access to children.	KIK.  WHY IT'S DANGEROUS: This site can be used for hidden communication to and from your child.

AS PARENTS, HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO

THESE APPS HAVE BEEN LINKED TO CASES AGAINST CHILDREN!

If your child has these apps, and you are ok with it, there are safety measures and privacy settings you can tweak to help protect your child.

First, you need to talk to your child to explain the dangers. We live in a digital era. Everything you do online can be tracked. Everything you post can be saved by someone, somewhere, if they want it. You are not anonymous online, even if you think you are.

Next, there are device monitoring apps available. Bark is widely known as a good monitoring app. Several families that work at AnyWay Tech use it for their kids.

Snapchat - Snapchat is unique since there is not a feed to really monitor. There is however, privacy settings that you can adjust to limit exposure. Sit down with your child and go into the apps settings, the gear icon next to the profile image. Scroll down to the "Who can" section and make these privacy tweaks:

- For "Contact Me" and "View My Story," choose "My Friends" and not "Everyone."
- For "See My Location," select "Ghost Mode" which will prevent anyone from knowing where your child is (you can choose to select certain friends that they can share location with, but make sure that this option is discussed with you).
- Finally, by deselecting "Quick Add" other app users will have to request your child's Snapchat handle instead of automatically finding it in lists of suggested friends. This will help ensure that only your children's friends are able to engage with them.

TikTok- If you are an Android or Amazon device family, you can also use Bark to monitor TikTok text chats.

As of August 12, 2021, the app rolled out new safety features for teens:

- Accounts for children between ages 13-15 will not receive push notifications after 9 p.m.
- For teens between ages 16-17, push notifications will be disabled after 10 p.m.
- Users between the ages 16 and 17 must actively switch their settings to enable direct messaging. Those under 16 don't have access to direct messages.
- Users under age 16 who are trying to publish their first video will get a pop-up message to help them better understand their privacy options. They won't be able to publish the video without selecting who will be allowed to see it.

While in the TikTok app and from your child's profile, you'll see three dots in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. Clicking on those dots will take you to the 'Privacy and settings' section of the app. When you scroll down to the 'Privacy and safety' option under "Account," you will see the option to set the child's account to private (recommended to toggle that on), as well as allow others to find them (recommended to toggle that off).

Also, under the "Safety" section of that same screen, you have the ability to customize who can post comments, who can Duet with your child, who can react to their videos, who can send them messages, and who can view videos they liked, she says. You can choose from "Everyone," "Friends," and "Off."

Keep in mind that your child may open the app and change these settings at any time, which is why it's important for you to also view the 'Digital Wellbeing' section of the 'Privacy and settings' screen. This offers a passcode-enabled screen time management system, as well as a restricted mode to limit the appearance of inappropriate content.

It's also important to remember that the app is meant for kids who are 13 or older. Check that your child's TikTok account has been set up using the correct data of birth. Some children might set their account up with a fake age, to appear older than they are, and this makes it more likely that they will be exposed to content that is not suitable for them.

Instagram - You can ask your kid to give you a tour of their Instagram. Ask them to walk you through their account, explain memes and comments, discuss friends, and share whatever comes up. Or try one of these ideas:

- **Ask for your kid's Instagram username and password.** Then, you can log in as them and review their accounts.
- **Do spot checks.** Either random or scheduled, these check-ins give you time to sit down together and go through your kid's feed.
- **Install a third-party monitoring app.** Parental controls such as Bark, give you a lot of visibility into what kids are doing online.

Instagram accounts are public by default, so the first thing to do is make your kid's private. To do this, go to Settings from your profile page. Select Privacy and toggle on Private Account. With a private account, only people you approve can see what you post. You get a lot of options in the Privacy section -- and you should spend some time here if you're helping your kid set up their first account. You can't lock Privacy settings, though, so be aware that kids can change them back.

Our recommendation: As parents to kids that fall into the category of wanting these apps, we will say the key here is monitoring your kids. Even good kids can find themselves in trouble online with a lot of inappropriate content out there. Snapchat & Instagram, in our house, is ultimately a NO. We do allow our kids to have TikTok that is strictly monitored. If your kids have the apps, we would recommend that you become familiar with them and set the privacy settings up that we put in this newsletter. There are also apps that monitor your child's device content. We use Bark and would recommend that but there are others as well. If you have any issues, please contact us and we would be happy to help you set these up for your kids. After all, we are a community and all want our children safe!

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